

12: Sports photography

**Sport Journalism
Beijing Sport University**

Dr. Simon Ličen

1

Recap and announcements

- Hard news in sport journalism: doping/PED; match-fixing; mega-events; bribery & corruption; athlete safety; sexual assaults; differences in sexual development
- Today: Sports photography
- Tomorrow: Exam review + group exercise
 - Prepare questions!
- Thursday, Friday: Presentations
- Monday, 19:00-20:30: Exam

2

Content

- Image composition
- Image captions
- Discussion/activity

3

Working with photographers

- Photojournalists: Conceive & shoot themselves
- Photographers: Assigned to tasks by journalists, editors
 - Games, events: record action
 - What is the story (retirement?), what do you need? **Communicate** and **think pictures!!!**
- Assignment sheet: event, time, location, specifics (access, parking, agreements, etc.)

4

Image Composition

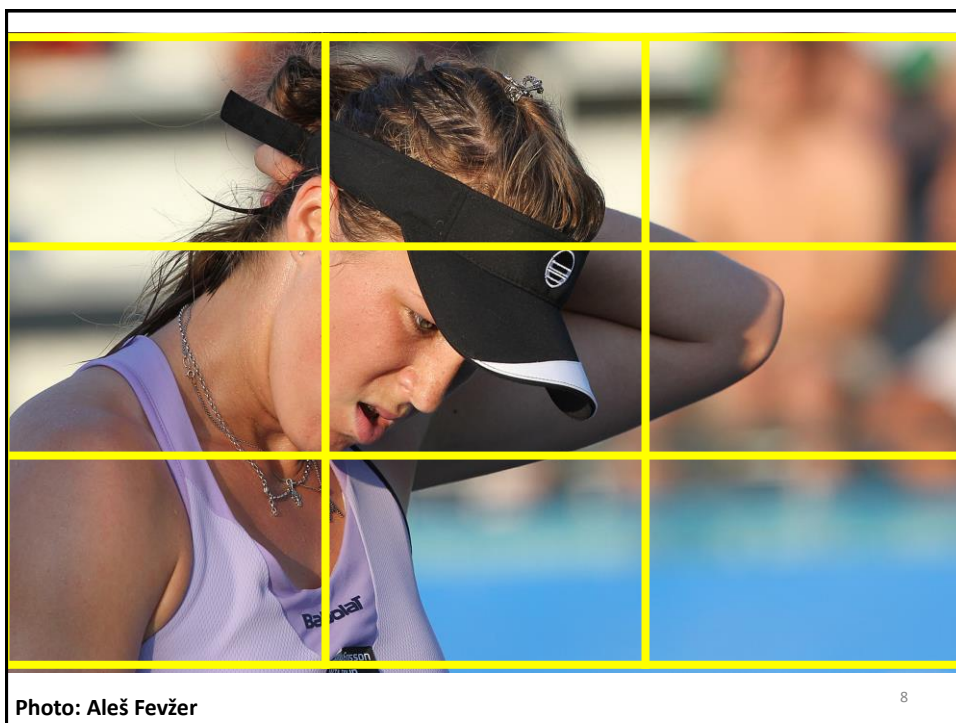
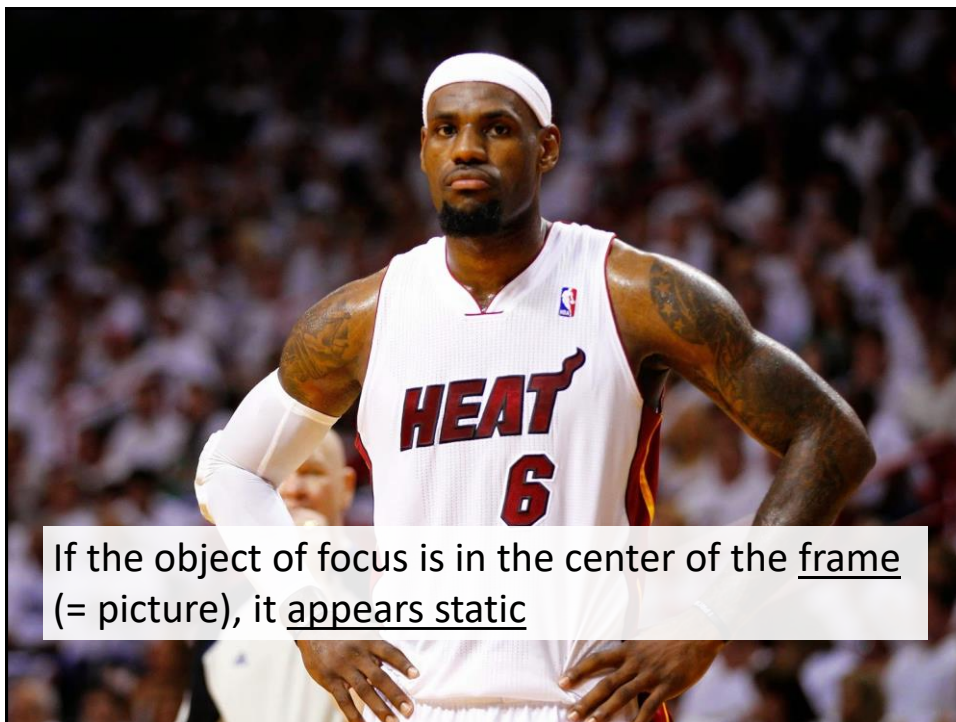
- *How* to shoot what you want to shoot:
- **Composition:** Placement or arrangement of visual elements in a work of art, as distinct from the subject
- Visual material instrumental to sport
 - Still pictures: Internet (websites + social), print
 - Moving pictures: Internet, TV (*still instrumental*)

5

Selected Composition Principles

1. Rule of thirds
2. Fill the frame
3. Level
4. Image orientation

6



Rule of Thirds

- Use two horizontal + two vertical lines to split image into nine sections
- Place subject on these imaginary lines or intersections
- Move the subject away from the center and **balance** it with everything else in the scene (incl. contrasting color, light)

9

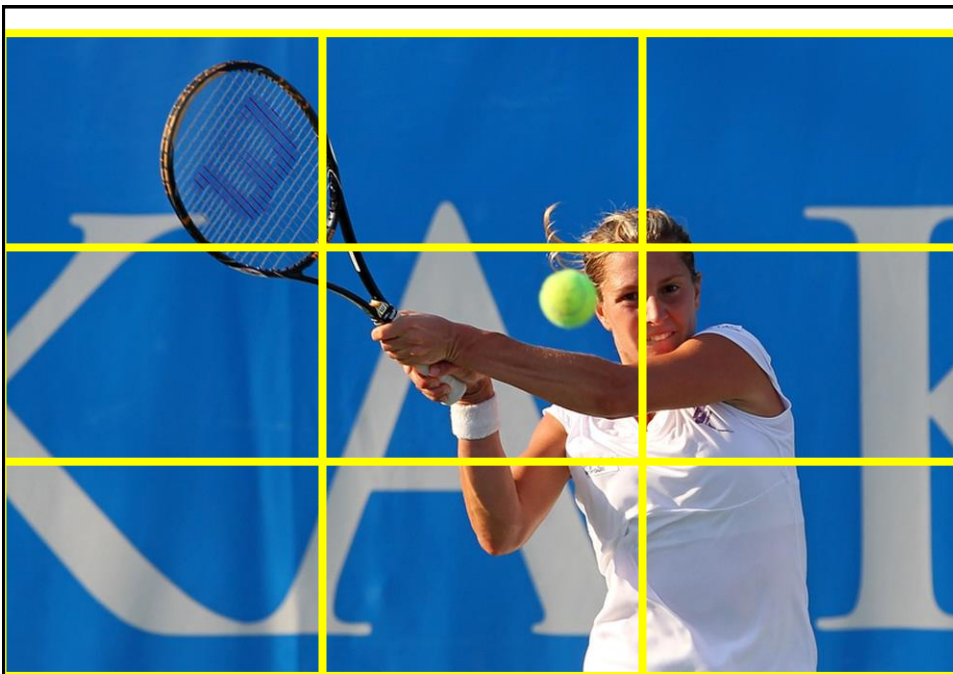


Photo: Aleš Fevžer

* 10

Fill the Frame

- Keep it simple; focus/zoom onto **what is important (relevant)** and omit the rest
- **Fill the frame** by leaving little or no space around the subject:
 - Reduces distraction
 - Allows emergence of details (even at the expense of cropping out others)

11



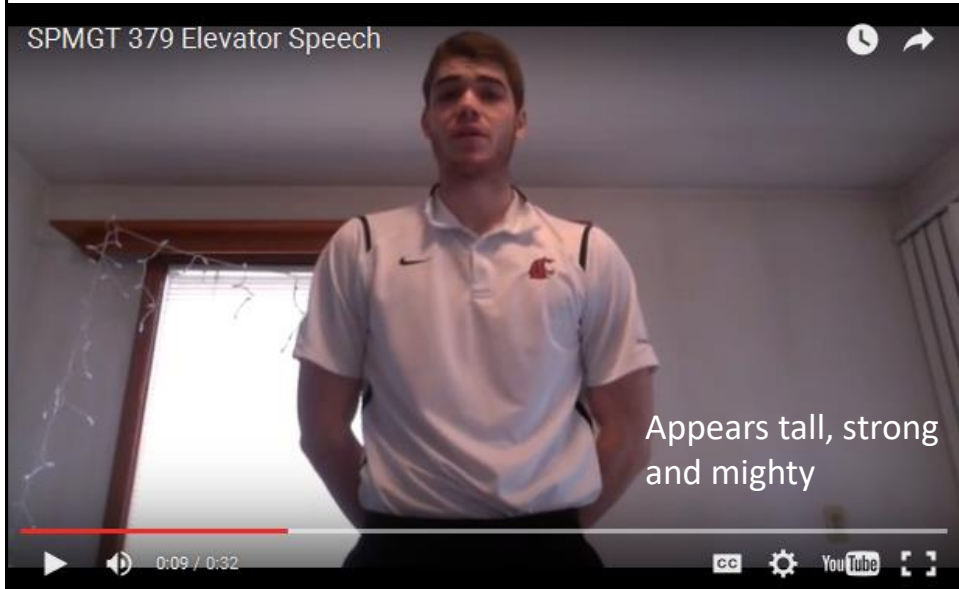


Level

- **Where to capture the best possible images?**
- Same level as action (e.g., sidelines)
- Catch faces, emotions, actions



Avoid worm's-eye view



Avoid bird's eye view



Exception: Panorama as an establishing shot



**Avoid
objects
growing
from
people's
bodies**



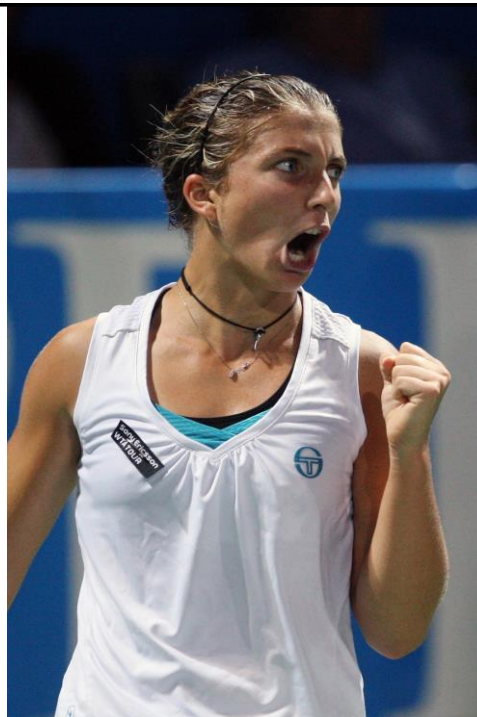
18

Image Orientation

- Shoot **portrait** ↑ only for up-close action and **landscape** ↔ for action far away
 - Landscape ↔ helps with cropping and aspect ratio of an image
- **Video** record: Landscape

19

Portrait ↑



20



Landscape ⇔

21



Also landscape!

22

Action Photos

- **Story angle?**
 - **Anticipate.** Where the ball is going to **end up** = where the action is going to be. Shoot there
 - Alt.: **Shoot series of actions** – multiple frames before, during, after action
 - (Individual) sports: Action shot or celebration?

23

Suggested Reading

- Twenty Composition Techniques:
<https://petapixel.com/2016/09/14/20-composition-techniques-will-improve-photos/>
(O'Carroll, 2016)
 - Incl. golden ratio, lines and geometric shapes, etc., and most mentioned today

24

Selected Composition Principles

1. Rule of thirds
 - Avoid the center; subject on 1/3 lines or inters.
2. Fill the frame
3. Level
 - Eye-level. Worm's eye or bird's eye only on spec. o.
4. Image orientation
 - Landscape over portrait

25

Photo Captions

26



Pictures

- **Yesterday's newspaper is today's history;
Today's online stories are tomorrow's history!**
- People ten years from now – or 10,000 miles away – may not recognize the person, people in the picture, or the **context**

Captions

- **Who** is in a picture;
- **What** is happening;
- **When, where** the photo took place;
- **Why** it is newsworthy, significant
- **“Rule of five:”** If up to 5 people in the picture and involved in the action: **Each** should be **identified** by name

29

Captions

- Explain what people **cannot** see by just looking at the photo – the **context**
- “Coach X poses at a news conference”
 - We can see that. **Why** are they at a news conference? What is important, unique, newsworthy about this photo?
 - *“Coach Lee prepares to watch game tapes and take notes for next week’s game before meeting with the team Sunday evening”*

30

Captions

- Make sure that the number of names in the caption matches the number of people in the photo
- **Make sure to spell names correctly**
- Describe action in present tense (“...poses...”)
- File (save) captions with pictures for future reference

31

Prepare a caption for the following picture(s):

32



Recap

- Image composition: rule of thirds, fill the frame, level, image orientation
- Captions: Tomorrow's history
 - Who, what, where, when
 - *Why* is the picture newsworthy, significant
- Rule of five
- Match names to faces
- Confirm spelling