

Shooting Swimming

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 pools. 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 logic.

2. Typically this is the hardest or second most difficult sport to shoot in the water. There are scores of wonderful shots to be had here, but you are at a disadvantage if you don't have a long lens and a motor drive. Autofocus lenses are a huge advantage!

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. Never use a direct flash mounted on the camera! You'll blind or distract the swimmers momentarily, irritate the coach immensely, and the flash will light up the irregular surface in a way that will make your subject hard to find.

6. Communicate with the coaches and referees before play begins. Before the meet begins is when you want to talk to the coach about getting a list of the events and swimmers if one has been printed. You give this roster to the writer or the yearbook/newspaper sponsor along with your photos.

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

8. Shoot with the medium telephotos as well. An 85mm lens is excellent for swimming if your team is in an outside lane because it allows you to get closer than your actual location. In the time prior to a night meet 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 !

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. Shoot the team members who are waiting to swim and who are assisting by counting laps, keeping times, etc. Watch for emotion shots from them as well.

12. DIVING IS HIGHLY VISUAL!! We haven't had divers in a while, but perhaps this will be the year.

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.