

QUICK TIPS

Can you take the team photo?

You have the newest, coolest camera of all the parents. Sooner or later someone asks if you can take the team photo. Excitement soon turns to panic as you realize you have no real clue how to get an excellent shot!

Here are some basic survival tips for when you get asked to do the honors.

First, ask what shots they have in mind. Do they want the standard group shot and individual poses? If so, get your hands on a previous year's photo and look at how the team was posed. How do they want your pics delivered? Email, posted to a website, burned to CD? Agree up front to what you can and cannot provide so there are no issues later.

Second, ask where the pictures are going to be taken. Look specifically for a background or area that is free of distractions. Nothing ruins a picture like a billboard partly visible behind the team, or a streetlight sticking out of someone's head! An open field, a plain wall, bleachers anything simple will work.

Next, qualify the space you are using. Can you set up far enough back to get the whole picture, or do you need your wide-angle lens? You want to use a normal to slight telephoto setting for the most pleasing proportions.

If the picture is outdoors, where will the Sun be when the picture is taken? What you do not want is sunlight from directly overhead or in front of the team. Shadows will be horrible under eyes and chins and the subjects most likely will be squinting from the brightness.

Finally, find someone to help you organize the players. This person will help identify the players, get them to the right spot, and help

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control the group.

Outdoors or indoors, use a flash. Not the dinky one built into your camera, but a more powerful external one. The flash will fill in any stray shadows, even out the color and lighting in faces, and give you a more pleasing contrast.

Ready, now relax. You are not shooting for National Geographic or Sports Illustrated. You are helping a team remember the fun they had. Line them up, make sure you can see everyone's face, and take several team shots in a row. From there let your helper bring the individual players to you and take at least two or three shots of each person in whatever pose you like. Just make them somewhat consistent!

When you are done, upload the pictures to your computer and deliver the results. Now sit back and get ready for more requests to take great pictures!

For more information on team photography including action shots and selling your work, please contact me!