

College Recruiting 101

The college experience is, in many cases, the most important four years in our children's lives. It can offer them the chance to impact a worthy team and shape their future personal and professional direction. Consequently, securing admission to a college or university that best match a students' desires, strengths, and skill is essential.

Today more than ever, high school athletes are strategically marketing themselves to college coaches for athletic scholarships, but also, with the hope of gaining entry into their top college choices in a highly competitive arena. And it is working.

Student-athletes bring a unique quality to the table when it comes to college recruiting. They offer exceptional talent that can improve the institution's visibility and raise the level of popularity among future attendees. College administrators understand this and, in many cases, offer strong support to student-athletes both in admissions and financial aid.

The college recruiting process can be a daunting effort if it is not well planned and executed with enthusiasm from start to finish. What follows is a College Recruiting 101 on how to maximize a student-athlete's best chances in navigating the college recruiting process.

Gather Information

Begin by gathering information on potential college choices, including team and coach profiles, statistics, ranking, and academic offerings. Continue to update and maintain individual e-files on your favorite college programs.

Build your Team

Parents, prospect, high school/club coach, college advisor, guidance counselor and a personal mentor should be part of your team in the college recruiting process. Each team player should have a specific role to play to build momentum with recruiting. Clear goals should be set, and your purpose should be clear.

Develop and Execute your Plan

Begin by developing timelines that target general assignments (develop the player profile and research potential college options). Move ahead with specific assignments (introducing yourself to the coaches, sharing evaluation information) that will help you build relationships with the coaches.

Communication

Effective communication between the prospect and the college coach is critical. It can make or break a coach's decision to offer an athletic scholarship or to provide that extra "push" in the admission process.

Provide the college coach with everything he or she requests (profile, video stream, transcripts) promptly. Simplify the job of evaluating your athletic and academic credentials, and the college coaches will appreciate your effort.

Player Profile

Maintain an updated copy of your player profile and share it with the college coaches. Keep the profile to 1 page and highlight key evaluation information (awards and accolades) that help separate you from the pack.

On average, you get 90 seconds of attention from college coaches when reading your profile. The impactful, clear, and easy to read profile increases your chance to remain in the active recruiting file.

Highlight Video

The highlight video complements the player profile in the evaluation process. Typically, a coach evaluates a recruit within the first 2 minutes of the video. You do not get a second chance at a first impression, so make it count!

The highlight video should be succinct, professional, and attention-grabbing. Keep the final product to between 2-4 minutes. YouTube is a great platform to host highlight videos, and it is free! Create your video and share the link with the coaches.

The college recruiting process is exciting yet potentially overwhelming. It requires a disciplined and yet flexible approach. Developing and executing a well-designed plan is crucial to your recruiting success. Communication is vital when building a mutually respectful and robust relationship to maximize results.

Utilize a well-organized college recruiting plan and give yourself the tools to secure admission to your top college choice. It is well worth your effort knowing that you were part of a team that guided your child as he or she embarks upon an essential and meaningful process.

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