

STANLEY LEARY

People & Location Photographer

Sports Photography

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May 2006

Client List

Associated Builders Contractors of Georgia American
Die Technology
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Country Magazine
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East Carolina University
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ESPN.COM
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Fulcrum Construction
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Georgia Council of Chiropractic
Georgia Southern University
Georgia State University
Georgia Tech
Georgia Trial Lawyers Association
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Hollywood Reporter
Home Channel News
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Kenyon College
Ladder to the Moon
Landmark Christian School
Lifeway Christian Resources
Lind-Bergeron
Marist Catholic School
Media2K
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Medical Economics Magazine
Merchandise Mart
Mississippi State University
Molloy Communications
Morning Glory Farms
MSI International
National Education Association
National Basketball Association
North American Mission Board
North Carolina State University
Old Dominion University
Ohio State University

Sports Photography



Georgia Tech's #34 Jordan Crews pitching during play for the NCAA Super Regional taking place at the Russ Chandler Stadium in Atlanta, Georgia, June 11, 2005.

Today the local paper must devote more space to the sports section because of the increased interest in sports and not just professional or college sports, but the local high schools and more. From the Super Bowl to T-Ball at the local park people are watching, playing and photographing sports.

Professional sports photographers are trained to look for the peak action or reaction. When this is combined with a story telling moment the photo becomes the cover of the magazine.



Georgia Tech's #5 Tyler Greene slides into home past Tennessee's #44 J. P. Arencibia and is called safe by Jeff Henrichs during play for the NCAA Super Regional taking place at the Russ Chandler Stadium in Atlanta, Georgia.

When choosing a shooting position check out the background. Watch for distracting signs on the walls of the baseball field. Shoot at a slightly higher angle to make the infield grass into the background. Use a shallow depth of field to blur the background. Setting the aperture at f/5.6 gives a shallow area that is in focus behind the player. Using f/16 may make too much of the background in focus and distracting.



Wake Forest's #55 Kyle Visser fouls Georgia Tech's #24 Marvin Lewis during play at the Alexander Memorial Coliseum in Atlanta, Georgia.

Many of the best sports photos capture the competition between the individual players. A shot of a runner sliding into second with the defensive player throwing to first beats the photo of just a batter hitting the ball. The great photo is often of the tag, or missed tag, at home plate.

The ball, the offensive player, the defensive player all caught in the same photo is the beginning of a great sports photo. The peak moment is the next part of the puzzle, but the real icing on the cake is expressions. A picture of Georgia Tech's Isma'il Muhammad slamming

Making great story telling

Presbyterian Today
 Princeton University
 Reinhardt College
 Robert Rytter & Associates
 Roni Hicks & Associates
 Sears & Roebuck
 St. John & Partners
 St. Joseph Catholic School
 Southern Catholic College
 Southern Seminary
 Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
 SouthTrust Bank
 Sports Illustrated
 Stetson University
 Summit National Bank
 Sunny Crest Publishing
 SYNC Magazine
 The Community Institute, Inc.
 The Foundation Center
 The Georgia Bulletin
 The Saint Joseph's Mercy Foundation
 Thione International, Inc
 Travel Weekly Magazine
 Union University
 United Methodist News Service
 University Of Alabama Birmingham
 University of Maryland
 University Of Michigan
 University of Nations, Kona, Hawaii
 University Of Tennessee At Martin
 University of Virginia
 Upper Deck
 Vindigo
 Virginia Commonwealth University
 Volleyball Magazine
 Wake Forest University
 WireImage
 Woodward Academy
 World Council Of Churches
 World Journalism Institute
 Yamacraw

sports photographs isn't only for the pros. Today's advanced cameras make it much easier to make great sports. You can follow focus on an athlete with auto focus cameras and fire three, six, even eight frames per second and most will be in sharp focus. Prior to these technological advances in equipment it took great skill to keep a fast moving athlete in focus.

With many types of photography simple, basic equipment is all that is needed. Sports photography is a whole other ball game, if you'll pardon the pun. Using a normal 50mm lens the athletes are just specs in the viewfinder. Getting physically close enough to the subjects for outstanding photographs is impractical. To span the distance special lenses are required; long, telephoto lenses that bring the action closer.



Tennessee's #19 Luke Hochevar pitches against Georgia Tech during play at the Russ Chandler Stadium in Atlanta, Georgia.

The PGA requires credentialed professional photographers to have at least a telephoto lens that are at least 300mm. That's the equivalent of 6X binoculars.

So, the first thing a parent needs to photograph their child playing a sport is a SLR (single lens reflex) camera that accepts interchangeable lenses. The next need is a long lens such as a 300mm or 400mm. If the sport is played outside during the daylight hours the

one early over NC State's Gavin Grant will likely make the cover of *Sports Illustrated*. This slam dunk ran over and over on ESPN highlight reel of the week.



Georgia Tech's #2 Isma'il Muhammad slams one early over NC State's #11 Gavin Grant during play at the Alexander Memorial Coliseum in Atlanta, Georgia.

Another little trick that can make the photo of your little athlete look like it belongs in *Sports Illustrated*—a low perspective. The lower you are to the ground the more the players look as if they are flying when they jump or are run. The low perspective makes the distance from their feet to the ground appear greater than it is.

If you watch the sidelines of the college and professional games you will notice most photographers are sitting or are on their knees. We like to see our athletes like Greek Gods. They are super heroes and role models we lift up in our society for all the effort they demonstrate.

Before photographing the next game look through the newspaper sports pages or browse Sports Illustrated. Don't just look at the professional sport photographers pictures, note where the pros positioned themselves.

Watch a team for a while and you can anticipate what they will probably do next.

Often great sports photographs are made by amateur

amount of money for this long lens is a few hundred of dollars. If indoor or night time sports are the subject the same length lens can cost thousands.

No matter how advanced the camera nor how long the lens just pointing and pushing the button will get only a few good photos. The outstanding photos are made by those who are able to anticipate the action. One of the best sports to start practicing sports photography is baseball.

When your child is at bat you should position yourself near the third base line if you child's a lefty. Be near the first base line if they bat right handed. Watch the pitcher to anticipate the batter's swing. You could almost put the camera on a tripod and wait for the right moment, however, unless you are behind a fence don't use a tripod. It can be dangerous to the athletes. You *can* use a monopod. This helps eliminate camera movement.

If there is a runner on first focus on second base for the possible steal. Pre-focus and framed the photo just wait for the shortstop or second baseman to run to the bag with the ball while the runner slides into second. If you're shooting from the first base side straight down the path of first to second base line you can might get a double play when the defensive player tags second and throws the ball to first.

photographers, simply because they *don't* know the tricks of the trade. That's right. They are not locked into a formula of how to cover a sport. This leads me to my last suggestion. While it's usually good to know the rules, don't be bound by them - be a risk taker.

Be a storyteller. Get to know people and let them know you. Telling a visual story through your pictures is fine. But don't be locked into thinking only visually. It is when you immerse yourself into the situation (a sport, in this case) that you begin to move outside the box and tell the story you *feel* and not merely see.



Georgia Tech's #45 P. J. Daniels leaves the Samford players in the dust during second quarter play at Bobby Dodd Stadium in Atlanta, Georgia.

Give Stanley a call for your next project at [770.998.3504](tel:770.998.3504) or email him at stanley@stanleyleary.com.