

Shooting Volleyball Photography

Grimm C- 6

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 isn't the same in all high school gyms. Remember, this is only a guide.

1. Be professional at all times ! This rule supersedes all others. Follow the lead of any pro photographers as well as the demands of coaches and security personnel.

2. Keep ready at all times and observe all areas of the action. Watch the action on the court and only allow yourself to be distracted when the play is momentarily over. During these interludes, timeouts, changing of players, etc. think about shots of players on the bench and coaches.

3. Communicate with the coaches and referees before play begins. Before the game begins is when you want to talk to the coach about getting or copying a roster. Most all coaches have spares made up in advance for reporters and scorers. You give this roster to the writer or the yearbook/newspaper sponsor along with your photos. Ask the ladies working the net where they will allow you to shoot as this varies a bit from person to person. Never disagree or argue; you make life more miserable for later photographers

4. Shoot with the medium telephotos if possible. An 85mm lens is excellent for volleyball because it allows you to get closer than your actual location and is an excellent portrait lens for coaches and players on the side as well. In the time prior to the game calculate the lowest ISO you can shoot and still freeze the action with sufficient depth-of- field, rely on your meter and your mind. And don't be afraid to ask the pro near you what his reading is!

5. Never use a direct flash mounted on the camera! You'll blind the player(s) momentarily and irritate the coach immensely.

6. Always shoot to freeze the action first and to get depth of field second. Shoot at 800 or 1600 ISO. This is necessary because the light is fairly low relative to what we generally shoot. Higher ISOs will allow you a greater depth-of-field because it will allow a smaller aperture. The greater d.o.f. will allow a greater margin of error in focusing the moving subjects. If you are at f/2.8 and focused at the net you have more d.o.f. than you have f/2 focused at the same point. Also note whether there are lights out overhead and avoid shooting under those areas where they aren't working.

7. If you shoot film at two different ISOs, be sure you know which roll is which.

8. Shoot from a variety of different camera angles. Shoot beneath the net, at the back end of the court, from beside the bench and take a shot or two from the stands when you aren't courtside. Sit down so that you are less of a distraction and you can hand-hold a slower shutter speed. The best photo is the shot of your team's players going high above the net on the opposite side from you and hammering the ball back past the opposition.

9. If you have more than one camera use different films and/or different lenses. If they are the same types of mounts/cameras you can change the lenses quickly and get various shots with different films. If you have a motor drive or winder be sure it has fresh batteries !

10. Dress well, but comfortably. The temperature is always fine, but you are representing us as well as yourself. Look good, be relaxed

11. Always shoot the plays and not the players. Our team will show up most often anyway, but never pass a good shot because the other team made the great play !

12. You might try shooting "safe" in the first half and then "go for it" in the second half trying to get something really unique.

13. If something happens that will prevent you from shooting the game or prevent you shooting the entire game, get your film and camera to another photographer.