

From ISO 100 to the Max in 35mm



Kodak's new and improved Gold color-print film family features new technology, beautiful photos and a new high-speed member—Gold Max

by Jack & Sue Drafa

Amidst all the excitement generated by the latest digital cameras and the Advanced Photo System, new and improved versions of conventional 35mm film continue to be introduced. At PMA recently, Kodak announced several new films for both amateur and professional photographers, and the first to reach our doorstep was the family of Kodak Gold consumer films.

As film reviewers for *Photographic* for many years, we have seen dozens of new films introduced every year. We often wonder if there will ever be an end to the improvements that can be made to film. We sure hope not, because each improvement makes picture taking better and better. Most of the improvements we see involve tweaking the dye couplers, stabilizers or inhibitors so the different

layers keep to themselves during processing. Understanding the chemical changes made to each new emulsion almost requires a doctorate in chemical engineering. We decided to skip most of the jargon, put the films to the test and present you with our findings.

The returning members of the Kodak Gold family, 100, 200 and 400, have been improved using "Colorsharp," a color-management technology patented by Kodak. This spectral sensitization allows these films to record colors more accurately with increased sharpness and saturation. These films feature a wide exposure latitude from two stops underexposure to three stops overexposure. They are also less sensitive to processing variations, which enables photofinishers to provide more consistent results.

GOLD 100

When the sun is out and there isn't much action, then this is the emulsion you will want to use. It has the finest grain pattern and will make the best

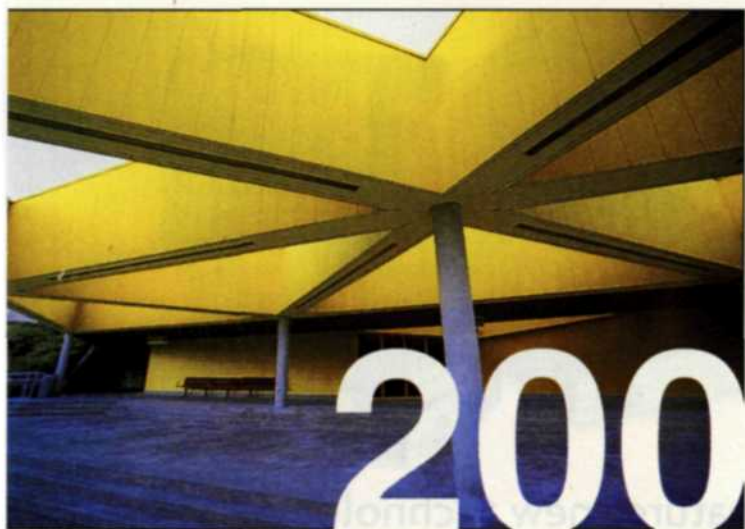


ALL PHOTOS BY JACK AND SUE DRAFAHL

enlargements. You might take this film with you on a family vacation and capture the sunlight streaking across majestic mountains, colorful flowers in fragrant bloom or even take flash pictures of your family. Although rated at ISO 100, the exposure latitude with this film allows you to expose it from ISO 12-400 and achieve great results!

GOLD 200

As the action starts to speed up, or it becomes overcast and the lighting drops to cloudy bright, you may want to load this film in your camera. The jump from ISO 100 to ISO 200 may not seem like a lot, but if you are shooting action, the increased film speed will reduce movement by 100%. This may mean the difference of a



slight blur on ISO 100 to razor-sharp images with ISO 200. This film can be used for most any photo situation as its exposure latitude almost guarantees perfection.



GOLD 400

When the kids are chasing the dog, who is chasing the cat, who has eyes for the bird, you will probably need Gold 400 to capture it all on film. With a film speed 4X greater than the ISO 100 film, you can shoot pictures in deep shade, in full sunlight or record high-speed action. The trade-off is a slight increase in grain over Gold 200, but it still makes excellent enlargements.

GOLD MAX

The newest member of the family, Kodak Gold Max, takes the worry out of film-speed choices. Although no film speed will show on the box, this ISO 800 film is "self-adjusting." The film has such a wide exposure latitude that it produces great results from ISO 50-3200! With that kind of latitude, it allows you take great pictures in almost any situation. We think this new Max film should be called "auto-exposure" film!

Top left and right: New Gold 100 provides rich, beautiful colors for nature close-ups—and all subjects when the sun is out. **Above:** Gold 200 is great for shooting when clouds cover the sun, producing bright colors even on dull days. **Below:** Rated at ISO 100, new Gold 100 has sufficient latitude to produce really nice prints from frames exposed from EI 12-400. New Gold Max (rated at 800) yields good images at speeds from EI 50-3200.



ISO 12



ISO 100



ISO 400

Below: Gold 200 produces rich colors.
Right: For tricky lighting and subjects in shade, Gold 400 is ideal.

There are going to be situations where you want to take pictures indoors, and the use of electronic flash is inappropriate. When we tested the Gold Max emulsion, we photographed our daughter, Kristy, as she played trumpet in Pacific University's symphonic band concert. We probably could have used a flash with a slower film, but she would have disowned us on the spot. It was bad

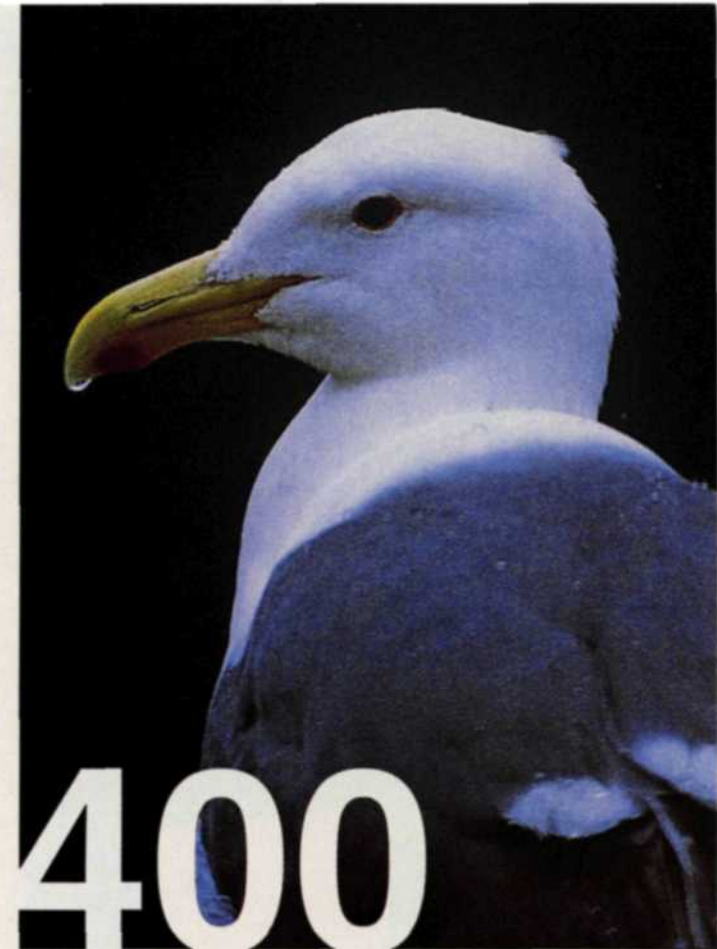
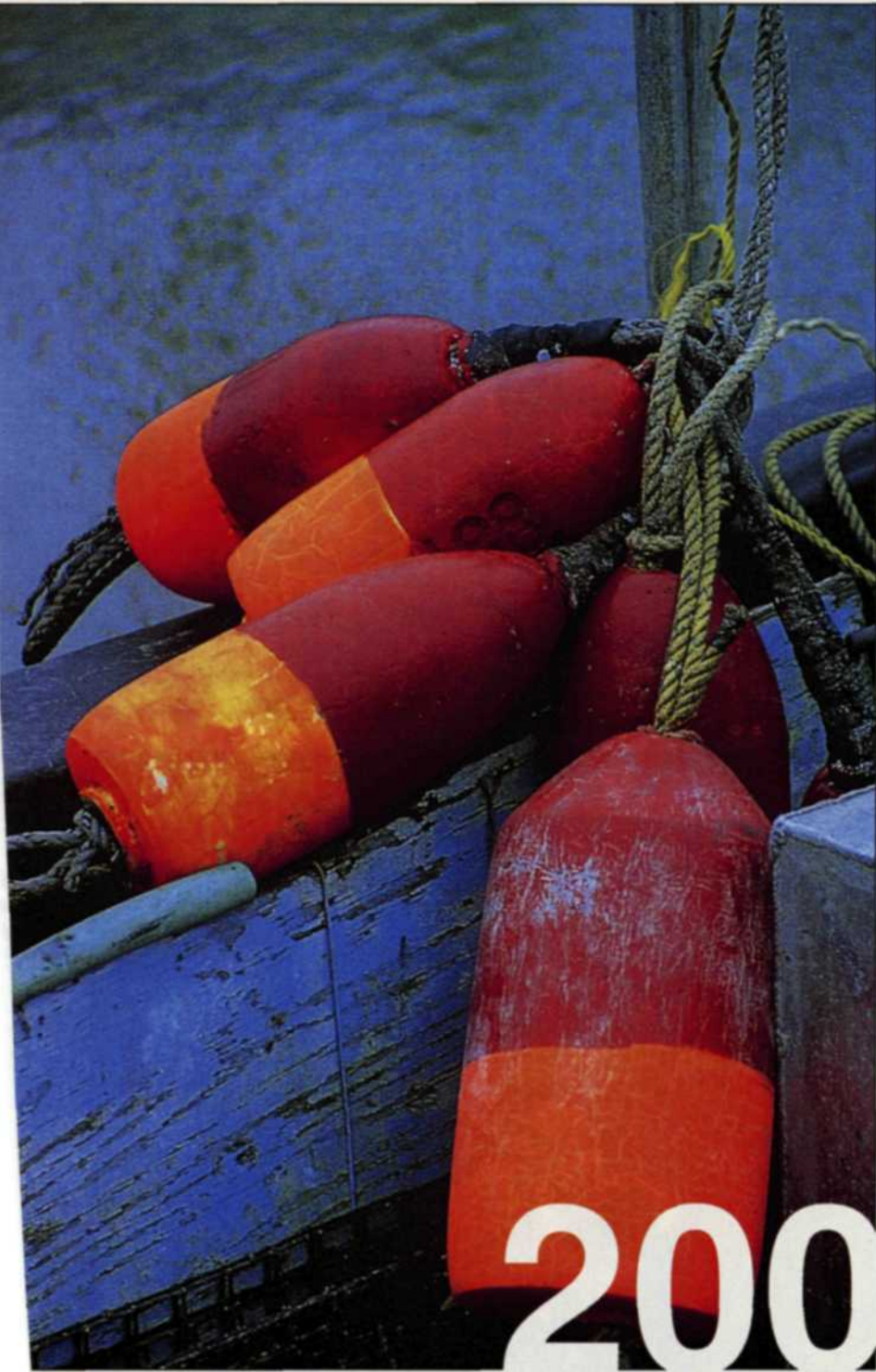
enough that her parents were constantly taking pictures of her every event, but to disrupt the concert with constant strobe flashing was totally uncool. The Max film allowed us to photograph several of the musicians without alienating our daughter.

400

Weddings are also a great opportunity for selecting Gold Max. When you use slower film, you need to use a flash to record the moment. When that happens, the professional wedding photographer is sure to give you a nasty look every time your flash goes off. Gold Max has enough film speed to allow you the freedom to capture the scene without the irritating interruption of flash.

Another nice aspect of the Gold Max film is that you don't have to worry about the color temperature of the light source. You can shoot under daylight, tungsten, fluorescent, all without filters and still get good prints. The trade-off is larger grain than with the Gold 400. Freedom still has its price.

To make the best use of the Gold family films you should take them all on your next family outing. Let's say you are taking your family to the county fair and it is bright and sunny, perfect for a day of fun. If you want group photos in full sunlight, you would be fine with Gold 100. When you want to capture the kids enjoying the rides, you may want to use Gold 200 or 400 depending on the lighting and speed of the ride. Pictures of the animal exhibits could be taken with flash and Gold 100 or 200 film, or Gold 400 or Max using available light. If you find yourself with too slow a film in your camera, you can manually increase the speed up to 4X safely and shoot until you are at the end of the



ISO 50



ISO 800



ISO 3200



Above: Gold 400 can handle a variety of shooting conditions. Right: Gold Max is great indoors.

roll. Remember to reset your camera ISO back to normal and then switch to a higher-speed film. Resetting the ISO higher in emergencies works because of the wide exposure latitude Kodak has designed in these films.

Kodak claimed that these four Gold films were compatible in printing from one pack, so we made a test using a seven-stop bracket on each film. Each roll of film was shot of the same subject and processed in the same processing run. When we laid the brackets from the four films on the light box, they all looked identical. Using a loupe to see the grain pattern, we could see only a slight difference in grain structure between the films. Each had different emulsion numbers on the rebate edge, but otherwise they definitely had the look of being related. We ran a print from each emulsion and compared the results. The color saturation was high, the grain was excellent for each ISO speed, and the sharpness was the best we had seen for similar ISO films.

Kodak has improved the quality of the Gold 100, 200 and 400 family members with the Colorsharp technology that records colors closer to the way you saw them. The addition of Gold Max to the family eliminates exposure guesswork with this "auto-exposure," "self-adjusting" film. Thanks Kodak for making picture taking easier and easier. Grab some Gold and let's go have some fun! ■

