

Shooting Tennis Photography

As always, what you are about to read is ONLY A GUIDE; you must make decisions about the practicality of this information as you shoot because the light may be changing.

1. Be professional at all times! This rule supersedes all others.
2. Shoot with the sun to your back if the sun is out, but only after you've chosen the best shooting locations. You must be very still so that you do not distract the players. If it's overcast, you'll have no severe shadows, but your contrast will be very low. Add a yellow filter in front of the lens if you're shooting B&W on a very cloudy day.
3. Work with the other photographers from your school. It will make for better coverage if you will shoot from different locations around the court. Do not try to communicate during a match.
4. (Almost) always shoot to freeze the action first and to get depth of field second. You want to try to minimize the grain by using the lowest ISO you can. Higher ISO films will allow you a greater depth-of-field because they will allow a smaller aperture. The greater depth-of-field will allow a greater margin of error in focusing the fast moving subjects. The exception follows...
5. Vary the number of people in a photograph. Some shots should be singles and others should involve multiple people in the shot. This isn't easy to do in tennis so you must watch for the groupings - your best bets are in the pre-match instructions by the coach. As always, remember the rule that odd numbers of people are generally more intriguing visually than even numbers of subjects.
6. Take a variety of lenses and use all that you take. This way you can isolate your team's individuals for some shots and yet incorporate the concept of "team" in others. Don't overdo any particular type unless another photographer is shooting a different lens at a different location, even then you would be wise to change lenses.
7. Look for that emotional shot that says, "I won!"
8. "Works well with others" If you are the only shooter from your school you would be wise to talk to any photographers from other schools and try to make an agreement to shoot their players if they will shoot ours. Give them the name of your advisor and the school's address and request the same information from them.
9. Shoot from a variety of different camera angles if possible. Sitting is what you will do the bulk of the time; dress accordingly.

