

Creating intensity for Under Armour

Shilo director Andre Stringer and cinematographer Max Goldman recently collaborated on a series of commercials for Under Armour. The campaign includes 60-second TV/Web spots and three individual brand films with world-class athletes Lindsey Vonn, Monica Hargrove and Lauren Cheney.

"With each new step in our collaborations with Under Armour, we intensify our focus on authenticity," says Stringer. "For this campaign, we've once again gone deep inside the vigorous training and personal motivations of these superior athletes."

The spots were shot on KODAK VISION3 500T Color Negative Film 5219 and 7219 and KODAK VISION2 50D Color Negative Film 5201 and 7201 at locations ranging from the Denver Police Academy to various gyms and sports stadiums in the northeastern United States.

"When Andre explained that we were going for a run-and-gun shooting style, I knew film was our only choice," says Goldman. "When you shoot in this style you never know what an athlete may do; you need to be ready for anything. The camera has to be free to move with the same agility as the athlete, so you cannot be overly concerned with exact exposure. You need to know that you have the latitude of a film stock, which allows you to stick with these tremendous athletes."

For the 35mm sequences, Goldman chose the ARRI 435 camera package to enable him to create a variety of effects. "On this campaign, we used every trick in the book," recalls Goldman. "We used the out-of-phase box and threw the shutter out of sync, which gave us a streaking look on the highlights. We also turned off the motor and used a hand-cranked wheel that gave us some very abnormal motion."

"Sometimes I would quickly turn the camera off and on during a shot. The 435 gives you really great flash frames when it starts rolling after being off. We jockeyed frame rates with the camera speeds switch. It overexposed as it sped up or it went dark as it slowed down."

The filmmakers also used the Clairmont Image Shaker, which gave even more intensity to the shots of sprinters.

"Sometimes we would use all these tricks at once. There would be five pairs of hands on camera helping me use all these effects simultaneously," says Goldman. "All the mentioned effects can only be done with film, and most are unique to the 435."

The filmmakers switched to the Aaton A-Minima for Super 16mm capture.

"The A-Minima was really a camera for Andre, because he could direct the 35mm camera and keep the A-Minima tucked under his arm," says Goldman. "Whenever he saw something happening he could capture it instantly. I think the A-Minima footage feels so free and natural, and gives us those unadulterated documentary moments, something we couldn't achieve with our 'A' camera."

Footage was transferred and color graded by Tom Poole of Company 3 in New York. Shilo's Nathan Caswell handled editing before all spots and athlete films were finished in HD at Shilo's New York studio.

"Our gritty, intimate athlete portraits allow viewers to experience the intensity of the work they put in, and see what it really takes to be an Under Armour competitor," adds Stringer.

Each film can be seen at www.youtube.com/underarmour.

Key Data at a glance

Director	Andre Stringer
Cinematographer	Max Goldman
Cameras	ARRI 435 (for 35mm sequences) Aaton A-Minima (for Super 16mm)
Film stock	KODAK VISION3 500T 5219/7219 KODAK VISION2 50D 5201/7201
Image transfer	Company 3, New York
Colorist	Tom Poole