

Tips for Sports Photography

Sports photography captures the heart and soul of the game along with the action. Learn how to anticipate the emotional highs and lows to have the right assortment of photos.

Before the game	At the game	After the game
✓ Know your camera settings ✓ Practice at their practice ✓ Know the sport ✓ Know the location ✓ Know the team ✓ Have a goal - one player, all players, Newtown Bee photo ✓ Have a cheat sheet of key shots and camera settings	✓ You are not a coach, fan or parent - you are "invisible" ✓ Be prepared and be ready ✓ Choose the right lens - size of field, distance to players ... ✓ Framing - ball, faces, joy ✓ Location, Location, Location ✓ Arrive early, stay late ✓ Capture the fans & field ...	✓ Review your results ✓ Workflow - discard, crop, quick correct, export, share ✓ Share ASAP ✓ Share only the best 5% to 10% ✓ Add items to your cheat sheet for the next game ✓ Listen for feedback

There are no "do-overs" at sports events. However, there are many do-over like opportunities.

Pre-game warm-up drills	Staging photos	Next game
❖ Carefully choose a background	❖ If you miss a key moment	❖ Focus on the play or players you missed last time
❖ Focus on the action	❖ Ask the player to pose	

Capturing the heart and soul - preserve the emotion of the moment

Moments	How
✓ Arriving, leaving, halftime ... ✓ Thrill of victory, agony of defeat, cheering ✓ Emotion - determination, smile, tears ... ✓ Action - score, goal, hit, catch, sprint ... ✓ Effect - dust flying, water splashing ... ✓ Joy - picking dandelions in the outfield ...	✓ The right place at the right time ✓ Inconspicuous - without being seen ✓ Often a face is needed ✓ Perspective - vary height and location ✓ Create a moment through interaction ✓ Willingness to forego some of your joy

Freezing action - sharpness is critical

Equipment	Shutter Speed
✓ Tripod - stable, but hard to move. You need mobility to capture other views. ✓ Monopod - some stability, easy to move, often the best choice ✓ Freehand - always available, may not be stable if you use a large heavy lens ✓ Don't walk while shooting	Is how long the sensor is exposed to light ✓ Most important setting ✓ 1/250 sec minimum walkers ✓ 1/500 sec minimum runners ✓ 1/1000 sec for fast ball movement ✓ Burst mode - hold down the shutter and take multiple photos

Flagpole Photographers Camera Club of Newtown, CT

Our mission is to enable members to share their photos and expertise, to learn and grow in their photography, and to enjoy the camaraderie of fellow photographers. Meetings the 2nd and 4th Thursdays at the Newtown Senior Center

FlagpolePhotographers.com

Balancing camera settings

Aperture

Determines how much depth can be in focus

- ✓ Bigger number provides more opportunities to have sharp photos
- ✓ Smaller number gets rid of background distractions
- ✓ Smaller number allows for faster shutter speed

Focus

- ✓ Continuous focus tracking mode is best since the camera tries to keep the subject in focus
- ✓ Use a focus spot at the center of the lens to help you focus on the subject
- ✓ Look for other camera focus settings, e.g. prevent photo capture if out of focus

Exposure Metering

Used to measure the amount of light

- ✓ Center-weighted - best choice since the subject may not fill the lens
- ✓ Spot - not a good choice because a very dark or very light jersey may confuse the camera
- ✓ For group and portrait photos use the default camera exposure style

ISO

Sensitivity of the sensor

- ✓ For sports, improved photo quality with high ISO is an important camera change
- ✓ High ISO is far better than a blurry photo from a slow shutter speed
- ✓ Test your camera's quality at different ISO settings to understand its capabilities
- ✓ Darker venues need higher ISOs

Use Flash?

Flash, artificial light, helps in darker arenas

- ✓ Is it allowed?
- ✓ Does it bother the athletes? Ask them.
- ✓ Subject must be closer to camera
- ✓ Find a location that slows perceived subject motion

Sports Mode

- ✓ Check if your camera has a "Sports" mode
- ✓ Use it to automatically configure settings
- ✓ Shutter speed, aperture, focus mode ...
- ✓ Extend "Sports" mode to your preferences by understanding what settings it is using

Presentation storytelling

- ✓ Think about your story, is the story about 1 game or about the whole season
- ✓ How important are individual accomplishments vs team accomplishments
- ✓ What is your viewer expecting - 1 minute, 5 minutes, 10 minutes, maybe 3 different short stories
- ✓ Plan and dynamically tweak your plan - a losing team story might shift to teamwork & friends
- ✓ Variety - use multiple styles of photography and perspectives across activities
- ✓ Words - does your story need captions, short video clips or end of season stat sheet
- ✓ Action - is always expected, save some of your best action photos for the end of the story
- ✓ Share - in a style and format that works well for the viewer
 - ✓ A set of ordered photos
 - ✓ A video
 - ✓ Printed
- ✓ Summary - a story delivers a lifetime of memories to the team, friends, family and to those who were never able to attend a game



