

Bob Martin, a British sports photographer who has an impressive collection of more than 60 national and international prizes to his name.



Hi, there! My name is Bob Martin, I'm a sports photographer.

I try to take different pictures to what the average photographer does... or the run of the mill photographer does. I try to stand out from the other photographers by finding angles that will produce special content....

You know, I like that my work is a bit artistic, perhaps; I try to find pictures that wire agencies aren't producing.

This picture here was shot in Athens at the Paralympics.... It's one of my all-time favourite pictures.

It shows Javier Torres, a paralympic swimmer, at the start of his race. He's left his prosthetic legs behind next to the chair which is the great thing.

There's a funny story about this: when I shot the picture, I was really excited by... the pattern of the water around the swimmer and the way the water was refracting... and it was making it look like the pool was cracking.

So, I was at the other end of the pool, photographing multiple swimmers... swimming with this crackling, if you like, around the swimmer.

I walked this Javier at the other end of the pool and starting taking his tracksuit off, and took off these prosthetic legs and lay them graphically next to his chair.

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And I was like “Oh, my God, I'm about to miss one of the greatest picture I could ever have taken!”

So, I was in the roof, which took a lot of negotiation, we had to write letters to the organising committee, we had fill out health and safety forms even back in those days... and we had to wear a harness so, I was... clicking, trying to get back to the other end of the pool which is, if you imagine this is the whole pool, there was walkways going down, and there some cross walkways and I had to go down here, like this, round the corner to get back to the start line.

So I was rushing round trying as fast as I could, whilst being safe, to get back to above this guy... who'd taken his prosthetic legs off and was preparing to dive. And I actually missed it, I got there too late.

And he dived in and I thought:

“Christ, I’ve just missed one of the greatest pictures I could ever have taken.”

But, as luck would happen, they had false-started.

So, I managed to shoot this frame.

I was lucky enough to be there.

I was lucky enough to have made the final moment.

So I was not actually late for the best picture of my career.