

EFFECTIVELY CAPTURE THE MOMENT



TAKING THE SHOT

Effectively capturing a single moment in time should be no accident. Equipping yourself with technique — rather than expensive gear — will help you harness those split-second story-telling moments.

Many photographers can shoot a great still life every time, and it's not uncommon for the ratio of great shots to decrease when people and emotions are introduced. But as soon as action, intensity, an opponent and competition become part of the equation, the best photographers quickly set themselves apart.

Great sports photos are easier to come by for those who follow these four simple tips:

STUDY YOUR PREGAME

There are many predictable occurrences that happen in stop-action photography, especially in high school sports. Someone will most certainly kick a ball in a soccer match or run at a cross country meet. Determine who the key players or matchups are and key on these. They will provide a lot of the action for you. There is a reason Los Angeles Lakers MVP Kobe Bryant has a plethora of cameras following his every move. Seek out locations where the action will take place and go there.



Photo by Wesley Cox

GET FOCUSED

Pre-focusing is a simple technique for you to get clear, stop-action images. Focus the camera to areas where you anticipate the action will take place. By pre-focusing on this area, you can just wait for the action to come to you. As the event unfolds, be keen to those subjects (players) who tend to be in the action most and gravitate toward them. Avoid the right-fielders — and others who play in less predictable spots of action.



Photo by Eli McNutt



PLAY YOUR POSITION

Getting into the proper position is simple. Locate yourself so the subject is moving toward you rather than perpendicular to you. By doing this, you neither have to track (pan) the action nor do you have to pre-focus as much.



Photo by Cameron Bingley

KNOW WHAT TIME IT IS

Adjusting the shutter speed to an appropriate setting (1/250 second or higher for most high school sports) is as fundamental to photography as the “pass, dribble and shoot” is to basketball. Know how the time of exposure affects the visual outcome of the image. To stop the action, use faster shutter speeds. Remember, it happens in a blink of an eye. These tips will help you capture the moments that best tell the story of sports at your school.



Photo by Danny Kern

Sports photos from the COLFAX (CA) HS EVERGREEN yearbook demonstrate how using all four of these principles will yield story-telling photos that capture the essence of performance and competition.



Photo by Sam Rydell

*Contributed by Terry O'Keefe, Yearbook Adviser
Colfax High School, Colfax, CA
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