

Action & Sports Photography



Kent Messamore

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Time & Motion

- We have been discussing composition with Camera & Subject remaining still.
- We now look at time and motion as compositional elements.
- In our composition we select some subjects to remain still while blurring others to show motion.
 - The blur of a baseball in a baseball game.
 - A still bicycle while the background blurs.
- Boat wakes emphasize motion of boat.
- Show Boat going in to frame not out.

Time & Motion

- Faster Shutter Speed freezes motion
- Slower Shutter Speed shows motion blur
- Try taking pictures of falling rain or snow at different shutter speeds:
 - 1 Sec gives streaks of water or snow
 - 1/250 Sec gives individual drops or flakes

Action Photography – Time & Motion



“There is nothing in this world that does not have a decisive moment”

- Henri Cartier-Bresson

Action Photography – Time & Motion

- In every sport there exist points in time where everything pauses:
 - When the pitcher winds up for a throw
 - In basketball when player rises for a dunk
 - When the quarterback drops back for a pass
- Sports photographers must anticipate these dynamic pauses
- And press shutter at precise moment

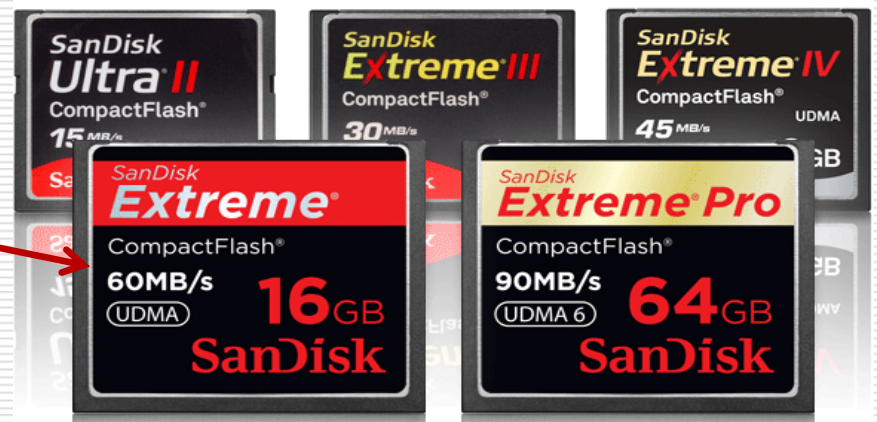
Action Photography – Time & Motion

- ❑ Accomplishing this requires practice & study
- ❑ Take a look not only at your successful shots, but study your failures as well
- ❑ Review Metadata (f/stop, Shutter Speed, ISO)
- ❑ Fast “Burst Rate” of camera will help
 - “Burst Rate” = number of frames camera can take in 1 sec.
 - Top cameras have a Burst rate of 10 – 11 Frames/sec.

Action Photography – Time & Motion

- ❑ How fast you can operate the shutter however is not all that counts.
- ❑ Jpeg or RAW – JPEG is smaller and faster
- ❑ Buffer capacity – How many images before buffer is full
- ❑ Speed of memory card

Note the card speed in mb/sec



Sports Photography

- Know the Sport
- Know what you want to take photos of – a team or an individual, etc.
- Watch the play to learn attack or defense sequences
- Choose your location
- Post Game – Record f/stop, Shutter Speed, ISO on each photo to analyze each photo.

Motocross



- ❑ My first experience with Action photography was trying to shoot Motocross.
- ❑ I thought it would be easy but I had a **lot to learn**

Motocross

- ❑ Focus & Shoot Doesn't work well.
- ❑ If you do you get a lot of shots like this.
- ❑ Panning Your Camera works but it takes practice



Fast
shutter
r
speed



Blur gives
sense of
motion



Slow
shutter
r
speed

Motocross

- ❑ The environment is a **major problem.**
- ❑ Do not change lenses in all the dust.
- ❑ Clean Your camera afterward.





Surf Boarding



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Sports are all about timing

- Learn the sport
 - Basketball - layups, jump shots, free throws, dunks, etc.
 - Football - Runs, Pass, Reception
- Anticipate the action
 - If you wait for the soccer player to head the ball, then press the shutter, the ball probably won't be in the photo.

Location, Location, Location

- ❑ Get close to the action
- ❑ You generally won't be allowed on the playing field
- ❑ There may be designated areas for Photographers
- ❑ You may be shooting from the stands
- ❑ Talk to an official before using flash (Some sports disallow)
- ❑ Local Youth Leagues & High School games are good places to learn rather than pros
 - Easier to get access to games & positions on field
 - Smaller lenses and less equipment required to capture shots

Equipment

- SLR Camera with a good burst rate
- Telephoto Zoom lens (100 – 400) f.5.6 or better
 - Shoot with Aperture wide open
 - To give you as much light as possible
 - To give you the fastest shutter speed you can get
 - To isolate the subject and blur the background
- You live with the background that is there at the time
- Monopod – to hold heavy lenses.

Baseball

- Hard to shoot
 - Action is unpredictable
 - Much of field is out of range
 - Night baseball is poorly lit
- Good shots
 - Pitcher throwing
 - Batters batting
 - Catcher catching
- When ball hit – Find play, aim camera, focus, fire – too late.
If looking for particular shot – Zone focus



Basketball

- Easiest sport to shoot
 - Two objects (Nets) where the action is
 - Limited shots – jump shots, lay ups, blocks, dribbling, defense
 - Zone focus – focus on net and wait for action to come to you
- Worst lighting you can get
- You can get away with slower shutter speeds by selecting decisive moment – Drive for a layup & they pause at top
- Fast lens (large aperture), 80 – 85 mm optimal

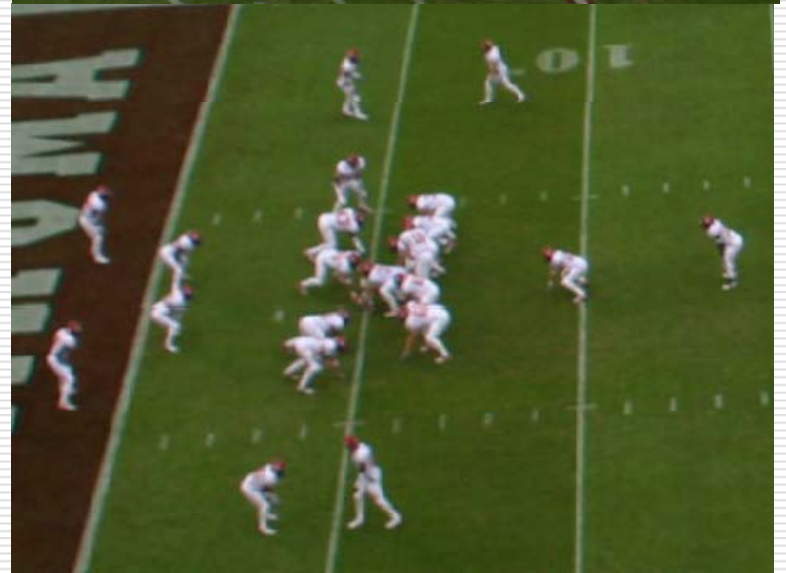
Basketball

- ❑ Position yourself
- ❑ Anticipate the moment



Football

- Easy to shoot
 - Action is frequently predictable
 - Much of field is out of range
 - Night baseball is poorly lit
- Large aperture, 100 – 400 Lens
- Good shots – Get attacking team coming toward you
 - Quarterback throwing the football
 - Runners running
 - Receivers catching – Hard to get



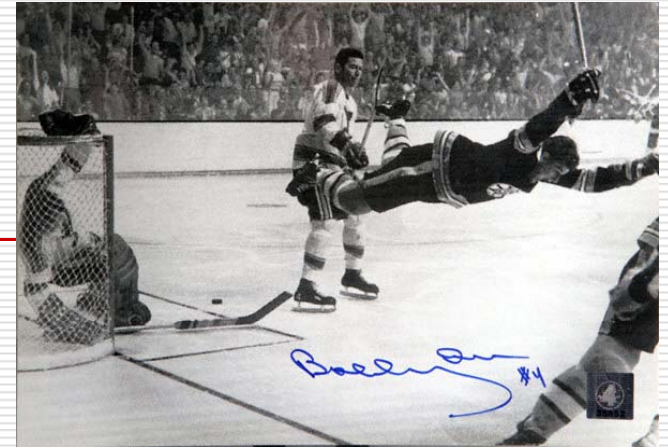
Soccer

- ❑ Rapid changes in direction
- ❑ Auto focus required to follow action
- ❑ Large aperture, 100 – 400 Lens
- ❑ Good shots – Get attacking team coming toward you
 - Headers (takes a lot of practice because of timing)
 - Traps
 - Corner Kicks
 - Goalie saves (from behind the net)
 - Players dribbling the ball



Hockey

- ❑ Like Soccer, rapid changes in direction
- ❑ Smaller contained area than soccer
- ❑ Auto focus required to follow action
- ❑ Large aperture, 80 – 200 mm Lens
- ❑ Overexpose by at least 1 stop to get white ice.
- ❑ Lighting is poor & you may be shooting through glass
- ❑ Good shots – Get attacking team coming toward you
 - Face-offs
 - Skaters with the puck
 - Goalie saves



Lacrosse



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Roller Derby

□ Flash is very difficult



Emotion

- Shots without emotion are “Ho-Hum” No story!
- Most tight action shots of players will be emotional
- Look for emotion in the game
 - In the players on the side lines
 - In the coaches
 - In the fans
 - In the winning team after the game is over
 - In the losing team after the game is over

The Thrill of Victory and the Agony of Defeat!

Some YouTube videos

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aq1fg7dV4nE>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5rfWu5qJSNQ&feature=related>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y2au7DIEv3I&feature=related>