

# COLLEGE FOOTBALL RECRUITING INFORMATION

## **Be Proactive:**

Do not assume that just because you made an All-District, All-Metro, or All-State team as a sophomore, a junior, or a senior that you're automatically going to be recruited at a high college level as a senior. Do all you can to promote yourself as much as possible. Make a bio sheet with stats and honors and also include your academic information.

## **Be Honest and Accurate:**

It has become commonplace to grossly inflate or exaggerate numbers when making a bio sheet for stats, honors, and especially heights and weights. Be honest in your assessment and trust that the body of work is enough to get you noticed. A college coach will find out easily enough what the true numbers are and, if it appears they were fudged, the coach may think you have something to hide and will question your integrity.

## **Be Realistic:**

Not everyone can play for the University of MN, Yale, or the University of St. Thomas. Shoot for the stars, of course, but also understand that a very small percentage of players who play high school football will move on to play in college. An even smaller number of players will sign with a DI or a DII school. Do not burn any bridges and big-time some of the smaller schools that are showing interest. Fill out and return EVERY questionnaire you get from colleges, even if it is from a school you currently do not have any interest in. The last thing you want to do is blow off some of the smaller schools that are recruiting you in hopes of landing an offer from one of the big schools, an offer that might not come.

## **Take the Right Classes:**

Long before college catalogs clog mailboxes, and recruiting tapes are viewed, a student-athlete takes classes in their freshman year of high school that directly affect their NCAA eligibility. Because eligibility standards continue to evolve - in 2008 the NCAA increased the number of English and Math courses required by one - it's an athlete's responsibility to make sure their class schedule fulfills NCAA core course requirements. The best way to make sure you meet all requirements is to schedule an appointment with a high school guidance counselor to ensure your course schedule is in-line with the approved high school core course list.

## **Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center:**

It used to be called the NCAA clearinghouse, but now it's the NCAA Eligibility Center that students must register with to validate their status as an amateur athlete. The process is relatively pain-free and a minimal cost; all you need is your social security number. Don't leave it to the last minute. Every year a few student athletes miss out on the chance to play collegiately because they fail to register with the NCAA Eligibility Center. The NCAA Eligibility Center can be found here: <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>

## **Create Personal Highlight Videos on Hudl:**

The recruiting video is one of the most important ways an athlete can attract the attention of coaches at the university level. Your film will ALWAYS hold more VALUE than your stats. To stand out in the eyes of a college recruiter remember your film is your mouthpiece which does the TALKING. YOUR FILM IS YOUR RESUME. Keep your videos short, 5-8 minutes max, with in-game highlights that show off athletic ability or extraordinary skills. The first 5-7 clips should grab your attention. Make sure to fill out ALL personal information on HUDL for recruiters (home address, email, ACT score, etc.). Coaches have the ability to send your highlight tape to specified colleges and universities. Please make all requests to Coach David.

## **Compete at College Camps, Combines, & Showcases:**

**COMBINES/SHOWCASES** - are great tools as part of an overall recruiting strategy, but coaches do want to see how well you play football - not just how well you run around in shorts and a t-shirt and lift weights. Combine and showcase results provide college coaches the ability to cross-check player information or find a verified measurement like a 40 time or a height and weight.

**COLLEGE CAMPS** - Are a very critical tool for prospects. Some camps will have several hundred student-athletes in attendance. If you just walk in the door "cold" as an unknown, odds are you won't receive a lot of recruiting benefit from that camp. You will certainly benefit from good coaching and get better - but coaches are not going to be able to focus on you if they don't know that you're coming. The key to maximizing your recruitability at camps is to make sure coaches know who you are before you get there. Ideally, the coaches will have seen you play on viewership-enabled video before you attend the camp.

## **Promote Yourself on Social Media:**

Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, etc. USE SOCIAL MEDIA to build your personal brand to market yourself to college coaches. Whenever social media and college athletic recruiting pop up in the news, the articles usually focus on recruits who have lost an offer or a scholarship because of their poor social media choices. However, social media when used properly, can be

an effective recruiting tool. In fact, recruits can use the power of social media to contact coaches, show coaches what kind of recruit they are and even gain the attention of college coaches who weren't previously recruiting them.

**-Connect with Coaches.** For starters, just follow the coaches of your favorite colleges and follow the colleges themselves. The coach probably won't follow you back, but don't worry - this can still get you noticed. You'll be in their followers list and they get an email saying that you are now following them.

**-BE ACTIVE** - You Actually need to Tweet, Post, Upload, etc. on a consistent basis. Nothing is easier for getting attention than a simple tweet. Again, just because a recruiter or coach can't tweet you back doesn't mean they won't find you when they research you. And you want them to find the videos and articles you're sharing on your Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook feeds! You don't have to be fancy; all you need is something like: "Hey @Coach check out The Laker article about my team! @WestonkaFB #team #family #athlete #westonka."

**-Engage with Admission offices.** On top of making sure you tweet/post consistently, get your name out to the college's admission office through direct messages (DMs) and tell them that you're interested, or ask questions about admission or the athletics departments.

**-Use Hashtags.** You already know the deal with hashtags: putting this little guy # in front of a word (with no spaces) automatically creates a link to all the other tweets in the world with that word in them. If a coach wants to click on the #football link, your tweet (depending on when you tweet it) will pop up in the tweet history.

**-Help get a Conversation Going.** So let's say you and a coach meet and the athletic recruiting process is underway. Show them you've done your homework about their team and the sport in general. If there's a moment to just talk freely, mention what you've seen from them and/or their team/college on social media. This shows initiative and excitement about possibly playing for the team. You're already a fan!

**-Be Mindful of what you post.** Let's just say from here on out anytime you're posting on a social media site, be nice and courteous. Profanity and negative comments are frowned upon and don't get you any points with anyone. What you post is a reflection of you. If you have a bad attitude or are constantly unloading buckets of drama, coaches and schools are most likely going to pass on recruiting you.

**-Remember: Once it's out there,** It's out there. Say you have a tweet-happy friend who just loves to tweet to you with pictures or videos that don't exactly put you in the best light. After they tweet it, it is out in the world to read. What happens if a coach just happens to be looking at your Twitter page? What happens if they click on that link? You might find the tweet 10 seconds after they clicked on it and then delete it, but it won't make a difference. Make sure you get all your friends on the same page to keep their pictures and videos to themselves before posting your crazy shenanigans for the world to see.

#### **Other Things to Post About...**

- Your commitment to becoming a better football player, a better student, and a better man.
- Pictures and videos with your teammates hanging out and having clean fun in the weight room, on the field, etc.
- Displaying positivity even after a tough loss.
- Shout-outs for a teammate, a coach, or a teacher who inspired or encouraged you.
- Your commitment to your academics.
- Your life (positive) outside of your sport.

#### **Make Your College Choices List:**

Before you compile a list of 200 schools you would just die to play for, remember the function of the list is to help you focus your search going into your sophomore and junior year, not overly complicate the process with unrealistic expectations.

- Make a list of your dream schools that you would like to play for.*
- Make a list of the top schools for academics you would like to attend.*
- Get those two columns to align to find your best fit.*
- Make a list of schools that you could realistically get into.*
- Apply to those schools.*
- Make a list of fallback schools in case something happens at the last minute.*

Ideally your lists should total no more than 12 to 15 schools, with the bulk of the schools residing in the realistic list. Give the list to Coach David so he can contact these schools.

#### **Complete Prospective Athlete College Football Questionnaires:**

Go online to schools you like and fill out their prospective athlete questionnaires accurately and honestly.

#### **Research the Schools:**

There is a multitude of recruiting information, both official and unofficial, about virtually any college or university you're interested in. For starters, check out the school's website to find out the best coach or school official to contact. For smaller schools, individual email addresses for coaches can be found quite easily, as they often view the website as a promotional tool for their institution. Bigger schools may require a little detective work to find contact information for specific coaches, but it is not impossible.

**First Contact with Football Coaches:**

Now it's time to place yourself on a college's radar in an aggressive, but friendly way. Make sure that all responses using email or by phone are responded back to quickly and are polite, honest, and sincere.

**Making the Final College Choice:**

Hopefully you have a few offers on the table so how do you narrow it down to the one school that is right for you? For most athletes, it will depend on the financial package being offered by the school. If one school offers a significantly greater financial award, it should not be considered lightly.

**Ultimately, though, most people suggest basing your final decision on the University itself. Not just the athletic department, but the overall collegiate experience a school has to offer.**