

Tips on How to Be Recruited

If your daughter/son has an interest in playing, walking on or being a part of a college basketball program, I want to share some advice from nearly every college coach I have talked to that will help them in those endeavors. Navigating through the process can be very overwhelming for parents & players. I hope this helps.

Student athletes need to be in charge of their recruiting journey, but they also need a support system to help. Your support system should include your HS and club coaches, your guidance counselor and your parents.

Obviously, being a really good person & player helps the most. In addition to that, you will also want to do a little recruiting of your own. Seek out the schools that you could/would play for and then go to their elite camps in the off season. Sometimes just seeing the town, facilities and meeting the coaching staff shows a player where you would not go is just as beneficial. While athletic and recruiting decisions are up to the coach and his/her staff, if you are considering a particular school, you should do a few other things to make sure that the school, not just the athletic program, is right for you.

Here are some questions to consider when you evaluate colleges and their athletic programs:

- What are some of the most common degree paths?
- Is there a faith affiliation? If so, how is that implemented into the students' daily life?
- How many current recruits are at my position?
- When will you have access to the coach and staff outside of practice and games?
- What is the travel schedule like?
- What are facility hours access like? When can I get in the gym outside of practice?
- What can I do to make myself more prepared for this opportunity?
- How do players balance academics and athletics?
- What happens if I have a conflict with practice and classes? How will that be dealt with?
- What percentage of players have graduated under your time as head coach?
- If an athletic scholarship is being offered, is it full or partial?

- Does the school stack academic and athletic aid?
- Will my major affect my being part of the program?
- What happens to my scholarship/opportunity if I'm injured?
- What are the current strengths and weaknesses of the team?
- How can I benefit this team and program early and later?
- What are some of the needs of the team?
- What is your coaching style?
- Are their academic tutors or resources available when needed?
- What is the team GPA?
- Is there a fitness or personal trainer?
- What does the admissions process consist of for student athletes?
- What is the off-season schedule like?
- What does a typical day look like during the season and the off-season?
- Am I required to have health insurance outside of the school policy?
- What are the living accommodations for the team?

Make sure the school has your degree program. If they do not have what you want to study, there's no point in you being there. Calculate the cost of attending each school you're interested in. Include the cost of tuition, room and board, books, living expenses and the cost of travel for visits back home. Also consider how the location of the school will suit you. Is the city too big or too small? Will you be comfortable living there? Are there enough things to do outside of school to keep you happy living in that location?

As far as athletics go, be sure you feel like you've connected with the head coach/staff and that you fit well in their system. If you don't feel like you're a priority to them, you probably aren't. So, when choosing a school and narrowing your list, always focus on fit, opportunity, relationships and comfort.

Make sure you reach out to the college coach/staff via email, social media, etc. Also, a handwritten letter that is personal and authentic can really help. A student athlete can always initiate contact with a coach. The rules only state when coaches cannot initiate contact with players. NCAA Division 1 college coaches aren't supposed to contact student athletes until

September 1 of their junior year and NCAA Division 2 coaches are not supposed to reach out until June 15 after sophomore year. However, these coaches are actively recruiting before this time. In fact, 78% of basketball recruits are connecting with coaches before their junior year. Many commitments happen before junior year as there are no restrictions on when coaches can extend verbal offers to recruits. A high school coach can set up a time for the recruit to call the college coach and the college coach can answer the phone if a recruit calls them. They cannot return a call, email, or text message, but they can speak to an athlete when the athlete initiates the conversation on the phone.

Here is another way to initiate contact with coaches. Thoroughly research the school in which you are interested. Compose a brief email that includes all your relevant academic information and attach easily accessible highlights. Read each coach's bio and find their contact information. Send your email to the HC coach's email or Twitter and cc the assistant coaches.

The evaluation period is a great time for college coaches to evaluate prospects and even scout new players. Keep in mind, though, that coaches come prepared with a list of recruits they want to see. Student athletes should be proactive in their recruiting and reach out to college coaches before a live period occurs. Sending an introductory email with a link to their NCSA Recruiting Profile and/or a highlight film can help student athletes secure an evaluation during an event. Here are some things to keep in mind when creating a highlight video:

- Have a title screen that includes all your contact information
- Make sure to include your height, year, position, HS & AAU team
- Put your best clips first
- Keep the total time of the video to 2-4 minutes
- Don't add music, animation or slow motion

Also keep in mind that if you have a social media account, this is a terrific way to get your information out there too. Be sure to do the following:

- Change your social media account name to your full name
- Change your profile picture to a basketball picture
- Include a highlight link in your bio
- Include recruiting info in your bio

******(I have included a pic of a great example)

It helps to write a SHORT letter explaining why the player would be a great fit at this particular school or for their program. Also, create a one-pager which is like a short resume that includes the player's achievements: All conference, All-state, stats, etc. Coaches build a list of their top prospects by sending questionnaires, evaluating highlight film and watching recruits compete in person, so having a link to a YouTube highlight video that is 25 min in length & a link to 1 or 2 of the player's best uncut halves of basketball is always a plus.

If you compete with a club team, you may get more exposure than someone who just plays for their high school team. College coaches tend to focus recruiting efforts more on club level competitions and events rather than high school events. Playing at AAU events where college coaches will be always helps. You can also find out where those schools will be during the evaluation period by requesting their recruiting calendar.

Also, if your HS coach, AAU coach or your trainer knows the college coach, it doesn't hurt to have him/her reach out to the college coach. Your coach/coaches are a valuable resource when it comes to recruiting. They can help you: connect with college coaches, help you evaluate your skill level, help identify target schools and provide a recommendation to college coaches.