



*Former Rugger's Edge Student Ryan Santos
Photo Credit: Harvard Men's Rugby*



COLLEGE PLAYBOOK

An In-Depth Guide to
College Admissions & Rugby Recruiting

By Karen Fong Donoghue

7th Edition 2021

DEAR RUGBY FRIENDS,

Thank you so much for your support in purchasing this guidebook. We know 2020 was a difficult year for everyone and we want to acknowledge the obstacles students and families have had to face. While rugby has been postponed in many regions, we have heard that many families still find comfort in planning for a hopeful future. We hope this guidebook can help provide some routine and consistency to a process that continues to change each day. Even if you or your child are unable to get out on the rugby pitch, there are still many things young people can do to prepare for a future of playing and studying in college.

As more colleges add support to their rugby programs, there continues to be more interest from players from all over the world to follow their rugby and academic dreams to the U.S. It is an exciting time to see players gain support from a rugby program whether that is in the form of admission influence and/or athletic scholarships. While these changes are great for the game, we continue to remind families that they need to be aware that any financial assistance is almost **always** tied to a student-athlete's academic performance.

Turning student-athletes into college-bound young adults can make daily high school life even more demanding. The rigors of preparing for college can be difficult with all of the tests, applications, and other factors that overwhelm many families. To help you with this task, this guidebook is designed to help your child achieve their dream of playing rugby at a U.S. college or university. Universities look for students who will perform well in the classroom and add to the campus community through participation in college rugby. Although college cannot be all things to all students, with proper planning it can meet your child's needs and expectations. Finding the right college is important, not only so that your child picks the right rugby team, but so that he or she will enjoy college life and receive a good education.

We encourage everyone who has the opportunity to join and to be part of a college rugby team to do so. You will learn there are a variety of competition levels, leagues and divisions that will fit every athlete. Playing a sport in college can be a major time commitment, but it will greatly enrich your child's college experience and provide him or her with new lifelong friends and fun memories that will last a lifetime.

The Rugger's Edge College Playbook is a great resource for education administrators, coaches, parents, and student-athletes interested in college rugby, recruiting, scholarships, and overall college planning. We hope you find this comprehensive guide useful in making your college rugby dreams a reality! Please don't hesitate to reach out to us for personalized guidance if needed. We are here for you!

Warmly,

Karen Fong Donoghue,
Owner & Founder, The Rugger's Edge

"You Don't Get What You Want, You Get What You Work For."

NOTE: The Rugger's Edge College Playbook provides links to other websites for informational purposes only. The Rugger's Edge is not responsible for the content in other sites, and links from this guidebook to websites are not intended to imply endorsement of them by The Rugger's Edge. All information is current as of January 2021.



PLAYBOOK CHAPTERS

ABOUT THE RUGGER'S EDGE	4
ABOUT KAREN FONG DONOGHUE	5
STEP ONE: ACADEMICS	6
ACADEMIC PROFILE	7
IMPORTANCE OF A RIGOROUS CURRICULUM	9
EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	10
STANDARDIZED TESTS	11
STEP TWO: BEST FIT	19
FOCUS YOUR PRIORITIES	20
ASSESS ACADEMIC GOALS.....	20
ASSESS ATHLETIC GOALS	22
ASSESS FINANCIAL NEEDS	36
CREATE YOUR "COLLEGE WISH LIST"	40
THE IMPORTANCE OF COLLEGE VISITS	42
STEP THREE: RECRUITMENT	46
COLLEGE RUGBY COACHES	47
RUGBY RECRUITING GUIDELINES	56
CREATE A STANDOUT RUGBY RESUME.....	58
ALL-STAR TEAMS AND REGIONAL CUP TOURNAMENTS.....	61
HOW TO CHOOSE A RUGBY CAMP	62
STEP FOUR: APPLY	64
MAKE YOUR COLLEGE APPLICATIONS STAND OUT	65
COLLEGE ESSAY PREP	67
YEAR-BY-YEAR COLLEGE PLANNING CHECKLIST	71
COLLEGE RUGBY LISTS	73
ADDITIONAL COLLEGE RESOURCES	87
INTRODUCTION TO RUGBY	91
BENEFITS OF WORKING WITH THE RUGGER'S EDGE	101

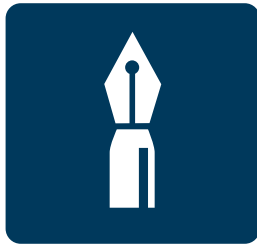


ABOUT THE RUGGER'S EDGE

The Rugger's Edge provides college rugby advising to rugby student-athletes applying to colleges and universities. The goal is to make the college rugby search and the recruitment process as enjoyable and stress-free as possible while increasing the likelihood that the student will attend a school where they will thrive.

Rugby players are "Students First, Athletes Second."

BENEFITS OF WORKING WITH THE RUGGER'S EDGE:



Personalized services from a Rugger's Edge Advisor who will address the unique needs of the student-athlete.



Increased awareness of available choices that may provide a good match for the student while optimizing admission and scholarship.



Reduced anxiety for everyone involved, resulting from good planning, preparation, and organization.



Access to our intimate knowledge about the college rugby landscape and admission process that will increase your ability to make informed decisions.

WE ARE PROUD MEMBERS OF:



ABOUT KAREN FONG DONOGHUE

OWNER & FOUNDER



University of California, Davis, B.A.

Chapman University, M.A. Counseling & School Counseling Credential

USA Rugby High School All American Program Academic Advisor since 2011

USA Rugby National "B" Panel Referee

World Rugby Referee Educator since 2016, Trainer since 2020

Former USA Rugby All-American Rugby Player

Former USA Rugby Under 23 National Team Player

Karen's experience includes time as a high school guidance counselor and over ten years as a professional college admissions consultant.

Karen has been active in the rugby community for over 20 years and knows firsthand what it takes to be successful at the highest levels of the game. Her rugby accolades include competing at the collegiate Division I level, being selected as a Collegiate All-American and National U-23 player, and formerly serving as a top national referee. Currently, Karen is a World Rugby Educator and Trainer providing referee certification courses for USA Rugby.

To satisfy the growing need of high school families planning for college with rugby in mind, Karen used her unique blend of expertise in academic planning and knowledge of the U.S. college rugby landscape to create The Rugger's Edge. Over the years, she has built strong relationships with the vast majority of college rugby coaches in the nation and has a passion for connecting these coaches with high school players. She is passionate about helping as many rugby student-athletes achieve their goals as possible and offers academic advising in a variety of settings such as the annual Eagle Impact Rugby Academy Winter Camp, the US Collegiate Development Camp at Dartmouth College and providing educational seminars around the country.

Karen is proud to see so many of her students continue to play in colleges and universities all over the world including programs such as Cal Berkeley, Army West Point, Dartmouth College, Harvard University, Penn State University and many more!

Learn more about where Ruggers Edge students have been accepted!
<https://www.ruggersedge.com/post/class-of-2021-college-acceptances>



STEP ONE: ACADEMICS



ACADEMIC PROFILE

As your child looks to play college rugby, one must remember **first and foremost** that these are institutions of higher education and your child's academic performance is what matters most. There are NO college rugby programs which can give your child a "pass" on completing the necessary requirements in order to be admitted to their school.

This is why it is imperative that parents and students are aware of each college's specific admission requirements. An athlete could be the #1 rugby prospect in the world, but if he or she does not meet the minimum eligibility requirements for admission, there is nothing a rugby coach can do to get a student admitted to their college.



Photo Credit: Queens University of Charlotte

All college rugby teams have eligibility requirements in order to play; typically, a 2.0 GPA. The high school GPA is the best piece of evidence for a coach to guess whether or not a student will be successful in college – and more importantly, be eligible to play. In other words, college coaches will not risk recruiting a player if the student could potentially drop out within a quarter.

GRADE POINT AVERAGE

The most important part of a student's profile is their **Cumulative Grade Point Average**. For most colleges, the cumulative GPA is the average of your child's 9th through 11th grade GPAs (note: this can vary. For example, the University of California system only takes into account grades after the completion of 9th grade. Many more schools also factor in senior year grades in their decisions). The better the high school records look, the higher that player's chances are of being recruited and getting scholarship opportunities. Getting good grades demonstrates a student's interest in learning as well as their daily work ethic.

Most colleges will examine your grades in "core" courses. While this can vary among schools, typically, a core course is:

- An academic course in one, or a combination, of these areas:
 - English
 - Mathematics
 - Natural/Physical Science
 - Social Science
 - Foreign Language
 - Visual/Performing Arts
- Preparatory for a four-year college; and
- Taught at or above your high school's regular academic level (*no remedial courses*)

Physical Education, Health, and/or Regional Occupational Courses (e.g. Woodworking, Automotive Technology) do not count towards college preparatory courses. If you are unsure of your core course GPA, take a look at the Unofficial Transcript (requested from the high school registrar) and look for the "Academic GPA" or use the following online GPA calculator: <http://gpacalculator.net/>

If your high school uses a 100-point scale for GPA, you can see the conversion to a 4.0 scale here:

Letter Grade	Percent Grade	4.0 Scale	Letter Grade	Percent Grade	4.0 Scale
A+	97 - 100	4.0	C+	77 - 79	2.4
A	93 - 96	4.0	C	73 - 76	2.0
A-	90 - 92	3.7	C-	70 - 72	1.7
B+	87 - 89	3.3	D+	67 - 69	1.3
B	83 - 86	3.0	D	65 - 66	1.0
B-	80 - 82	2.7	F	Below 65	0.0

✓ STUDENTS: Your path to college begins with good grades so it is vital you keep your grades up. As a general rule of thumb, I advise all students to strive for at least a 3.0 GPA which opens the door for you to be accepted at hundreds of institutions. The GPA is the first critical factor a college admissions counselor and a college coach will review when considering an applicant, so increase your chance at admission by making your academics a priority.

COVID-19 UPDATE: Some high schools have a Pass/No Pass grading system for remote learning which may impact your overall GPA. Keep in mind that all colleges will be made aware of your school's grading policy. In the absence of "true" grades, your participation and overall participation may be impactful as more teachers may have to write letters of recommendation to speak on your effort during remote school.



Photo Credit: Colgate University Women's Rugby

A RIGOROUS CURRICULUM

While the cumulative GPA is important, the context of the GPA is as also critical. A 4.0 (all A's) in a relatively easy curriculum (e.g. no Advanced Placement or Honors courses) will not be given the same weight as someone who has a lower GPA but with a much tougher course load. For example, take a look at these two students' profiles:

Susie Smith (4.0 Cumulative GPA)	John Jones (3.5 Cumulative GPA)
English 9, 10, 11	Honors English 9 & 10, AP English Language
Algebra, Geometry, Algebra II	Algebra, Hon. Geometry, Hon. Algebra II
World History, U.S. History	AP World History, AP U.S. History
Geoscience, Biology, Chemistry	Biology, Chemistry, AP Biology

Even though John has a lower overall GPA, he would be considered a more “college-ready” student than Susie because he challenged himself with Honors and AP courses.

While we are not suggesting your child must add on as many Honors or AP courses as possible, we do recommend asking your child which subjects s/he enjoys most, is particularly strong at, and/or what potential college majors s/he has in mind. These subjects are indicators of good course areas to increase their challenge.

Another piece to the curriculum puzzle is keeping an eye on a future college major. Certain college majors will have specific expectations for their applicants therefore, curriculum planning should begin as soon as possible to ensure your child is able to complete these classes during their high school career. For example, in order to be eligible to Harvey Mudd College, one of the best engineering schools in the country, a high schooler must complete calculus.

SUGGESTED MATH TRACK FOR A PROSPECTIVE ENGINEERING STUDENT:

Grade 9 – Geometry; Grade 10 – Algebra II; Grade 11 – Pre-Calculus; Grade 12 – AP Calculus AB

Last, colleges understand that many schools do not offer Honors or AP level classes. Therefore, your child will not be “penalized” if they don’t have these types of classes on their transcript if your particular high school doesn’t have this curriculum in place.

Note: Students who are taking part in an International Baccalaureate® (IB) program are widely considered to be taking the most rigorous program available with High Level Courses considered stronger than Standard Level. For more information: <http://www.ibo.org>

✓ STUDENTS: Colleges expect your grades to be consistent or improve over the course of your high school career. Colleges understand that many students have a difficult time transitioning from middle school to high school and can be more forgiving over rough freshman grades. Some even consider the first semester of senior year grades in making their decision, so it is never too late to improve!





EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

I am often asked, "How many activities do I need for college applications?" While there is no hard and fast rule to this, one helpful resource is simply looking at what a college application asks for.

The Common Application Activities section offers 10 spots for a student to fill in. Does this mean every college wants you to have 10 activities? Well, no, but in most cases, students should at least be able to fill up half of these activities with a variety of sports, community service, work and/or other things they are passionate about.

The problem is, oftentimes, students only have 2-3 activities which, unfortunately, in this highly competitive college admissions game, just isn't going to cut it (with these activities only being sports!). It is best to start early, however, it is rarely too late to start being more active within your school or community in order to strengthen your college profile.

Do your activities relate to what you plan to study?

Recently I met with a student who was passionate about pursuing business in college, however, his activities resume only included 2 sports and participating sporadically in a youth church group. Right off the bat, I asked him why he wasn't a member of a business-related club on campus (turns out his school offered a Marketing Club) or hadn't volunteered with a local business. These are activities that an admission officer might expect to see a future aspiring businessman take part in. Think about areas you are interested in and see how you can become more involved. Interested in Finance? Take a local Quickbooks class, learn basic bookkeeping and accounting and then, volunteer your services to a local non-profit. Interested in Finance? Take a local Intro to Marketing Class online and volunteer your newfound knowledge to a local business in need.

Start early!

The earlier you join a club the better. Colleges are looking for activities you have been involved with over time. It won't help you to join 5 clubs in your senior year! By joining early, you also have a better chance of taking on a leadership role by the time you are a senior (e.g. President, Treasurer, Secretary, etc.) Not sure where to start? Check with your ASB advisor and see what clubs are available on your campus. Most high schools also list their clubs on their school website so you can contact the president or the faculty advisor ASAP to find out what you need to do to join. Last, but not least, if your school doesn't have a club for an activity you absolutely love, go ahead and start your own club! All colleges will value your focus and drive to create something you are wholeheartedly enthusiastic about.

Are your activities unique?

While this should not be the priority when starting out in activities, for the purposes of college admission, it is smart to start thinking about whether or not any one of your activities is unique. If ALL of your activities are such that thousands of students across the world are also doing it (e.g. Class Treasurer, Choir Member), it can be helpful to think of something that less students are doing. Often I ask my students, what is that "thing" you just "nerd out" on? That you could talk someone's ear off for hours? That's the thing I would want you to do more of, or share with others. For example, I had a student who was passionate about the bee population. She had learned about the demise of bees all over the world and she decided to look into how to be a beekeeper. By the end of her senior year, she had a few working bee hives and was an avid beekeeper. This was a solitary activity, but one she spent a lot of time on (researching, meeting a local beekeepers club) and was unique to her story.



STANDARDIZED TESTS

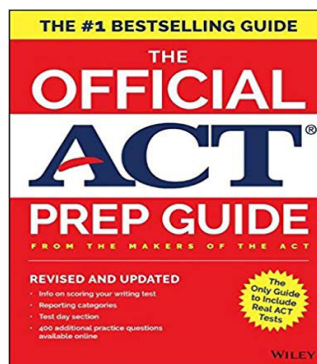
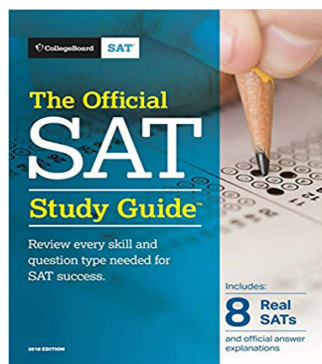
The third most influential part of your child's application will be their standardized test scores; either the SAT (www.collegeboard.org) or the ACT (www.act.org). Many colleges will "Super Score" the SAT (and many more are doing this for the ACT), meaning they combine the highest scores in each section from different test dates to create a composite score. Therefore, it is in your child's best interest to take a test more than once to increase their chances of a higher score. Keep in mind ALL colleges who require a standardized test view the ACT and SAT equally. One is NOT preferable to another.

Most students take a practice SAT (PSAT) or practice ACT (PreACT) the fall of their sophomore year which is a good place to start. We highly recommend students take a mock test of whichever test they haven't taken and compare scores before deciding on just one.

Here are some valuable ACT & SAT prep resources that are helpful, user-friendly and FREE!

1. ACT Academy - <https://academy.act.org>
2. College Board Khan Academy - <https://www.khanacademy.org/sat>

We highly recommend the **OFFICIAL SAT** or **OFFICIAL ACT Test Prep Books**. Many can be found at your local library or purchased for a reasonable price through bookstores.



✓ **STUDENTS:** Make sure you study and prepare adequately for these tests. Going into a test with no preparation is akin to playing in a championship game without any practice! To gain the best results, we recommend at least 6-8 weeks of solid test prep time, whether it is through a reputable tutoring company (like ArborBridge) or with a good test prep book. Athletic and other forms of scholarships often have minimum test scores. For most, test preparation will result in higher scores which can translate directly into scholarship dollars.

COVID-19 UPDATE: For the Class of 2021, colleges and universities have moved to a "Test-optional" or "Test-Blind" model in order to not penalize students who were unable to take a standardized test due to the pandemic. We do not yet know if this will extend to the Class of 2022. We strongly recommend you research each college on your list to check their specific testing requirements for your year prior to applying.



THE SAT vs. THE ACT

Knowing what to expect on the SAT and ACT is the best way to decide which test will better suit your strengths. We broke down each exam's content and formatting so you can be prepared come test day.

SAT

MATH

- Tests algebra data analysis, arithmetic, pre-calculus, and trigonometry (emphasis on advanced algebra)
- Provides commonly used formulas (ex. Pythagorean theorem, special right triangles, and area)
- Multiple-choice and grid-in questions
- Tests ability to apply Math concepts
- No calculator allowed on the 34% of the exam

READING

- Tests ability to draw inferences and conclusion from evidence
- Questions include line numbers and appear in order in the passage so students can easily navigate
- Some questions test graphics (charts, graphs, pictures) related to passage
- Does **NOT** include vocabulary section, though vocabulary tested within passages
- Includes Founding Documents/Global Conversation passage

WRITING

- Tests grammar rules related to verbs, pronouns, idioms, sentence structure, style, and punctuation
- Questions ask about sentences within a passage
- At least one passage with graphics related to passage

NO SCIENCE SECTION

ACT

MATH

- Covers same material as SAT with slightly more emphasis on geometry
- Does **NOT** provide commonly used formulas for students
- Multiple-choice questions only
- Tests ability to apply Math concepts
- Calculator allowed on *entire* section

READING

- Tests speed and instant recall
- Most questions do **NOT** include line numbers, so students must *remember what they read*
- Does **NOT** include vocabulary sections, though vocabulary is tested within passages

WRITING

- Tests same material as SAT
- Questions ask about sentences within a passage
- No graphics

SCIENCE

- Tests ability to analyze charts/graphs and draw conclusions
- Focuses more on *logic and scientific thinking*, not on actual scientific knowledge

SAT

ESSAY

- Tests ability to analyze a given passage by discussing how the author uses evidence and develops the passage's argument
- Essay score is **NOT** included in student's total SAT score
- Essay is *optional*

SCORING

- Composite Score: 400-1600 points (sum of 2 section scores below)
- Writing/Reading Score (200-800 points) + Math Score (200-800 points)
- Essay scored on a scale of 2-8 points
- *No guessing penalty*

EXTRA TIME

Students who receive extra time for a learning difference are held to a strict schedule for each section

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

- More commonly accepted by international universities
- Given in more international locations
- Exam is *paper-based*

SUPER SCORING*

Most universities super score

SCHEDULING

Offered the same day as SAT Subject Tests and may conflict with students' plans to take those exams

ACT

ESSAY

- Tests ability to write a persuasive argument in response to a specific, modern-day issue
- Students must incorporate three short viewpoints from different sides of the debate (there are provided in the prompt)
- Essay score is **NOT** included in student's ACT composite score
- Essay is *optional*

SCORING

- Composite Score: 1-36 (average of 4 section scores below)
- English Score (1-36 pts) + Math Score (1-36 pts) + Reading Score (1-36 pts) + Science Score (1-36 pts)
- Essay scored on a scale of 2-12 points
- *No guessing penalty*

EXTRA TIME

Students who receive extra time for a learning difference are held to a strict schedule for each section

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

- Not always accepted by international universities (although accepted by ALL U.S. universities)
- Fewer international test sites but offered more throughout the year
- Exam is *computer-based* for international students (students with accommodations may take paper test)

SUPER SCORING*

Most universities do **NOT** super score

SCHEDULING

Offered on days different from SAT Subject Tests and will not conflict

*Super scoring is the process of taking the highest section scores from multiple test sittings to create a new composite score.



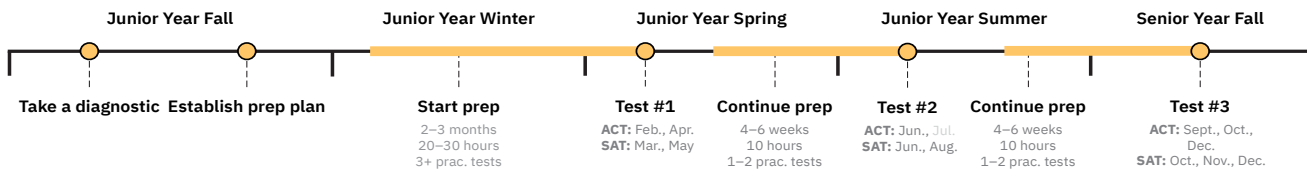
DOMESTIC (U.S.-BASED)

Timelines for Preparing for the SAT or ACT

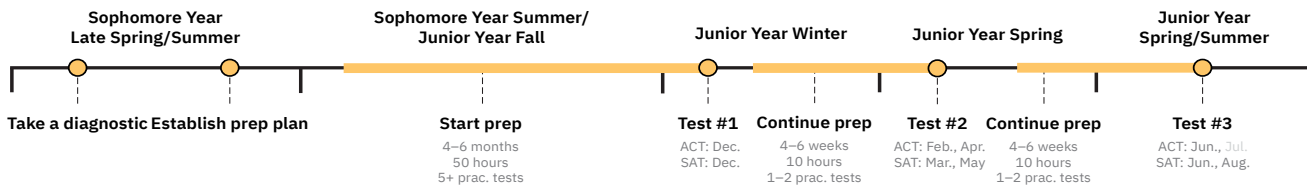
No matter your starting point, we have your test prep timeline covered.



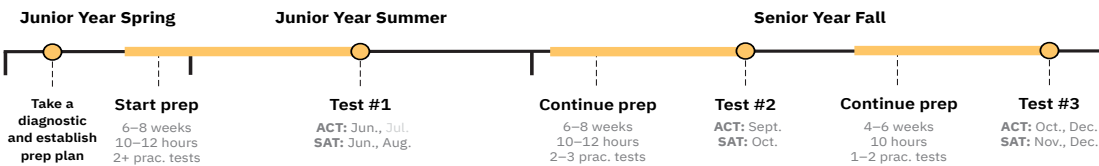
Standard Student



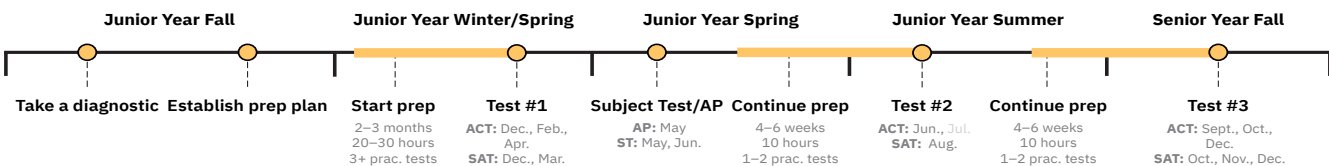
Early Student



Late Student

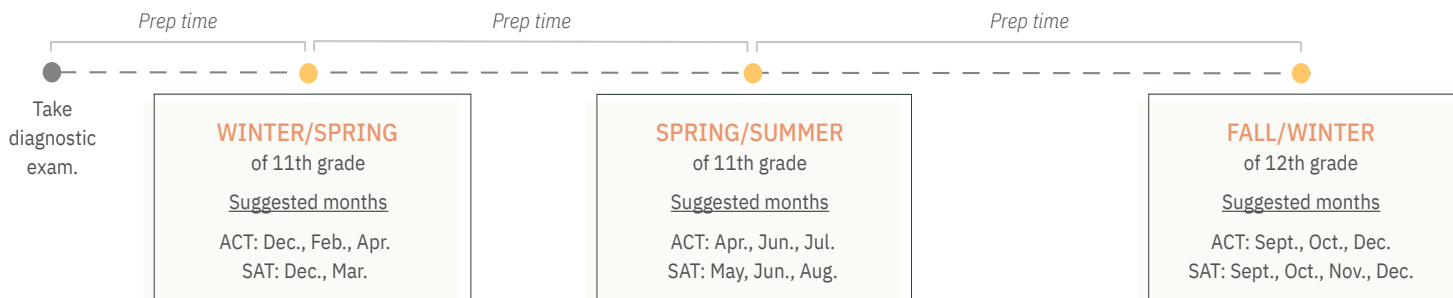


Subject Test Student



NOTE: No ACT test centers are scheduled in New York in July.

YOUR SAT OR ACT PREP TIMELINE



2020–2021 TEST DATES & DEADLINES

ACT TEST DATES

Test Date	Registration Deadline
September 12, 2020 September 13, 2020 September 19, 2020	August 14, 2020
October 10, 2020 October 17, 2020 October 24, 2020 October 25, 2020	September 17, 2020
December 12, 2020	November 6, 2020
February 6, 2021	January 8, 2021
April 17, 2021	March 12, 2021
June 12, 2021	May 7, 2021
July 17, 2021	June 18, 2021

*No test centers scheduled for July in New York.

SAT TEST DATES

Test Date	Registration Deadline
August 29, 2020*	July 31, 2020
September 26, 2020	August 26, 2020
October 3, 2020*	September 4, 2020
November 7, 2020*	October 7, 2020
December 5, 2020*	November 5, 2020
March 13, 2021	February 12, 2021
May 8, 2021*	April 8, 2021
June 5, 2021*	May 6, 2021

*SAT Subject Tests also offered on these SAT dates.

FAQ

WHY TAKE A DIAGNOSTIC?

Each test caters to certain strengths more than others. Taking a diagnostic exam allows you to confidently decide which exam you should begin prepping for.

HOW MANY TIMES SHOULD I TAKE THE TEST?

We recommend students sit for 2–3 exams to maximize point increases and familiarity with the exam.

This year we also suggest planning for an additional make-up test date in case you miss a test due to COVID-19.

IS THIS THE ONLY TIMELINE I CAN FOLLOW?

Absolutely not. Your test prep timeline depends on your academic schedule, individual needs, and a handful of other factors. Talk with your college counselor to plan out your best timeline!



arborbridge.com
info@arborbridge.com
(+1) 917-525-2548



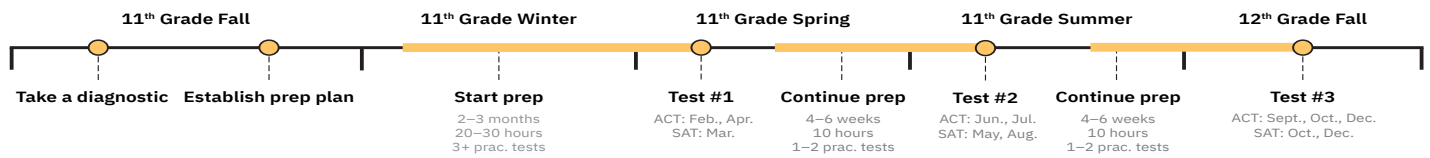
INTERNATIONAL

Timelines for Preparing for the SAT or ACT

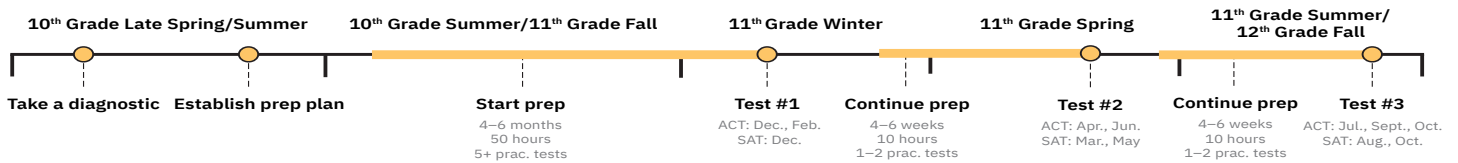
No matter your starting point, we have your test prep timeline covered.



Standard Student:

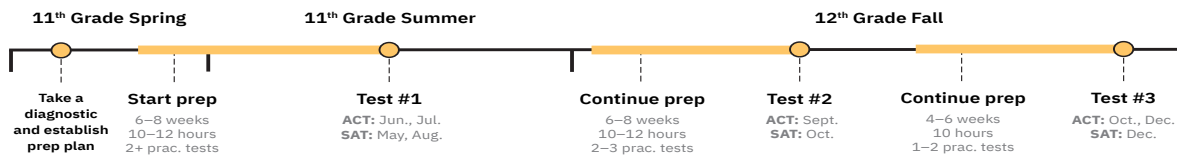


Early Student:

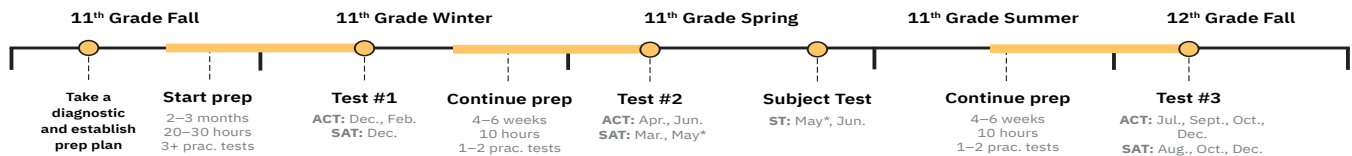


More timelines on the other side >

Late Student:



Subject Test Student:

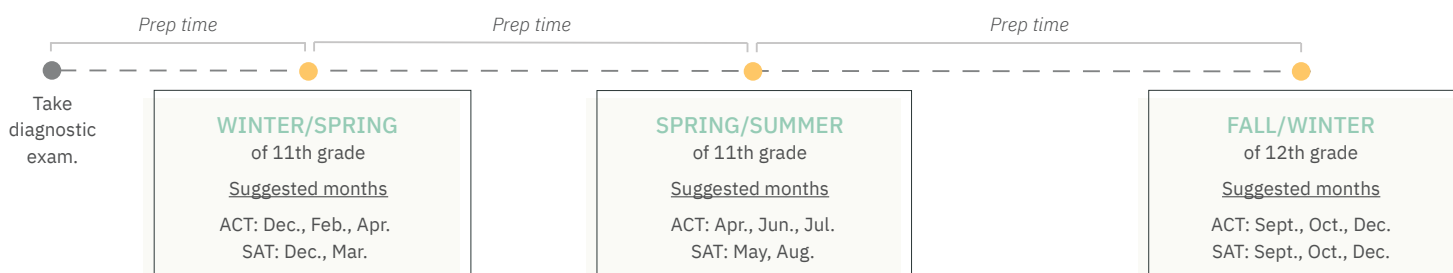


*Students will need to choose between the May SAT or May SAT Subject Tests. Students cannot take both.

NOTE:

The available test dates shown here are subject to change. Students must check the ACT and SAT official websites to determine if these dates are actually offered in their home country. Not all dates shown will be available in every country and may impact a student's testing timeline.

YOUR SAT OR ACT PREP TIMELINE



2020–2021 TEST DATES & DEADLINES

ACT TEST DATES

Test Date	Registration Deadline
September 11 & 12, 2020	August 21, 2020
October 9 & 10, 2020	September 18, 2020
December 11 & 12, 2020	November 20, 2020
February 5 & 6, 2021	January 15, 2021
April 16 & 17, 2021	March 26, 2021
June 11 & 12, 2021	May 21, 2021
July 16 & 17, 2021	June 25, 2021

SAT TEST DATES

Test Date	Registration Deadline
August 29, 2020*	July 31, 2020
September 26, 2020	August 26, 2020
October 3, 2020*	September 4, 2020
December 5, 2020*	November 5, 2020
March 13, 2021	February 12, 2021
May 8, 2021*	April 8, 2021

*SAT Subject Tests also offered on these SAT dates.

FAQ

WHY TAKE A DIAGNOSTIC?

Each test caters to certain strengths more than others. Taking a diagnostic exam allows you to confidently decide which exam you should begin prepping for.

HOW MANY TIMES SHOULD I TAKE THE TEST?

We recommend students sit for 2–3 exams to maximize point increases and familiarity with the exam.

This year we also suggest planning for an additional make-up test date in case you miss a test due to COVID-19.

IS THIS THE ONLY TIMELINE I CAN FOLLOW?

Absolutely not. Your test prep timeline depends on your academic schedule, individual needs, and a handful of other factors. Talk with your college counselor to plan out your best timeline!



arborbridge.com
info@arborbridge.com
(+1) 917-525-2548



HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR TEST DAY

Many high school students find the SAT/ACT very anxiety provoking. We think it is useful to try and think of it not as some dreaded epic test that will completely make or break your future (this overly dramatic way of thinking about it is not only unhelpful, but inaccurate), but instead as a championship rugby game. Like a big game, you ideally will have had months of preparation, be fully familiar with the structure of the exam, and have built up some confidence.

The night before your test will look a lot like the night before a big game. As you've been preparing for your test for several months, the night before is the time to relax. That's right —No more cramming! Just as you wouldn't have an insanely tough workout the night before a championship match, you shouldn't have a grueling study session the night before the SAT or ACT.

SAT Checklist: <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/taking-the-test/test-day-checklist>

ACT Checklist: <http://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/test-day.html>

TIPS FOR THE NIGHT BEFORE:

- **CARB UP!** Just as you would eat a filling meal before a big game, make sure you carbo-load the night before your test. You want to make sure you have plenty of fuel for your brain!
- **SET AN ALARM!** Few things are worse than waking up late. To prevent against this unnecessary stress, make sure you set several alarms.
- **PACK YOUR GEAR!** After dinner get all of your belongings together:
 - SAT or ACT admission ticket
 - Student ID or driver's license
 - A couple of #2 pencils with fresh erasers
 - An approved calculator (with new batteries)
 - Watch
 - A small snack & bottle of water
- **MAKE A PLAN TO GET TO THE TESTING SITE!** Make sure you know exactly how you're going to get to the testing site. Allow extra time for unexpected traffic or to find parking. If you are relying on public transportation, check the schedule and make sure your subway/bus/train is running. If a friend or parent is going with you, make sure they know what time you need to leave by in order to arrive on time. Note: "On time" is at least 15 minutes early!

TIPS FOR THE MORNING OF:

- **WAKE UP EARLY!** You want to make sure you get up 2 hours before the test so that your brain has plenty of time to warm up without adding unnecessary stress to the day.
- **EAT A HEALTHY BREAKFAST!** Just like you wouldn't play a rugby game on an empty stomach (or, I hope you wouldn't), you can't expect your brain to function at its best without proper fuel. Be very thoughtful about what you eat and drink, what medicines you take, etc. For example, if you eat too close to a test, your body may focus more energy on digestion than on thinking. But being hungry won't help either. Eat something healthy one to two hours before your test.
- **WEAR PROPER GEAR!** Just as you would dress appropriately for the weather of a rugby game, it is important to dress appropriately for a potentially chilled or overly hot classroom. The best way to ensure you are comfortable is by wearing layers.
- **GET IN THE ZONE!** Just like you are about to play in a big game, it is important to be in the proper mindset before this test. Take some time to relax, listen to music, or meditate.

You've got this!



STEP TWO: BEST FIT



FOCUS YOUR PRIORITIES

Did you know that as many as one in three college freshmen don't return for their sophomore year?

The reasons for this range from homesickness, to financial problems, to simply realizing they made the wrong choice. One of the most important aspects of our advisement is to help each student find their "best fit" college while they are in high school. This helps avoid the heartache and hardship of dropping out or attempting to transfer schools at a later date.

✓ STUDENTS: The first step to building your college list is to think about your priorities for your college experience. Are you looking for a particular program of study, like engineering or pre-med? Even if you aren't sure, figuring out at least a few majors that interest you will help narrow down your target college list.

ASSESS ACADEMIC GOALS

ACTIVITY: Begin thinking about what your future goals are by filling out this worksheet below. Use the 1st row as an example and choose 2 possible future careers.

POSSIBLE CAREER CHOICES	POSSIBLE COLLEGE MAJORS LEADING TO THIS CAREER
<i>Doctor/Physical Therapist</i>	1. <i>Biology</i> 2. <i>Kinesiology</i> 3. <i>Physiology</i>
	1. 2. 3.
	1. 2. 3.



ACTIVITY: Here are some questions to help you get started (adapted from CollegeBoard Big Future):

- 1. What are some things you feel you do well?** (Think about the talents you know you have and ask friends and family what they think you're good at.)
- 2. What challenges you?** (The things that challenge you might be opportunities to improve and move towards your goals.)
- 3. What do you like to do for fun?** (Think about the reasons you enjoy your favorite activities, the things they have in common and the strengths they bring out in you.)
- 4. What accomplishment has made you most proud?** (What you're most proud of can help you see what matters most to you.)
- 5. What's your favorite class?** (Don't limit yourself to subjects that are easy for you, Which classes make you lose track of time? Is it the teacher or the subject matter that holds your interest?)
- 6. What do you read about in your free time?** (What you read can help you figure out what really makes you curious.)
- 7. If you could do any job for a day, what would it be?**

Still have no idea? It's ok! Lots of students are interested in a variety of things and it can be very overwhelming to feel like you have to decide on a career right now. Take a deep breath. You don't have to have all of the answers right now.



Want to learn more?

Watch these Career Videos for inspiration:

<https://www.careeronestop.org/videos/careervideos/career-videos.aspx>



ASSESS ATHLETIC GOALS

In order to find the rugby program that will best fit your child's needs and goals, it is helpful to first understand the U.S. college rugby landscape followed by an explanation of the different types of collegiate programs available.

HOW COLLEGE RUGBY IS DIFFERENT

One of the most unique aspects of college rugby is that the vast majority are not overseen in the same manner that mainstream college sports are. In order to help you understand how rugby is organized, we will first explain how traditional U.S. collegiate sports are governed.

The teams and sports you most commonly see on TV (like football, basketball, and soccer) are regulated by a governing body call the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).



The NCAA (www.ncaa.org) serves as the governing body for 1,098 colleges and universities, 102 athletic conferences.

With the exception of 20+ women's rugby programs, rugby in the U.S. college rugby does not adhere to the NCAA divisions. Instead, they are directed by USA Rugby.

NCAA Divisions

DIVISION	#OF SCHOOLS	MUST SUPPORT	ATHLETIC SCHOLARSHIP?
Division 1	351	At least seven sports each for men and women (or six for men and eight for women) with two team sports for each gender.	Yes
Division 2	308	At least five sports each for men and women (or four for men and six for women) with two team sports for each gender, and each playing season represented by each gender.	Yes
Division 3	443	At least five sports each for men and women, with two team sports for each gender, and each playing season represented by each gender.	No

USA Rugby Collegiate Divisions

	# MEN'S TEAMS		# WOMEN'S TEAMS
USA Rugby D1-A	68	USA Rugby D1-Elite	4
USA Rugby D1-AA	101	USA Rugby D1	96
USA Rugby D2	130	USA Rugby D2	149
Small College	242	Small College	111
TOTAL	541		360

Unlike NCAA programs, which are essentially mandated to a division based on of which conference their institution is a member, college rugby programs have a much looser affiliation with divisions (more accurately described as “conferences”). This decision can be based on factors such as budget (e.g. travel expenses make it impossible for a team to join USAR D1A if the closest teams are all over eight hours away) or as a choice to create a more challenging schedule.

As a result, many teams compete in a “division” or conference that does not align with their institution’s NCAA athletics division (e.g. Colgate University is a NCAA D1 school whose men’s rugby team competes in D1-A, while their women’s team competes in D2 during regular season and moves into the Small College Division for post-season. Confusing, indeed!)

A highlight for many college players is making an appearance at any number of National Championship tournaments (15’s early-May, 7’s late-May, <https://www.usa.rugby/college/championships/>) where a men’s and women’s team are crowned national champions each year.

✓ **STUDENTS:** It is especially important for you to understand that the delineation between divisions among rugby teams is not as pronounced or clear as it is in other NCAA sports. Therefore, **focus on other areas of the college beyond just the rugby program.**



Karen on the match official team at HSBC 7s



ABOUT USA RUGBY



Founded in 1975, USA Rugby is the national governing body for the sport of rugby in America, and a Full Sport Member of the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) and World Rugby (WR). USA Rugby is charged with developing the game on all levels and overseeing four national teams, multiple collegiate and high school All-American sides, and an emerging Olympic development pathway for elite athletes.

USA Rugby underwent a massive re-organization in 2020 and there is still a lot of movement within all major departments. One of the biggest changes is USAR stepping away from management of the collegiate game and various other organizations stepping in. Examples include National College Rugby/NCR (formerly National Small College Rugby Organization) <https://ncr.rugby/>, American College Rugby Association/ACRA, American College Rugby/ACR and Collegiate Rugby Association of America/CRAA. College programs can remain in their divisions (D1A, D1-AA, D2, Small College) but may change which conference they are competing in. We strongly recommend researching your colleges to receive up to date info on this if this is a part of your college search criteria.

Want to learn more?

Watch this RETV Webinar on these updates from Fall 2020:
<https://www.ruggersedge.com/post/rugby-101>



Photo Credit: Life University Women's Rugby

USA RUGBY COLLEGE STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

In order to participate in any Qualifying Match (meaning, eligible for league standings, playoffs and championships), and in any National Collegiate Championship, the student-athlete must meet all of the following eligibility criteria at the time of competition:



Every student-athlete has seven years in which s/he may compete a maximum of five (5) seasons:

The seven-year period for College Rugby Eligibility begins in the Academic Year immediately following high school graduation date or the graduation date of his or her class (as determined by the first year of high school enrollment) or based on the prescribed educational path in the student athlete's country.



A student must request a waiver of eligibility to compete in his/her sixth (6th) year following high school graduation.

A student enrolled full-time in a post-grad or grad school can be eligible if within the seven-year window since high school graduation at the same or at a different institution. The college issuing the original degree must be within the United States (domestic). Players must be in compliance with all applicable amateur standards.



The student-athlete must be enrolled full-time as an undergraduate in their first degree or certificate seeking program and in good-standing, as defined by the university or college registrar, to be eligible to participate in their respective University or College rugby program.

A student-athlete may only represent the school in which (s)he is enrolled in qualifying competition.



A student-athlete within his/her final two undergraduate Academic Terms may carry less than a full-time academic load and still maintain eligibility. This is only permitted if the student-athlete is a graduating senior and a letter from the Registrar confirming such status is obtained.

More details located at: <https://www.usa.rugby/college/eligibility/>

Photo Credits: Penn State University Women's Rugby; Dartmouth College Men's Rugby; Furman University Men's Rugby; Quinnipiac University Women's Rugby

NCAA WOMEN'S RUGBY PROGRAMS

As previously mentioned, there is a growing number of varsity level women's teams (24) who do abide by the NCAA rules and regulations. These members compete in their own National Intercollegiate Rugby Association (NIRA www.nirawrugby.org) conference.

Division 1: Army West Point, Brown University, Dartmouth College, Harvard University, Long Island University Post, Princeton University (new 2022), Quinnipiac University, Sacred Heart University, Mount St. Mary's University

Division 2: Alderson Broaddus University, American International College, Lander University (new 2021), Molloy College, Notre Dame College, Post University, Queen's University Charlotte, West Chester University

Division 3: Adrian College (new 2021), Bowdoin College, Castleton University, Colby-Sawyer College, Manhattanville College, New England College, Norwich University, University of New England



NIRA

National Intercollegiate Rugby Association



ATTENTION FEMALE STUDENTS: If you are a prospective player for one of the NCAA compliant universities, you must register through the NCAA Eligibility Center in order to be recruited. (<https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>). For more information on the Eligibility Center, you can download the "NCAA Guide for the College Bound Athlete" from the NCAA website.

COVID-19 UPDATE: Some NCAA requirements MAY be waived (e.g. Test Scores) or adjusted (GPA Requirements). We strongly recommend you check the NCAA COVID News here: <http://www.ncaa.org/sport-science-institute/covid-19-coronavirus>



Want to learn more?

Watch this RETV Webinar on "All About NCAA Women's Rugby":

<https://www.ruggersedge.com/post/all-about-ncaa-women-s-rugby>



Photo Credit: Harvard University Women's Rugby

HOW TO DIFFERENTIATE RUGBY PROGRAMS

Now that you have an understanding of the overall collegiate rugby structure, there are two key areas families should focus on to determine “Best Fit”:

PROGRAM DESIGNATION:

The main difference among Varsity, Varsity Club, or Club lies in what college department oversees the rugby program. This often relates to how much administrative and financial support they receive.



CLUB

The majority of U.S. college rugby teams fall in this category and the level of competitiveness, support from the school and funding runs the full spectrum. A “club” typically describes a team that has no oversight by the Athletics Department and are overseen by the Student Recreation and Activities Department. They are financially self-supported (players tend to contribute dues or host fundraisers to cover the cost of running the team), and access to resources is limited (e.g. volunteer coaches, or administrative support). Some club teams are able to offset their total cost with contributions from the college’s club sports’ funds and alumni donations.

Take note that many club programs are just as (if not more so in some cases!) competitive and organized as their varsity counterparts. Do not discount a program simply because it is a club program!

Examples: St. Mary’s College of California, University of Virginia, University of Colorado Boulder

VARSITY CLUB (or “Quasi-Varsity”)

Also referred to as a “Team Sport” on many campuses. Varsity Club teams are usually overseen by the Athletics Department and has access to some of the resources their varsity counterparts do (but not of equal amount). For example, some teams may have a full-time staff coach but no dedicated facilities or fields. There is a wide spectrum of what Varsity Club teams can provide their players.

Examples: University of Arizona Men, Penn State University

VARSITY

Also referred to as “Intercollegiate” on many campuses. Varsity teams are usually supported by the college or university’s administration and is under the direction of the school’s Athletics Department.

Varsity programs receive the same support and resources that their mainstream NCAA counterparts do such as paid coaches and staff, early enrollment in classes, access to varsity weight rooms and training areas, medical support, uniforms and supplied equipment, and dedicated fields. These programs usually also have influence on the admissions process and some also have athletic scholarship money (but not all).

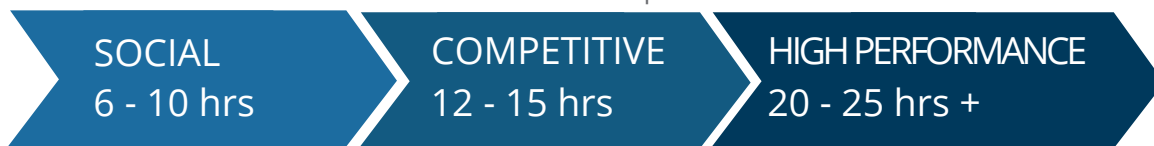
Note: NCAA Teams are all Varsity, but not all Varsity teams are NCAA.

Examples: Cal Men, Furman University Men, Quinnipiac University Women



PROGRAM LEVEL:

Instead of focusing too much on the Program Designation, I encourage you to do more research on the Program Level as described below. This is the most critical factor in finding the best-fit. The main difference between the three levels lies in the required time commitment.



SOCIAL

Social rugby teams tend to require less time commitment (e.g. practices two or three times a week, games on Saturdays). Players will still practice very hard and compete wholeheartedly on game days, but usually rugby is not the players' number-one priority. These teams typically have volunteer and/or player coaches and do not have access to dedicated rugby fields. Some social teams travel off campus to local city sports fields for practices and games. Many players pick up rugby while in college and are involved in many other groups on campus (Greek life, student council, etc.) and find rugby to be a great competitive outlet. Players with extremely time-consuming majors find that social programs are a great choice for allowing them to continue to play rugby, while still giving them plenty of time to devote to their studies.

Examples: Connecticut College, Vanderbilt University, Sonoma State University

COMPETITIVE

Competitive rugby teams strike a balance between the Social and High-Performance programs. Some are essentially run like a HP performance program but may not have as many requirements (e.g. no mandatory film or strength & conditioning sessions). While others may be more similar to a Social team, but with slightly higher levels of commitment expected from their players (e.g. required Friday fitness led by captains). Competitive teams tend to be a mix of new and veteran rugby players. Competitive programs are good options for those looking for organized programs, but who may also be interested in being involved in other activities on campus. This area of the collegiate landscape is the fastest growing segment in the college landscape.

Examples: Syracuse University, University of Notre Dame, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

HIGH PERFORMANCE

High Performance (HP) programs generally require the type of commitment level you would expect for a NCAA Division I mainstream sport such as American football, basketball, or volleyball. Competing for a spot on a HP team will require upwards of 25+ hours per week, which includes 4-5 mandatory practices, strength and conditioning sessions, film review, travel time, and mandatory study halls. HP players tend to arrive to college with at least a few years of experience; many at the representative or national level. HP teams may also include longer pre-seasons and/or practices during scheduled breaks such as summer, winter, and spring vacations. These teams typically have dedicated training facilities, paid coaches, and support staff. Many high-performance athletes admit that at this caliber you must be a master of time management and prioritizing in order to balance your rugby commitments with your academics.

Examples of High Performance Teams: Army West Point, Cal, Life University



Note: A varsity team does not always equal High Performance and vice versa. There are many programs which can be described as Club High Performance, or Varsity Competitive.

✓ **STUDENTS:** If there is a team you are interested in and you are unsure what level they are, take a look at the team's website, Facebook page, and videos online to help you determine that. Teams usually list their practice and game schedules, as well roster size and history which are good indicators.

Remember, deciding what type of rugby program you want is a personal choice. Some players I work with definitely know they want to dedicate a large portion of their time to their rugby team, while others would like rugby to play a much smaller role. There is no right or wrong choice, only what is best for you. Think about which type of rugby program do you think would be your best fit? Why?

▶ **Want to learn more?**

Watch this video about how to evaluate college rugby programs:

<https://www.ruggersedge.com/post/how-to-evaluate-college-rugby-programs>



Photo Credit: Central Washington University Men's Rugby



HOW TO BE A SUCCESSFUL COLLEGE RUGBY PLAYER

Written by Sean Duffy, Head Coach, University of Arizona

University of Arizona Head Coach Sean Duffy shares with us some key tips for future college players.

TIME MANAGEMENT

You'll have way more time than you are used to having and will have the urge to procrastinate. USA Rugby requires all student-athletes to be in good standing with their university to be eligible to compete, which for most that are on a 4.0 scale is a 2.0 GPA. Some teams go a step further and do grade checks or require higher GPAs. Texting your coach asking to miss practice because "I have to write a paper" translates to "I was assigned a paper and I'm waiting until now to do it so my lack of time management is going to affect the team."

STUDY LOCATION

Find 2-3 study locations so that you have options when, for example, the library gets crowded around exams. Study lounges in dorms on some campus are hardly used and usually fantastic. The student union/dining hall/cafeteria on most campuses empties out around exam time because everyone's in the library. Secondly, never study in your dorm. Keep that as a place to hang out, relax, sleep, and play video games.

High School students: think about where you do your homework now and whether that location is really conducive to studying. Find a place that allows you to focus and not get distracted by TV, a computer or other people.

GET TO KNOW YOUR PROFESSORS

Introduce yourself to your professors on day 1 so that they know you as a person and not just a student ID#. They will then already know you if you feel yourself struggling in your class and ask for help.

High School students: you can begin this habit by making sure you also get to know as many of your teachers too!

GO TO CLASS

Take your family's tuition bill for the year, divide it in half so you have the semester costs. Now take that semester cost and divide it by the number of courses you have. Take that number and divide it by the number of class days. When you skip, you're literally wasting that money. Show up. I know 8:00 a.m. classes are tough to make sometimes. But, if you're like most college students, in the remaining 5/6 semesters (or more) you're in college you'll get to make your own schedule. So, suck it up for the first three to four months of freshmen year and then your 8 a.m. are likely gone forever if you want them to be!



*Sean Duffy
Head Coach, University of Arizona*



INSURANCE

Get your insurance sorted out before play starts, so that if (and likely when) you have an injury you are ok. If you're attending a college out of state, sometimes it's better to purchase the university's insurance plan which will open up more doors for you care-wise in the event that you get hurt. Having to travel to the neighboring city because your family's insurance plan isn't accepted in the city of your college is a hassle.

High School students: do you know your current insurance plan?

MEDICAL RESPONSIBILITY

Communicate with your coaches on your injury status. If you make them chase you to see a trainer (if your team has one) or doctor, or if they're forced to operate not knowing your medical status, most will simply just rule you out. The second part of this is if you're sick... stay home. A small flu, virus, or case of strep throat can quickly spread through the team.

High School students: Start taking ownership of your medical care now by making your own doctor and dentist appointments.



Photo Credit: University of Arizona Men's Rugby

BUY IN

If there's an optional preseason camp, go. If there's an opportunity to move in early, do it. If there's an off-field thing where your coach needs help, do it. Service project, do it. Showing buy-in to the program is the #1 way to earn the respect of your new teammates. Don't be the kid that talks about your HS Rugby success all the time and wears your HS Rugby gear to every session. Your new teammates don't care. Work hard, buy in, and you'll have a full team of new brothers before you know it.

MANAGE CRISIS

Transferring is an option if things really get bad, but quite often students that do regret it. Quite often thoughts of transferring come from homesickness, frustration with rugby, academic troubles, or minor things which at the time will feel huge like your roommate situation, weather, etc. Every single person in college has gone through something similar at least once. Establish allies in the university, such as a teammate, particularly one who's an upperclassman. I can guarantee someone in the program has gone through what you're going through. Don't make rash decisions. After a year, still not a fit? You tried. Explore options. After two weeks? Relax. Take a breath. Your family has likely paid for the semester already anyway.

COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR PARENTS

Send them the game schedule. Call them once a week, once every few days to start the first year. Trust me.

Want to be a Wildcat? <http://www.arizonarugby.org/recruits>



HOW TO FIND BALANCE AS A STUDENT-ATHLETE

It can be hard to find balance as a student and as an athlete. In the last month, I have had more meetings with students on weeknights (as late as 9 p.m. in some cases) and weekends because many simply have no other time to squeeze in a session with me. Teens share how stressed and anxious they feel most of the time, with more asked of them on a daily basis. I confess, I may be part of the problem as I often talk about students needing to take rigorous classes, adding activities to bulk up their resumes as well as, of course, continuing to work on their fitness, strength, so on and so forth. A recent heart to heart with a student made me sit back and think about ensuring that my message of “doing more” wasn’t at the expense of doing harm to a student. So, to that end, I came up with a few things I think students and parents should discuss as a family and come up with a BALANCED plan:

HOW MUCH SLEEP ARE YOU GETTING?

This is a good question to start with. The student above was getting approximately 6 hours of sleep a night. Definitely not enough for a growing teenager. The National Sleep Foundation notes that adolescents should be getting anywhere from 8-10 hours a night. Over time, the cumulative effects of not getting enough sleep can be extremely detrimental not only to your physical well-being (how well will you perform in training or in a game if you’re tired and drowsy?) as well as your mental health (how can you focus on studying, tests, writing essays?).

Three things to aim to do:

1. Turn off screens at least 30 to 60 min before bedtime. Even if you aren’t tired, try to read a paper book, magazine or journal. Your brain can be tricked into staying up later by the light in these screens which will lead to less restful sleep.
2. Keep to a schedule. Have a set bedtime and wake time every day. I know it is tempting to stay up late on the weekends and sleep in, however, this will only go to mess up your routine more during the week.
3. Limit your caffeine intake during the day, nothing past 2 p.m. in the afternoon.

HOW MANY SPORTS ARE YOU PARTICIPATING IN?

Often my students are feeling especially harried because they are playing 2, 3 sometimes even 4 sports on top of jobs, community service and more! At a certain point, you have to learn to pick only the activities you really want to focus on, especially if the time commitment is affecting your school work. I typically ask students to pick the things they are MOST passionate about. Leaving a sport or activity won’t look like a “failure,” it will be looked at as prioritizing your time. This is a skill you will need in college, I promise you! I brought this up with a student recently who felt so pulled by all of her coaches, she finally decided to walk away from a sport she had been doing “her whole life” because she realized that she had only been staying in it out of habit, not because she enjoyed it. By saying no to one thing, she was then able to say yes to an activity she longed to do, but never had time for (joining a local yoga class).



From a college perspective, it would be looked at better for a student to only be in a few activities he/she was deeply and passionately involved in vs a lot of activities that he/she really had no interest in. Write down all of your current activities and rank them from most important to least important. Could you take 1 or 2 activities off the list?

HOW MUCH STRESS ARE YOU EXPERIENCING ON A DAILY BASIS?

While it is normal to feel some stress sometimes, what is NOT normal is to feel stressed all day, every day. Take a minute right now and take stock of how you are feeling. Is your mind racing? Are you nervous about something coming up, or are you running over something that happened a couple days ago? Try this simple exercise to ground yourself in the moment and bring you back to the present. I find that when I am also feeling out of control, this 30 second exercise helps me feel much calmer and more focused.

- What are 5 things you see?
- What are 4 things you hear?
- What are 3 things you smell?
- What are 2 things you feel?
- What is 1 thing you taste?

If you find that the anxiety really is affecting more aspects of your life (your sleep, your eating, your mood, you're always sick), it may be time to see a doctor. You might first start with your pediatrician or family doctor to rule out an illness or you can also speak with your school counselor and see what resources you may have in your community to help with stress.



Photo Credit: Penn State University Women's Rugby

DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FURMAN RUGBY PLAYER

Andres Mejicanos, Florida, Junior

Former Rugger's Edge student

Primary Rugby Position: 8-Man

Why did you choose your school?

Andrew: I chose Furman University because I knew I wanted to continue to play rugby in college, but I didn't want to sacrifice academics in order to do so. Furman allowed me to get a rigorous education while also having the opportunity to play high-level rugby.

What was your process of being recruited?

Andrew: Due to my late start in rugby (the summer before my junior year of high school), I was very behind in the recruitment process. I attended a camp in Dartmouth the summer before my senior year, which allowed me to get exposed to some schools but not as many as I would have liked. The Rugger's Edge helped me to get into contact with schools, one of which was Furman. From there I created a rugby resume and emailed it to the head coach of Furman Rugby who at the time was John Roberts. From there, Coach Roberts and I arranged for me to come on an overnight visit in the fall of 2017 where I met with the team and was exposed to all of the benefits of Furman Rugby. During the spring of 2018, Mike Miller became the head coach and reached out to me to share that he would still love to have me on the team. I then later committed in April of 2018.

What are your favorite parts about being a member of the rugby program?

Andrew: My favorite part about the rugby program is that it balances being a player and a student. Furman Rugby is a very high performing program, but Coach Mike Miller is very supportive of us getting the full Furman experience. Furman Rugby's flexibility allows me to participate in a high-level program while also being involved in other extracurriculars such as the Furman University Student Activities Board and Sigma Nu fraternity.

What are your favorite parts about being a student at your school?

Andrew: My favorite parts about being a student at Furman University both stem from Furman's small size: the community feel and challenging academics. At Furman, you always feel as though people want the best for you, including teachers, administrators, students, or coaches. This, blended with challenging academics makes you realize that people want to see you succeed, but they will not put in the work for you. Furman is challenging and encouraging, allowing students to develop in more profound ways than at a bigger school.

How do you balance schoolwork and rugby?

Andrew: I balance schoolwork and rugby mainly through the help of my teammates. To



Photo Credit: Furman University Men's Rugby



play for Furman Rugby, you must meet specific academic requirements. The bond between teammates extends past the field, and each player helps to keep one another accountable as much as they can. In addition to the accountability from teammates, I am also involved in other extracurriculars which require me to have a strict schedule. As Coach Mike Miller always says, "Start On Time, Stay On Task, Stop On Time. SOT Always."

What does a typical day and/or week look like for you?

Andrew: A typical week for me is pretty busy. Being a full-time student I have classes Monday through Friday, but I'm typically done in the early afternoon. In addition to class, I have rugby practice three days a week for an hour and a half in the evenings and rugby games are always on Saturday. I also have weekly board and committee meetings for the Furman University Student Activities Board and a weekly chapter meeting for the Sigma Nu fraternity.

What's the biggest challenge about playing rugby at your school?

Andrew: The biggest challenge about playing rugby at Furman is living up to the reputations of players before me. Furman Rugby has consistently recruited strong players and, as a club, Furman Rugby saw a lot of success very early on thus setting a precedent for the culture of the team. Although Furman Rugby is not a varsity program, we operate at a varsity level and our goals are set high every year because Coach Mike Miller knows what we are capable of even if we lose sight of it sometimes.

Besides rugby, what else are you involved in on campus?

Andrew: Besides rugby, I am involved in the Furman University Student Activities Board and Sigma Nu Fraternity.

Is there anything else you'd like to share with a high school player who is interested in your school?

Andrew: Visit. On paper, I was a little hesitant about Furman because of the size. But when I came to visit, I realized that there is so much more to Furman than any online video or email could ever convey. Furman does not just create great rugby players and students, but it also fully develops very capable young adults who will take the lessons from their Furman experience out into society.



Photo Credit: Furman University Men's Rugby

ASSESS FINANCIAL NEEDS

Does your family absolutely need scholarship money in order for your child to attend college, or would it just be some nice icing on the cake? Understanding what your family needs will vastly increase your child's ability to narrow down and build an appropriate college rugby list.

First, you will want to calculate your "Estimated Family Contribution" (EFC). The Department of Education offers an online "EFC Calculator" to get you started: <https://collegecost.ed.gov/>. Once you know your EFC, you will be able to:

Estimate how much your family will be expected to contribute to a college or university for the year.

Gain insight into your child's financial aid eligibility.

If your family is unable to contribute the entire cost of college, financial aid is available to bridge the gap. The difference between the total cost and the student's EFC is considered the student's financial need and the amount of aid you're eligible to receive.

If you have a specific college in mind, you can get a more accurate estimate of your real cost by using the net price calculator on their website. Net price is the full cost of attendance minus the grants and scholarships you receive from the college. A college's net price calculator uses their financial aid policies to calculate its estimate.

Once you have a rough projection of how much a university will cost, consider how you plan to contribute to your child's higher education and don't forget to take into account "personal expenses" such as cell phone or internet bills, rugby team dues, and meals. How do you and your child plan to cover these costs? Do they plan to have a job or partake in a work-study program? Do they plan to apply for additional scholarships?



Photo Credit: McGill University Women's Rugby

✓ **STUDENTS:** Start by being realistic about your family's income and budget (over four years, not just one!), consider the cost of siblings also attending college in overlapping years, as well as considering your expected earnings after you graduate. Students should not take on loans that s/he will not be able to pay back. The college loan crisis is at an all time high with the average student loan debt at over \$31,000! A general rule of thumb is to limit the amount of student loans over four years to no more than you expect to make in your first year out of college (e.g. \$25,000 total for a prospective entry-level office employee).

ACTIVITY: What is your Family's EFC?

College 1:	_____	EFC:	_____
College 2:	_____	EFC:	_____
College 3:	_____	EFC:	_____
College 4:	_____	EFC:	_____

Note: Don't dismiss a college simply because of its sticker price. Do the calculations and see what is best for your family's financial needs. More times than not, schools that seem more expensive have deeper pockets and can give aid more readily.

Now that you know your family's EFC, we can talk about how your child's rugby can help discount your total college cost.

HOW RUGBY CAN HELP GET YOU INTO COLLEGE AND PAY FOR IT

Rugby is experiencing an amazing boom in support from their college administrations. Over the last few years, we have seen a marked increase in rugby programs who have athletic scholarship money available to prospective players. Many of the most talented rugby players are able cut the cost of their college attendance by half (e.g. scholarships upwards of \$20,000 or more!), with many others being able to combine different types of scholarships to completely cover their costs. The collegiate rugby world is changing each year and we expect more programs to be added to this list in years to come.

One of the most exciting developments has been the growth of college programs who may be unable to provide direct athletic scholarship for a prospect but can provide valuable assistance in the form of admission support.





ADMISSION SUPPORT: There are two “buzzwords” regarding the type of support college rugby coaches can provide a player:

1. **ADMISSION INFLUENCE:** Many varsity programs may be able to offer you both scholarship money AND help influence your admission to their school. Admission Influence normally involves being able to have your application receive an “Early Read” from admissions and receiving a “Likely Letter” or assurance from the admissions department that you will be admitted. However, some may only be able to offer you admission support but not any money. It is important to find out what type of support a program can give to your candidacy.
Ex: Army West Point (M & W), Dartmouth College (W)
2. **ADMISSION INPUT:** There is a growing number of non-varsity programs who have formed positive relationships with their school’s admissions office and therefore are able to provide input into admissions decisions (often phrased as “we can flag your file with admissions.”) While this is by no means a guarantee that you will be admitted, in a hyper competitive admissions system, simply having someone on campus advocating for you can go a long way!
Ex: Syracuse University (M), Penn State (M & W)

It is important for you to ask a coach what type of support he or she is able and willing to provide you before you commit to that program.

There are three different types of scholarships available to a rugby player (not counting Need-Based Financial Aid):

Merit Scholarship

This is money offered to you for a combination of things such as your academic profile (e.g. GPA, test scores) and other areas of your character (e.g. leadership, community service). In most cases, you will receive more Merit Aid than Rugby Athletic Scholarship money, and scholarships can be combined into a total package.

“Alternative” Scholarship

This is money offered to you in the form of tuition discounts (e.g. In-State Tuition Waivers/Discounts) or outside scholarships (e.g. CA Rugby Club Alumni Scholarship).

Athletic Scholarship

This is money offered to you strictly for your rugby talent. This is unrelated to your academic record or need.



Rugby scholarships for both men's and women's programs operate similarly to the NCAA Equivalency model meaning there is a certain amount of money made available for a specific sports program (e.g. \$50,000) which can be split up among multiple players in the form of partial scholarships. Most families hear the word "scholarship" and begin to envision dollar signs - but be forewarned! As noted previously, equivalency scholarships indicate there is scholarship money available however, a program can be selective about how they distribute it.

Rugby players can receive anywhere from \$500 - \$20,000 in athletic scholarship money. This is renewable each year, but not guaranteed. For the most part, athletes who stand to gain the most in scholarship money will use a combination of both athletic scholarship (based on their rugby talent and potential to add to the program) AND merit scholarship.

Rugby Scholarship - In Reality

JOHNNY RUGBY	RUGBY UNIVERSITY
Family Budget: \$20,000/year	Cost of Attendance: \$40,000/year
4.0 GPA, 1300 SAT	Merit Scholarship: \$15,000
Regional All-Star, Captain, great leader	Rugby Scholarship: \$10,000
Expected Family Contribution: \$15,000	Cost of Attendance: \$15,000

✓ STUDENTS: Financial Aid starts with the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA - <https://fafsa.ed.gov>). Fill out the FAFSA Oct 1 of your senior year and continue to do so for each academic year that you will attend school. Ensure you have your family's tax returns ready from the previous year in order to fill this application out accurately. If you wait for April 15th, most financial aid will have been distributed already. When it comes to aid dollars, it is "first come, first served," and when the money is gone, there is no more to distribute to late filers. Remember: The financial aid application process is separate from the application process!

NOTE: Some schools won't consider you for any of their scholarships (including merit scholarships) until you've submitted a FAFSA. With this one application you can apply for financial aid at multiple colleges and from multiple funding sources (federal, state, institutional, and private providers of assistance). Many private schools also require an additional application called the CSS Profile (<https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org>). Check to see if your schools are on this list.



CREATE YOUR “COLLEGE WISH LIST”

Many students have NO idea where to start when thinking about all of the attributes that make up an amazing college experience, such as campus atmosphere, student life, and other activities. I encourage parents to have a conversation with their child about what he or she likes best about their high school experience. Factors that contribute to their success and happiness now will continue to support their achievement in college.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CHILD:

- **Are you someone who lives for Friday night football games and cheers on your team all weekend until you are hoarse?** If so, he or she will likely feel at home somewhere that prides itself on its high levels of school spirit (e.g. UCLA, University of Michigan, University of Oklahoma).
- **Do you love having a strong relationship with your teachers and being able to see friends as you walk to class? Or do you think you would enjoy the anonymity of large classes and meeting new people every day?** If he or she is more of the former, a smaller school where he or she can continue to have a strong sense of community with their peers and professors may be a good fit (e.g. Saint Mary's College of California, Bowdoin College) while the latter may point to a preference for a larger school (e.g. The Ohio State University, University of Arizona).
- **What do you like to do on the weekends? Are you someone who loves finding adventure in an urban city setting? Or, would you prefer a more mellow choice like hanging out with friends at a local park?** These choices may point to your child either finding happiness at a campus well-known for its proximity to a metropolitan city (e.g. Seattle, San Francisco, Boston, New York), while the latter may point to a more laid-back college town (e.g. Davis, CA, Madison, WI, Eugene, OR).



STUDENT COLLEGE WISH LIST

ACTIVITY: Below, list your top five “must-haves” at your dream college.

EXAMPLE	MY COLLEGE WISH LIST
1. Competitive rugby	1.
2. Northeast	2.
3. Small/Medium (less than 20,000)	3.
4. Engineering major	4.
5. Open to urban, suburban, or rural	5.

Finding Your Match: Once you have your Wish List items, use the College Board “College Search” located at <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search> and plug in your Wish List items into the “filters” to create an initial college list.

EXAMPLE	MY COLLEGE LIST
1. Dartmouth College	1.
2. Syracuse University	2.
3. Princeton University	3.
4. Bucknell University	4.
5. Drexel University	5.
6. University of Delaware	6.
7. SUNY Binghamton	7.
8. Ithaca College (3-2)	8.
9. Colgate University (3-2)	9.
10. Norwich University	10.

Note: The College Board’s search engine does have a “Rugby” search filter, but sometimes it is not current. For added information, cross-reference your list with our College Lists (located at the end of this book).

Still having a tough time finalizing your college list? Discuss your goals and interests with your high school counselors, coaches, parents, mentors, and college admissions professionals to help you make the best choice for your future. Remember, the college search should be about finding the “best fit” college for YOU, not for anyone else. Take a deep breath and reflect on the things that are most important to you and your success.

Ask yourself: **“Would I be happy on this campus even if I did not play rugby?”**



THE IMPORTANCE OF COLLEGE VISITS

✓ **STUDENTS:** Now that you have a rough college list, it is always advisable to visit college campuses and “kick the tires,” so to speak. There really is no substitute for visiting a campus in person to get a sense of what a college is really like. If you begin visiting colleges early, this can help you further figure out your “must haves,” which can ultimately result in a more successful college match.

SOME COLLEGE VISIT TIPS:

1. As the student-athlete, do the majority of the planning. You should register your family for visits, calculate the amount of time you will need on campus as well as travel time if you intend to visit more than one campus in a day. If your travels include flights, take the opportunity to learn how to search for and book your own flight. This will show you what kind of a process is in store for you should you should choose to attend this school.

2. If possible, always take the official walking tour and attend the admissions information session. In most cases, students are required to register ahead of time and during popular times of year, these tours can fill up so plan accordingly! A walking tour typically lasts anywhere from 1.5-2 hours and is led by a knowledgeable current student ambassador. These students are a wealth of information and I find are the best people to ask questions to get some “unpolished” answers to tough questions such as “is there anything you don't like about this school?” Try to stay at the front of the group so you can hear everything the tour guide is saying. The info session is led by a member of the admissions team and generally goes over highlights about the school as well as covering topics such as what the school is looking for. At a recent visit to Colorado College, the admissions counselor shared their process of looking through applicants as well as the impact of interviews. To hear



Photo Credit: Brown University

firsthand from a college's admissions professional is a great way to answer any questions you may have that you can't find on their website.

3. Prior to a visit, think about some questions you would like to have answered during the tour or info session. Even if you ask only one of them, it will help you continue to play an active role in this decision-making process. Asking similar questions at each school will also help you compare the same information at each place so that you're able to assess the options "apples to apples."

4. Feel out the rugby program if possible. Email a coach prior to your visit and ask to meet him/her while you are there. Most coaches are more than happy to meet prospective students, show them the athletic facilities; even have students observe a practice. Even better, take a look the upcoming fall schedule and see if you can come visit when there is a home game. Ask current players what they like most or what they dislike about studying and playing at the particular college. Also, take special care to watch the level of play – do you feel as if you could compete for a spot or would you sit the bench every year?

5. Lastly, try to find some time to check out the surrounding town. Most students don't spend 100% of their time on campus and it is important to see what else is going on. Is there a happening music scene? Movie theater or a lake/river/beach close by? The bottom line is to see if you can picture yourself attending, playing, studying, and being happy at this school.

PARENTS: Allow your child to take the lead on asking questions throughout the tour. Too many times I have seen well-meaning parents overshadow their children on tours by monopolizing the conversation. Some students prefer to sit back and observe. If this is the case for your child, take a deep breath and don't feel as though you have to fill the air. Allow your child to buy-in to this process.

COVID-19 UPDATE: Many colleges have suspended in-person college visits. They have, however, added many options to discover their colleges in a variety of unique ways from current student panels, to live walking tours, take a look at their "visit" options to explore what colleges have to offer from the comfort and safety of your home.



Photo Credit: Furman University

COLLEGE VISIT CHECKLIST



To make the most of your college visits, make a copy of this checklist and fill one out each time you visit a college.

College Name: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Size: _____ Tuition: _____

Financial Aid/Scholarship Options: _____

Admissions Contact: _____ Email: _____ Phone: _____

Rugby Team Contact: _____ Email: _____ Phone: _____

TO DO CHECKLIST

Tour campus	Look at school bulletin boards
Attend info session	Meet rugby coach
Check out residence halls/dorms	Talk to students/current rugby players
Sit in on a class	Check out rugby facilities (field, weight room, field house, etc.)
Eat at cafeteria	Tour city around campus
Read school newspaper	Picture yourself living here

ASK A STUDENT

What is the best part about this college?:

What do students do on the weekends?:

What would you change about this college?:

Why did you choose this college?:



QUESTIONS TO ASK ON A COLLEGE VISIT

QUESTIONS FOR THE ADMISSIONS OFFICE:

1. How many students return after their freshman year?
2. What percentage of students graduate in 4 years? In 6 years?
3. How safe is the campus?
4. Is there an Honor Code? How does it operate?
5. Are there job placement services when I graduate?
6. How easy is it to change majors?
7. What is the largest class size I can expect as a freshman or sophomore?

QUESTIONS FOR A CURRENT COLLEGE STUDENT OR TOUR LEADER:

1. How many of your courses are taught by a professor and how many by a teaching assistant?
2. Is the teaching innovative, discussion- and project-oriented, or is it mostly lecture-oriented?
3. What are the strong majors and what are the weak majors?
4. How hard do you have to work to get good grades?
5. What reputation does the department of _____ have?
6. What do students do on weekends? Do they all go home or hang around on campus?
7. How much help outside of the classroom do you get from professors?
8. Do people participate in the activities, groups, and clubs on campus? Or are they dominated by a few groups?
9. How is the quality of food in the cafeteria or dining hall? How are the sizes of the portions? Is it healthy or fast food?
10. Why did you choose to attend this school?





STEP THREE: RECRUITMENT



COLLEGE RUGBY COACHES

Some athletes and parents have the notion that coaches will come to you. Unfortunately, that isn't how athletic recruiting works in the rugby world.

Today's recruiting game is all about being proactive. Student-athletes (especially seniors!) should not sit around and wait for coaches to come to them. College rugby coaches do not have the budget to travel and scout players the way traditional sports like football or basketball do.

Coaches cannot help you in this process if they don't know you. Once you have your ideal college list, it is on your shoulders to begin the hard work of reaching out and building that relationship.



Karen (in green) with college coaches at the Girls High School Single School Nationals 2019

- **BE PROACTIVE IN THE PROCESS AND START EARLY.** Coaches like to see persistence because it shows the prospect is serious about playing at the next level. We highly recommend contacting coaches no later than your junior year. If a program has an official Prospective Questionnaire, fill it out ASAP. If you are planning a visit to a campus, email the coach ahead of time and request a meeting.
- **BE STUDIOUS.** The better your grades and standardized test scores, the more options you will have. If you have both academic and athletic ability, your chances of getting into the college of your choice are enhanced, as are your chances of enjoying the experience, too.
- **DO YOUR RESEARCH.** The best way to find out whether a school is right for you is to take a campus visit, tour the facilities, and watch a game. Research the college's academic program you are interested in so you can tell the coach exactly why you want to attend that college. You should have reasons you want to attend beyond the rugby team!

SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT "YIELD": Even if a coach is unable to offer any official support for your application, more and more colleges will take note if you have made contact with an athletic team on campus. These days, with the huge increase in the number of colleges students apply to, it is becoming extremely difficult for colleges to tell which students would actually enroll if admitted (known as the college's "yield" rate). In an effort to increase their yield, many colleges now look for signs of "demonstrated interest" or, in other words, evidence that if admitted, you will enroll. Lots of applications now ask if you have ever had contact with someone on the campus or ask for an essay explaining how you plan to add to their community. Being able to name a college coach you have been speaking to will help you stand out over other applicants who don't show any extra initiative to get to know the school better.

HOW TO HANDLE COLLEGE COACHES

Written by University of Arizona Men's Rugby Head Coach Sean Duffy

So, you get the call, email, or a coach comes up to you. It's a college coach, and they want to talk to you about joining their program. Awesome, right? Well it is, and this is the coach who you could be playing for over the next four years. But what's the best way to handle communicating with that coach during the recruitment process and when should you make your decision?

1. RESPOND TO COMMUNICATION

If you want to stay on the radar screen, respond to emails or calls. If you're busy? Just say so. They understand you have a life, and often you're playing another sport like football that takes up a lot of time. Most coaches have been there, and they get it. I know one coach that if you don't respond within a week, he crosses you off his list.

2. ASK QUESTIONS

You don't have to know the history of the school or anything like that, it's my job to tell you. But to not have a single question about the team, players or school gives the impression you don't care. No question is stupid. (Ok, maybe some are. One kid asked me how soundproofed the library walls were – that was weird.) But most questions are not stupid. Ask!

- What are the admission requirements for an athlete?
- Will my specific major interfere with the athletic schedule?
- What does the training program consist of at your school?
- What is a typical "day in the life" like for a member of the team during the season?
- What is a typical "day in the life" like for a member of the team during the off-season?
- What's your policy on Freshmen playing time?
- Do you allow players to play for national teams?
- How many players will you have next year who play my position?

3. SPEAK UP, THEN HAVE PARENTS SPEAK

I know a lot of parents are reading this, so let me first say how much I love you. You are the stockholders in this business, and you should be asking a ton of questions...however, it is a red flag to me when the parent speaks and the player is silent. In about 70% of recruiting cases I will have a separate call or email chain with mom and/or dad, and that's great. But if I don't hear at all from the player, that's concerning. If a parent tells me his son is very interested and I have yet to hear from that player, that's a bad sign and typically goes to the bottom of my recruiting pile.

4. FOOTAGE > REC LETTERS

Game footage is what I want to see. Doesn't have to be a highlight tape, but that's cool too. A letter of reference from a high school coach I've never met telling me how good you are does not help me when I have no idea who your coach is. Oh, and do not send weight room numbers. Nobody's reading them. (*Note: this can be dependent on certain coaches. There are handful who do value seeing stats and numbers).



5. DECISION TIME DO'S AND DONT'S

This one is a really, really important one. Probably the most important one. Here is how you should approach the decision. After you've made your decision, you should 100% notify all coaches who are recruiting you that you are not coming. If you really want to be nice, notify coaches after you've narrowed down your list. Now I know that's uncomfortable but TRUST ME you are doing them a favor by freeing them up to go recruit others. They will thank you. A quick email or a phone call is great. Don't do it via text. 99% of coaches will say "no worries, if you change your mind let me know."

6. SIGNING DEADLINE IS NOT A THING

If any coach tells you "you have to make a decision by this date" he's lying to you and afraid you're going to go somewhere else. It's not a thing in College Rugby, and never has been. *(Note: this can be dependent on certain programs – especially Varsity or NCAA programs.)*

7. PROOFREAD YOUR EMAILS

I know many of you will write one email, and then send that to 5-6 different colleges. That's fine. But make sure you put the right name in the right email. "I've always wanted to go to ___" and having it not be the correct school happens quite a bit and can be pretty embarrassing. Also, tons of typos can show a lack of attention or care in this communication. If you really are interested in a school, take your time and put together a well-written email.

8. BE PATIENT

Most coaches take a while to respond. Many are not full-time coaches so they have other full-time jobs during the day and then coach and administer rugby in their spare time. If they take a while, cut them some slack. I'm full-time and it even takes me a while sometimes when we're in-season.

Want to learn more?

Watch these RETV Webinars about rugby recruiting in a pandemic:

<https://www.ruggersedge.com/post/rugby-recruiting-during-a-pandemic>

<https://www.ruggersedge.com/post/men-s-college-rugby-recruiting-update-december-2020>



Photo Credit: University of Arizona Men's Rugby

TYPICAL RECRUITING TIMELINE (JUNIOR-SENIOR YEAR)



PARENTS: EMPOWER YOUR ATHLETE TO TALK TO COLLEGE COACHES



Photo Credit: Quinnipiac University Athletics

Written by Quinnipiac University Women's Rugby Head Coach Becky Carlson

It happens every Fall. The inboxes of our coaching staff fill up with emails and questionnaires. Back-to-back national championships attract attention and we take time to look at the next potential athletes.

With so much recruiting material to sift through, about one third of the candidates make it past the first stage of sorting. Each coach in each college sport has their own process, their own season and their own specific timeline. The information below shows you how our process works. Remember, every program is a little different. This brief piece is intended to help you. Challenge yourself as a parent to see the good in this advice that can - and maybe will - sting a bit.

To begin, allow me to present some basic numbers that grant a small peek into what many coaches are dealing with in terms of volume, interest and communication.

Our program receives over 100 questionnaires and around 75-100 individual resume online packets throughout each year. These include emails of interest and a variety of other gimmicks sent by paid recruiting services. Of those athletes submitting questionnaires, depending upon their year in school and whether they are eligible for contact per NCAA rules, about half will receive packets of information or some form of digital return requesting playing schedules, film or various other items to evaluate skill.

Approximately 25-30 of those 50 athletes will receive phone calls. About 15-20 will receive in-person, coaching staff evaluations. At the end of the day, out of 100-plus candidates, as an equivalency sport, between 5-7 official visits will be offered and those athletes will receive partial scholarship offers. Keep in mind this means that 5-7% of each recruiting class pool will receive opportunities. Depending upon roster and sport, classes may be smaller or larger but the percentages are still small. Yes, I realize many of you have probably seen the statistics on the small margin of athletes who



Photo Credit: Quinnipiac University Women's Rugby



receive scholarship opportunities. As a result, and to help many more athletes in the process of helping themselves, here are my brief pointers to parents and their athletes on how to stay out of the early throw-away pile. Again, each coach is different, but I have a sneaky feeling with the “sense of entitlement” and “helicopter parenting” topics most of you have read about or been accused of, many coaches may see commonality with these points, so listen up.

1. If you (as a parent) are shouldering the majority of the effort in the recruiting process, the coach can always tell.

At one point in my career I had a prospective student-athlete writing to me weekly. That was quite impressive. When I started to notice a striking similarity between the athlete's misspelled words and the mother's I politely asked the athlete about one of the emails I received. Over the course of the conversation the athlete casually admitted that she had not been authoring any of the emails over the last few months. Those emails describing her deep interest to attend were written by her mother. While this was deeply embarrassing for the athlete and not her fault, it was alarming for our staff to feel we had been falsely assuming we had developed a quality relationship with the athlete herself.

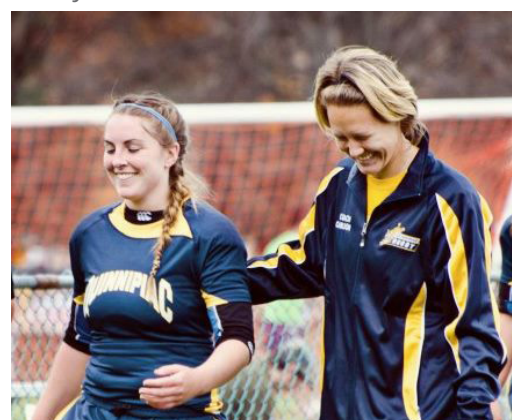


Photo Credit: TheRecruitingCode.com

Keep in mind that while those time-consuming and expensive full-color recruiting packets you put together for your child are aesthetically pleasing, they hold no more weight than a personal email directly from the athlete themselves. Emails or calls from the athletes are free of charge and allow them to practice professional contact.

In my experience the first packets to be relegated to the NO pile are the ones written directly from the parent(s) expressing every detail of how talented, intelligent and involved their student-athlete is. As coaches, we are more concerned how invested the student-athlete is. Granted, there is absolutely nothing wrong with guiding your child in this process which can be full of questions and challenging at times. However, the moment the sentence “WE want a spot with your program” or “It's OUR dream to play at your university” appears, it could also be the moment a coach imagines you running blocker in every challenge your child faces for the next four years. Even if you are not that parent, perception is reality.

2. Do not call a coach to market your child.

As I coach a women's sport, one of the most reoccurring themes in the conversations I have with parents is centered around an explanation that their daughter is a great athlete but she is on the shy side, lacks a bit of confidence, or maybe she doesn't like talking on the phone.

Take my advice. None of these characteristics are likely to change if we are not allowing our athletes the opportunity to become stronger in those areas. Removing initiative from their plate isn't helping them. You take control thinking your child will have a stronger chance if you lobby for them, but that is extremely nearsighted.



If your child does not like talking on the phone or is too shy to call a coach, it may be time to ask them what it is they truly want. Try having an honest conversation with them and explain that even if you call on their behalf and are successful in garnishing attention, how do they believe that is helping them for the future? Try giving them examples of new, inevitable conversations about scholarship, school visits, academics or any other issues about their education that may arise in the next 4 years. Perhaps follow this up with points demonstrating how showing initiative to the coaching staff is the best way to prepare and practice for harder conversations that are bound to happen in the future.

When all else fails, having their high school or club coach speak to them initially is another avenue. Athletes understand that practice makes you stronger and more prepared for games, so this comparison helps them see the bigger picture. High school coaches and club coaches are more than happy to make the introduction call with their take on your child as an athlete. If it helps, imagine that your child is in a race in the recruiting process. You can assist them by cheering them on and supporting their training beforehand. However, you cannot be the starter gun, nor can you run the race for them.

3. If a coach does indeed respond to your marketing emails or phone calls, be grateful and pass the baton to your child as soon as possible.

If your child is the McDonald's Player of the Year, Gatorade All-American or is the state champion in his or her sport four years in a row with a 4.3 GPA and perfect SATs, it's likely they may make it to the second round. However, think long term.

What do you want your child to gain out of the recruiting experience? More importantly, what are your child's own goals? If they are successful in the recruiting process, the next four years of their life will be full of conversations concerning playing time, time management, team rules, standards, professor conflicts, personal relationships, etc. These are real factors of college life that will require independent decision making. To complete all the legwork for the athlete in the early stages cheats them out of their first steps to making hard choices and facing hard consequences. Brace yourself. They're going to need to be able to do this without your help.

Upon receipt of these types of inquiries and market strategies by parents, they will receive this template email.

Dear _____,

Thank you for your email and for the detailed packet on your student-athlete.

Our staff's assessment of each student athlete's interest in our program can best be determined by a demonstration of initiative from the athlete themselves. While parental enthusiasm for the recruiting process is expected, to be consistent with our standards as a successful program, we are committed to evaluating and considering those candidates whom take an active interest in personally pursuing their opportunities.

As the recruiting process is the ideal platform for every student-athlete to demonstrate their goals and desires, we invite you to embrace this positive opportunity to encourage your athlete to contact us directly.

Go Bobcats,

Coach Carlson



4. Support your athlete by listening, gently encouraging and stepping back.

I have come across many wonderful, supportive parents in my 10 years in NCAA athletics. For those athletes who did not make it to the next round, I genuinely hope they end up somewhere that makes them happy and meets their personal needs. In many cases of those who have not advanced to the stage of being offered an athletic scholarship - while it is evident to our staff that the parents and the athlete have different goals - it is not always as evident to the parents.

I have watched loving parents who naturally want to see their child attend the college that they desire regardless of what kind of fit they are for the institution and vice versa. Remember, as you offer up your credit card number to pay the video editor for your child's highlight film or complete the 50th email blast of the night to your child's top pick of schools, please remember that while initiative shows you what a person wants, absence of initiative is a strong indication and message of what they do not want.

Listen to your athlete, and when you are exhausted from sending emails and digital athlete resume packets out by the dozens, be kind to yourself knowing you want the best. But remember, if your athlete is not sitting right next to you, or is not actively involved, it's saying something.

5. Understanding and applying advice 1-4 are only your first steps.

Following each of these points up with consistency in the process isn't easy. You may want to jump in when things become tough or even when your child is rejected or there is no response from a coach or school. Regardless of what kind of history your child has as an athlete with winning, losing can be good for them in the sense of having to go to plan B or the third school of their choice.

There are endless scenarios in the recruiting process where you are needed – things like finances, student-athlete medical or health plans, meal plans and various other steps where you have an integral role. Cherish these steps and be supportive, but when it comes to initiative with what could be their future coaching staff and teammates, take a step back and do your best to let go.

@TFCoachCarlson #FEARLESSCOACHING

Want to learn more?

Watch this video:
<https://www.ruggersedge.com/post/rugby-chat-with-coach-carlson-quinnipiac-university>



Karen talking with parents at the U.S. Collegiate Development Camp



COACHES ARE ALWAYS WATCHING YOU

More than once, I have had coaches tell me it is always easy to spot the most talented player on the field, but the giddiness of finding an athletic gem can quickly be overridden by the negative character faults they see.

There are a couple of pitfalls I constantly encounter when I am out at the pitch – be sure to ask yourself:

Are you prepared? Are you the player who shows up to a game late, missing a mouthguard, and is still getting taped when everyone else is already running a lap? These small things point to a much larger issue. If you already have these bad habits now, will they turn into a bigger issues in college?

Are you supportive of your teammates? Are you the player who gets angry at the teammate who mishandled your pass? Or, are you someone who pats them on the back and says, “it’ll be ok, we’ll get the next one”? You don’t have to be the designated captain to be a leader on the field. Coaches are always looking for someone who will add positivity.

How do you treat the ref? As a ref, I may be a bit biased here, but if you are a player who constantly talks back to the ref, the assistant refs, or even other parents (yes, I have seen this!) you are a huge problem waiting to happen. Also, if a coach sees you getting a yellow or red card, they quickly learn what kind of player you may be under pressure.

How do you act on the sideline? What happens if you aren’t a starter? Do you sit on the bench and sulk, or do you actively cheer on and support your teammates, ready to go in as soon as the coach calls your number? How you act when you are NOT on the pitch is just as important as how you act when your hands are on the ball.

How do you act at the end of the game? Win or lose, do you shake your opponent’s hand sincerely? Do you stay around to help your coaches break down the field? Do you console teammates who may be upset over a loss? Even if the game is over, your behavior is a testament to your character and something that many college coaches will keep an eye on.

How do you act on social media? How you act virtually is a reflection of you. Don’t post anything online that could potentially create a reason for a college coach to see a red flag. This goes for anything that could be considered racist, misogynistic, hateful, or simply of poor taste and character. If you are having thoughts of “should I post this?” - Don’t.

Want to learn more?

Read this article:

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/open-letter-athlete-we-must-stop-recruiting-becky-carlson/>



Karen with Justin Moss, Harvard University Women's Rugby Asst. Coach



RUGBY RECRUITING GUIDELINES

As more college programs are able to recruit in the traditional sense, I want to ensure that students and parents are aware of conduct that is expected and things that are red flags. Recruitment is a funny process because, for the most part, we urge students to be proactive and do all of the communicating, however, this does not mean parents, high school coaches and other invested adults should be left out of the conversation.

COMMUNICATION

While I do stress that for successful college recruitment, communication should be between a student athlete and college coach (meaning the parent(s) should not be the one directing all the communication. Any communication between a player and college coach should be messages that a student is comfortable showing a parent. In most cases, I recommend that students email college coaches and cc their parent(s) on the communication so everyone is on the same page.

I would urge that you stick to email for all recruiting communication instead of using text, Facebook/Facebook Messenger, Instagram, or any other social media platform. If a coach reaches out to you first through social media, I would move the conversation over to email and follow step 1 above. You can be friendly in your conversations, but you are not friends.

RESEARCH

Anyone stating they are a part of a college program should be easily identified through the rugby team's website (listed under Staff or Coaches). Just because someone says they are a part of the team and could "help you" does not make it so. Do your due diligence and make sure the person you are talking to truly part of the program. The Director of Rugby or Head Coach is the person who can speak to your chances of admission or scholarship.

IN-PERSON MEETINGS

If you meet with a coach in person, meetings should take place in an official meeting place (e.g. a coach's office, athletics department meeting room). If you're meeting off-campus, meetings should be in a public location. At no point should you have to go back to a coach's hotel room or something to that effect to discuss recruitment. Anything a college coach says to you in person should be something he/she can say in front of your parents or high school coach.

RECRUITING TRIPS

On recruiting trips (unofficial or official), there should be a detailed agenda of your visit that your parents should be provided ahead of time. The itinerary should list with whom you will be meeting, when, and where. All contact information should also be listed. It goes without saying, but under no circumstances should you be put in a situation where you are uncomfortable or feeling unsafe. If this happens, call your parents and leave the school immediately.

SPEAK UP!

If you (the student) ever feel like a college coach (or even a college player!) crosses the line with you, please tell a trusted adult ASAP. You should not feel ashamed or that you did anything wrong. You will not "lose a scholarship" or your college admission if you report someone for acting inappropriately. You can always report to Safesport anytime. Bottom line, the recruitment process is for the student athlete to drive the process, but the parent(s) are still along for the ride. They MUST be included in all conversations. If a coach resists this, there is a problem.



RECRUIT VIDEO DO'S AND DON'TS

In a perfect world, a college coach is able to see a rugby player live, either at a local game, a tournament, or at a rugby camp or clinic. This gives them the very best indication of a player's skills as well as their demeanor on and off the pitch. However, the majority of college rugby coaches do not have the time or budget to travel so rely on film.

1. DO Introduce Yourself:

Make an opening slide with this info: a) Your name, b) Your high school and year in school, c) Your color and number, d) Height and weight, e.g. 1) Matthew Smith, 2) Anytown High School, Junior, 3) Blue #7, 4) 6'1", 205 lbs
Additional info such as the date and game details can also be helpful.

2. DO Stay Quiet:

Continuous yelling in the background detracts from the quality of the rugby footage. We recommend finding a relatively quiet location to shoot the video, or simply mute the audio when sending the video.

3. DO Find an Optimal Filming Location:

Film from an elevated position looking down onto the field, even if it is only a few steps up on the bleachers.. This gives the best perspective to see the entire pitch (and helps with keeping the noise level down (see #2).

4. DON'T Make a Highlight Reel:

Phase play allows a coach to see not only what you do with ball in hand, but what you are doing off the ball, which can often be even MORE important to a coach than single plays. We encourage you to send an entire game film, but note the sections where you make some key plays (e.g. at 7:05 I break the gainline and score our first try).

5. DON'T Focus on Yourself:

Rugby is the ultimate team sport and coaches must see how you work within the context of your team. Great plays don't make a great player. Coaches must see your decision-making skills in conjunction with the actions and results (e.g. did you break your defensive line to make that great tackle? Did you make that run, but should have passed in a 2-on-1 situation?).

6. DO Point Yourself Out (When Possible):

Many software programs (like Hudl) allow a player to pause the video during a play and highlight him or herself with an arrow. If you have the capabilities, this helps a coach quickly identify you throughout a film.

7. DON'T Add Music:

Too many times, players add their favorite song to "spice up" their video and the explicit lyrics end up turning off the coach who is watching it. There is no need to add music to your videos; rugby is exciting enough without it!

8. DO Upload Videos to a HUDL, YouTube, Vimeo Channel:

Gone are the days of sending DVDs to coaches. The easier you can make it for a coach to recruit you, the better your chances. Create your own online channel and simply send the page link to your list of coaches or include in your resume. As you update your channel with new videos, you can notify the coach to check back.

9. DO Include Additional Skills Clips:

Scrum-half, Full-back, Fly-half, Wing: Proficiency at kicking for touch, at goal, box kicks, grubbers. Demonstrate technique, accuracy, distance, endurance

Hooker: Throwing. Demonstrate accuracy, strength, proper technique

Props: Engaging (either against opponents or against a sled). Demonstrate technique, leg drive, core strength.

10. DO Follow up:

Sending a video to a coach and then expecting to be recruited isn't likely. We encourage you to follow up with the coach preferably on the phone and ask if he or she received the video, watched the video and what the next step might be in the recruiting process.



CREATE A STANDOUT RUGBY RESUME

Many students have already downloaded the Rugby Resume template from the Rugger's Edge website, and I am always surprised to see so many sent to college coaches missing critical pieces. Remember, in many cases, this is your first opportunity to make a great impression so take time to do this right. Before you send a resume to a coach, make sure to spellcheck and grammar check. Better yet, ask a trusted adult to also look it over just in case you missed something.

- 1. Contact Info** – You would think this does not need to be said, but make sure the contact info you list here is updated and correct! Do not list an email you don't check or a home phone that no one answers. This is the first place a college coach will reach out to you so make sure this part is the fastest way someone can get a hold of you. That being said – CHECK YOUR E-MAIL! I know most teens rarely check email, but in the professional world, everything runs through email. Coaches are not going to text you with their interest; they will email you. If you don't respond in a timely manner (24-48 hours), most will assume you are no longer interested and move on. Make sure this doesn't happen to you.
- 2. Photo** – A clear head shot can help coaches distinguish you from others. When a coach is talking to many different student athletes at once, it is really helpful to do anything you can to remind him or her who you are. Like a passport photo, keep things simple: no sunglasses, hats or distracting clothes.
- 3. Updated Academic Info** – We are looking for most updated cumulative GPA – this means your GPA from the start of 9th grade until now. They do not care that last semester you had a 4.0 if the year before that you had a 2.0. Coaches need to see the entire picture. You waste a coach's time if you are not being up front about what your academic record has been. If there was a reason for poor grades, you can always make sure to explain this to a coach ahead of time. Also, make sure you continue to update this each year – the last thing you want is a coach to disregard you because they still think you are in Grade 10 when in reality, you are in Grade 12.
- 4. Rugby Accomplishments** – We are only looking for rugby involvement/accomplishments that have occurred while you are in high school. No one cares if you were the "Man/Woman of the Match" while playing Under-8s. As with #3 above, continue to update this with each rugby season since it is often the case you may forget accolades as the years go on. Make sure to break out different teams such as Academy Teams, All-Star Teams, Club Teams, High Schools, etc.
- 5. Include links to game film** – I understand that many teams do not film, but this is becoming increasingly important. If at all possible, find some game film, upload it to your own YouTube or Vimeo channel and include this link on the resume. Many students have also had a lot of success using the HUDL platform to create easy to watch videos that help highlight who you are on the field.



SAMPLE RUGBY RECRUIT RESUME

Matthew Smith

123 Any Street Rd. Anytown, CA 12345
Home (333) 123-1234 Cell (333) 123-1234
matt@anyemail.net

[Insert headshot
picture here or
center student's
name and address]



Parents' Names, Phone, Email: Cory & Sue Smith, 888-888-8888, thesmiths@anyemail.com

Birth date: 01/01/2004

Height: 6'0" Weight: 215lbs

Primary Position, Alternate Position(s): Hooker, Loosehead Prop

Statistics (Optional, Delete if None Available): 4.8 40m, 11.5 100m, 11.5 Beep Test, 200lb Max Bench, 300lb Max Squat

Education:

Anywhere High School, 123 Any Rd., Anytown, CA 12345, 858-555-5555

Current Grade: 11th, Class of 2022

School Counselor: Ms. Jane Park, 858-555-5555 x555, jdoe@anywherehigh.com

GPA: 3.85 Weighted

Academic Honors:

Junior Year: *Science Olympiad Finalist*

Rugby Coach:

- Joe Martin, Anytown High School Coach, 888-888-8888, Joe@anyemail.com (2 years)
- Matt Johnson, Anytown Rugby Club, 999-999-9999, Matt@anyemail.com (5 years)

Rugby Accomplishments:

- Selected to Regional All-Star Team 2018
- Co-Captain of the Forwards U-18's Any Rugby Club Team (2018-present)
- Champions of Anywhere Town Region, Any Rugby Club Team, undefeated season (2017)
- Captain of the Forwards for U-16's Any Rugby Club Team (2015-2017)

Other Athletic Accomplishments

- Any High School Football Team, Starting Fullback & Linebacker (Frosh, Junior Varsity)
- MVP for Any High School Junior Varsity Football Team (2019)

Upcoming Schedule/Video Links & Press Links: (Optional – If none, Delete This Line)

Leadership/Community Service/Work Experience:

- Eagle Scout 2022 (Expected)
- Treasurer, Key Club, Anywhere High School (2018-Present)
- Host, Any Restaurant, Anytown, USA (Sept 2018-Present)

Potential Collegiate Majors:

Engineering, Biology



Download an editable version
here
<http://bit.ly/2ih4Fx1>

INITIAL EMAIL TO COACHES

Here is an example of an initial contact email you can send to a college coach along with your Rugby Resume, a copy of your school transcript and test scores. Make sure to personalize it and make it sound like YOU wrote it; **don't just copy and paste!** Ensure you have the CORRECT COACH(ES) name(s) matching the CORRECT college in each email. Double check everything before hitting send.

Dear Coach _____,

Hello! My name is _____ and I am a YEAR IN SCHOOL at _____ High School in CITY/STATE. I will be applying in the fall of YEAR. I have been playing rugby for ____years and am very interested in playing for your program. I am a HEIGHT and WEIGHT lbs POSITION. Some of my stats* include: 40 time _____, Bench: _____ lbs, Squat: _____ lbs, Power clean: _____ lbs., Beep Test _____ (*Only include if known)

I am happy to tell you my current GPA is a _____ and am currently taking # AP/IB classes next year. I have attached my athletic resume and a copy of my current transcript as well. I recently took/plan to take the ACT/SAT on (DATE) and scored a _____. Other test scores are also noted in my resume.

Most recently my team (INCLUDE ACCOMPLISHMENTS IF APPLICABLE e.g. "won the Northern California state championships.")

When I visited/when I researched your school, I am most excited about the _____ (explain what you like about the school, the atmosphere, the rugby program etc. – be enthusiastic!)

I want to go to COLLEGE NAME because I plan to major in _____ and COLLEGE NAME has an amazing undergraduate _____ program.

Please let me know if there is anything else you need from me and thank you for taking the time for your consideration. Look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Phone:

Email:



ALL-STAR TEAMS & REGIONAL CUP TOURNAMENTS

The All-Star Team model has been a part of USA Rugby's National team selection pathway for a long time evolving as the overall structure of rugby has evolved with Men's & Women's Collegiate (aka U-23) and Senior-level All-Star Teams competing in tournaments against each other. The mission of the model has remained consistent – to allow the best players in each region to both compete in front of National Team Selectors and represent our country.

As the pathway for National Teams has also evolved, all-star teams are no longer the the sole method of being seen for National Team selections but it has remained an important part of the overall process with top-notch tournaments like HS

Nationals, Fullerton International Tournament, and Great Northwest Challenge being created on top of the geographic all-star teams. Starting in 2016, USA Rugby adopted a number of these high-level regional tournaments and folded them into the previous all-star model, renaming them "Regional Cup Tournaments."

Tryouts for all-star teams typically start in the spring. Once selected, they will compete against other such teams at any of the Regional Cup Tournaments, and, just as the generation before them, compete for a chance to be selected to a High School All American squad. Many all-star teams also compete in other elite competitions like 7s specific tournament such as Tropical 7s or the North American Invitational.

Another good reason to play on an all-star squad is the opportunity to challenge yourself and see how you compare with other players in the same age group but from a different part of the country. I think it's a great educational moment for a player who may be the top player in their region to go up against a top team and see how they truly stack up.

Lastly, Regional Cup Tournaments are also becoming a common place for college coaches and reps to attend and scout prospective talent similar to how many other sports recruit. This year, each tournament is focusing their efforts on inviting and encouraging colleges to attend their tournaments and see high level rugby from across the country.

Bottom line, if you have the opportunity to try out for your All-Star team, take it! It's your chance to not only represent your region, show off what you have, and also take your shot to be seen by National Team selectors. Good luck!

USA Rugby Re-Organization Update: With USAR updating many of its youth and high school models, the Regional Cup Tournaments may be re-branded as something else or may take on less of a "national" model and tournaments will simply be stand-alone events.



Photo Credit: American Rugby Pro Training Center

HOW TO CHOOSE A RUGBY CAMP

As previously mentioned, camps are quickly becoming the go-to place for coaches to assess prospects. Here are some important things to bear in mind as you make decisions about attending a rugby camp:

- 1. History of Camp & Background/Experience of Coaches and Staff** – Every year, more and more summer camps pop up and, while it can be very exciting to have more options, the downside is that not all camps are created equal. It is important to look into the background of not only the camp (e.g. Is this their first year running the camp? If this camp is overnight, how are staff assigned?), but also of the coaches involved (e.g. What is their rugby teaching background? Do they have experience coaching in a camp setting?). You might also inquire what other activities are included with the camp. For example, we partner with various camps (such as the US Collegiate Development Camp) to provide academic advising.
- 2. Benefits** – What are the unique benefits of attending this particular camp? Will it help your child gain admission or recruitment support? For example, many colleges and universities make their summer camp essentially mandatory (e.g. Life University Rugby Camp and Cal Varsity Rugby Camp) if you want to be considered for a recruitment slot, whereas NIKE camps offer players a chance to build technical skills.
- 3. Focus** – Is there a special focus to this camp? Some camps focus on overall development in 15's, while others are more 7's focused or position focused. Consider which skills your child is hoping to develop.
- 4. Age Group** – Ask about the age group of the majority of campers attending the camp. A camp might be open to a broad age range, but gains such a following with older high school and college players that the intensity level might become a bit much for a U12 or U14 player. Other camps skew younger and might not be challenging enough for older players.
- 5. Cost** – Finally, take a look at the cost. Depending on your child's needs and goals, it might make more sense develop your skills at a local camp close to home.

Whenever possible, try to get references from the camp director and speak to a few families who have attended the camp before.

COVID-19 UPDATE: In 2020, all camps were shut down due to the pandemic. In 2021, things are still up in the air as to whether or not camps will occur. If they do, chances are likely they may look very different than in years past. You might expect smaller cohorts of players, day camp only options, mask requirements and non-contact rules. If a college program you are interested in DOES have a camp, we do still encourage you to attend as coaches may still want to meet you and see some of your skills in person if possible.



Karen as Match Official at Tropical 7s in 2019

FEATURED RUGBY CAMPS

Here are our 2020's Featured Camps, all of which were sadly canceled due to COVID-19. These programs may or may not be able to host camps in 2021. Check with each program for the most updated detail.

Also check out our list of Rugby Camps: <https://www.ruggersedge.com/recommended/rugby-camps/>

NIKE RUGBY CAMPS

10 LOCATIONS NATIONWIDE

Cal RUGBY

CAL VARSITY RUGBY CAMPS

BOYS AGES 14-18
JULY 21-24

CalSportsCamps.com

LINDENWOOD RUGBY SUMMER CAMP

LED BY NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP WINNING COACHES
BILLY NICHOLAS & JOSH WADY
LEARN FROM PAST & PRESENT LV & PRO PLAYERS

WHEN & WHERE
JUNE 25TH-JUNE 27TH
ST. CHARLES, MISSOURI

WHO CO-ED CAMP
ALL RISING 8TH GRADES THROUGH SENIORS
RESIDENT CAMPER \$350
COMMUTER CAMPER \$275

HOW TO REGISTER AT:
[HTTPS://WWW.LINDENWOODLIONSCAMPS.COM/](https://www.lindenwoodlionscamps.com/)

AMERICA'S TOP RUGBY CAMP

US Collegiate.org

Live the dream

SUMMER RUGBY CAMPS IN NEW ZEALAND

FOR MEN & WOMEN

Experience the life of a full-time rugby player in New Zealand. Play club rugby and train full-time with world class coaches.

4, 6, 8 & 12 WEEK CAMP OPTIONS AVAILABLE FROM JANUARY- DECEMBER 2020

Book Now! Contact us at: mike@insiderunning.com

INSIDE RUNNING ACADEMY
The Ultimate Rugby Development Experience

www.rugbyacademy.global

2021 HIGH SCHOOL PLAYER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

- Rugby Development
- S&C Programming
- Nutrition
- Mental Skills
- Individual Development Plans
- Tournaments
- 12 Month Programming

MORE INFORMATION VISIT
WWW.AMERICANRUGBYPRO.COM
RYSIARD.CHADWICK@AMERICANRUGBYPRO.COM

POLAR BEAR RUGBY CAMP

AT BOWDOIN COLLEGE

Top-rated liberal arts college with varsity program Prospect and development camp for HS and college women in beautiful Brunswick, Maine

REGISTER AT POLARBEARRUGBYCAMP.COM

VARSITY RUGBY ACADEMY

DARTMOUTH COLLEGE
JUNE 28-JULY 1, 2020
GIRLS AGES 12-18

ALL SKILL LEVELS WELCOME!

WWW.VARSITYRUGBYACADEMY.COM

BROWN RUGBY SUMMER CAMP

2020 **NORTHEAST ACADEMY**

BROWN RUGBY

JULY 31 - AUGUST 2

ELITE INSTRUCTION FROM BROWN UNIVERSITY COACHING STAFF & NORTHEAST RUGBY ACADEMY

SIGN UP @: <http://brown.edu/go/RugbyCamp/Summer>

ARMY WEST POINT RUGBY

2020 BOYS RUGBY CAMPS

PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT CAMP
JULY 20-22 (AGES 10-14 + 14-18)

COMPETITION & ANALYSIS CAMP
JULY 23-26 (AGES 10-14 + 14-18)

WEST POINT, NEW YORK
THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY

ARMYWESTPOINTSPORTSCAMPS.COM

JULY 06 & 07 2020

CRIMSON RUGBY CLINIC

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

GIRLS & BOYS

CRIMSONRUGBYACADEMY.COM

FURMAN RUGBY CAMP

July 8-12, 2020
Boys ages 12-19

www.furmanrugbycamp.com



STEP FOUR: APPLY



MAKE YOUR COLLEGE APPLICATIONS STAND OUT



Photo Credit: Carolyn Fong Photography

THE BASICS: The fall of your child's senior year is when he or she will begin applying to colleges. Each school will have their own method for accepting applications. Some use their own individual application (most public state university systems, such as the University of California, have their own), while others use the Common Application (www.commonapp.org), Coalition Application (<http://www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org/>) or Universal Application (www.universalcollegeapp.com).

To find out what application different colleges use, go to each college's website and click on their "Admissions" page. Deadlines may change every year so be sure to check for these specific dates.

KEY TERMS:

- **Early Decision (ED): ED plans are binding—a student who is accepted as an ED applicant must attend the college.** ED deadlines are typically November 1st, with notification coming around mid-December. You may only apply to one college via ED. Many college coaches who can provide Influence or Input will request your child applied ED.
- **Early Action (EA): EA plans require students to apply by an earlier deadline (typically November 1st), but are non-binding.** Students receive an early response to their application, but do not have to commit to the college until the normal reply date of May 1st. You may apply to multiple colleges via EA.
- **Regular Decision:** The standard application timeline with RD deadlines is typically around January or February, with notification around mid to late March.
- **Rolling Decision:** Rolling decisions allow universities to admit and enroll on a "first come-first served" basis; meaning, as soon as applications are received, they are processed, and students will receive notification much earlier in the application window.
- **Statement of Intent to Register (SIR):** You must submit your SIR to your choice college by May 1.



✓ **STUDENTS:** Completing a college application goes beyond filling in boxes on forms:

1. **Check your spelling and grammar carefully and have someone look it over to be certain you have not included any simple mistakes.** Keep it real. Do not exaggerate accomplishments or claim things that are not true.
2. **One of the most important parts of the college application is the personal statement.** Be sure your essay tells a coherent story and doesn't just repeat your list of activities or accomplishments. Your essay should be a genuine reflection of YOU; reveal facets of yourself, your life, and your personality that make you unique. It is a good idea to write a rough draft in order get your ideas down clearly on paper. From there, you can continue to get feedback, revise it and submit a great essay.
3. **If your colleges require letters of recommendation from teachers, advisors, or coaches, be sure to give these mentors enough time to write and submit by the stated deadlines.** Many high schools require these requests be submitted by certain dates – check with your school ahead of time to make sure you don't miss these deadlines!
4. **Be sure that every required part of the college application is included.** Most colleges require an official transcript and test scores to be sent from the testing agency. If you are applying to a design school or performing arts program, they may also require an audition or portfolio of your work. Make note of application deadlines, and if early decision or early action admission is offered, it can be a great idea to take advantage of that opportunity. Often times, admissions rates are much higher in these early rounds.
5. **Keep it clean online.** Do not have anything on your social media pages (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) that you would not want a college admissions officer to see. Type in your name on search engines and see what the results are.
6. **Continue communication:** After you apply, make sure to give your application number to the coaches you have been in touch with if they are able to help support you.

APPLICATION TIMELINE:

- **SUMMER BEFORE SENIOR YEAR:** Brainstorm and begin first drafts of essays
- **SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER:** Complete and submit Early Decision (ED) or Early Action (EA) applications by November 1 (check school website for their stated deadlines).
- **NOVEMBER/DECEMBER:** Complete and submit Regular Decision (RD) applications.
- **JANUARY-MARCH:** Receive acceptances
- **MAY 1:** Submit Statement of Intent to Register (SIR).



COLLEGE ESSAY PREP

College admission officers want to get to know you in your essays, but how can you write about yourself if you have never taken any time to think about who you are? What is important to you? What are you passionate about? Sometimes the hardest part is simply getting something down on paper.

ACTIVITY: The following worksheet will help you get your creative juices pumping as you begin to draft your college essays. Answer the following questions about yourself as completely as possible:

- What are some of my strongest abilities?
- What things interest me most?
- What activities, people, places, or things make me feel really happy?
- What issues, world problems, and current events concern me most?
- What are my personal strengths? (e.g. I get along with people, I'm not a quitter, I am a good friend, etc.)
- How could I improve myself?
- What challenges have I overcome?
- Who do I look up to and why?





WRITE AN AMAZING COLLEGE ESSAY

Many of the schools you are applying to will use the Common Application (www.commonapp.org), which is accepted by more than 700 member schools. It makes applying easier as you only need to fill out one standard form which can be sent to multiple schools. All of the schools on the Common Application require a personal statement answering one of seven essay prompts (see blue sidebar). It is important to note that some schools require supplemental essays or portfolio items as well if you are applying to specialized programs.

It is possible that you will apply to a school that is not on the Common Application therefore, you may have to respond to a different essay question. Many times, the essay you have written for your Common Application schools can be carefully edited to answer a similar, but different question.

These tips are primarily directed to the Common Application questions, but they can be generalized to all essay questions.

- 1. Familiarize yourself with the questions.** Read them over several times and make sure that you understand what each question is asking.
- 2. Once you have read the questions, ask yourself if there is one that immediately appeals to you.** It is important that the topic you pick is something that matters to you—something that you feel passionately about. The college essay is one of the few spaces in the application where you can provide the officers of admission with qualitative information—information that shows who you are as a person, not just as a GPA or a test score.
- 3. Don't be afraid to write too much.** Sometimes it is hard to narrow things down on a topic. We find that it works best to get everything you are thinking onto paper first, and then to cut it from there. It is much easier to work with too much than too little!
- 4. Don't expect the first draft of your essay to be nominated for a Pulitzer Prize.** We have read countless of college essays and have never seen a first draft that could immediately be submitted. College essays require time and thoughtfulness to make an impact.
- 5. As cliché as this sounds...have fun!** You are an exceptional student athlete, have so much going for you, and deserve to talk about what a phenomenal person you are! Enjoy this process!

2020-2021 Common App Prompts

- Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
- The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
- Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
- Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma - anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.
- Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
- Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
- Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

MAKE YOUR ESSAY STAND OUT

Maybe you have already gone through a few rounds of editing your Personal Statement and you're pretty confident your essay is complete. Try using the following questions to carefully critique yourself to ensure you have written a compelling essay that will help you stand out to admissions officers.

- 1. Is it a topic you care about?** Do you care about it enough to endure revising it 10 times? If not, choose something else that you would enjoy writing about!
- 2. Does it show growth or transformation?** If your essay starts off talking about who you were as a 14-year-old, make sure that you demonstrate how you have matured since then. You want to show how you have developed as a person: how your beliefs have evolved, how your behavior has changed, and how you have grown emotionally! Admissions officers want to see that you have grown over the past several years and that you will continue to mature when you attend their college.
- 3. Does it make you look good?** I know that from a young age we are taught not to brag, but the college essay is an exception to the rule. While you don't want to explicitly state that you are the absolute best human in the whole world, you want to show the admissions officers how special you are. This is your time to shine! You should ask a friend, family member, or teacher to read over your essay and determine how you are perceived. Are your exceptional leadership qualities being adequately highlighted, or have you made yourself come across as cocky and tyrannical? The college essay is like working in public relations—we want to spin everything to make you look phenomenal.
- 4. Does it raise any red flags?** There are some things that should not be written about in college essays, or at the very least should be approached with great caution. I would generally advise avoiding writing about mental illness or self-harming behaviors. While this might be a topic that means a lot to you, and might demonstrate great personal growth, admissions officers might be concerned about your future stability (as unfair and unjustified as that might be). If you do choose to talk about one of these topics, be sure to have an expert look it over before you submit it!
- 5. Is it about you?** Make sure that your essay talks about yourself. While you may have written a very compelling essay about your grandmother's transformation from a 50's housewife to a progressive feminist, you want to make sure that the essay says something about YOU. Remember: your grandmother is not the one applying to college. The admission officers want to know what separates you from everyone else.
- 6. Does it show who you are as a person?** It is important that your essay accurately describes you. Once again, call on a friend or a family member and ask them to look over your essay. Ask them to if it captures your true essence. We want the essay to completely reflect who you are as a person.



- 7. Does it show, not tell?** One of the shared traits of most poorly written college essays is that they “tell” instead of “show.” By this I mean: don’t tell me how responsible you are by writing, “I am a very responsible high school student.” Instead, show me! For example, if by that statement you really mean that you are responsible because you take care of your little sister while your mom is at work seven days a week, show this.

Use detailed language to describe a moment in which you demonstrate your responsible nature. Help me visualize how every day after school you pick your little sister up from elementary school, walk with her back to your house, prepare an afternoon snack for her, and monitor her as she does her homework. I want to see what you see; I want to smell what you smell; and I want to experience ALL that you experience. A good essay transports the reader and helps them live your life. While this may be hard to accomplish at first (once again, not all of us have tons of experience with creative writing), it is absolutely possible through revision and guidance. Have faith in your writing abilities!

For additional inspiration, please check out some of these “Essays That Worked” presented from a variety of colleges and universities:

Johns Hopkins University: <https://apply.jhu.edu/application-process/essays-that-worked/>

Connecticut College: <https://www.conncoll.edu/admission/apply/essays-that-worked/>

Tufts University: <https://admissions.tufts.edu/apply/advice/past-essays/>

 **Want to learn more?**

Watch this video:

<https://www.ruggersedge.com/post/make-your-college-essays-stand-out>



Photo Credit: Carolyn Fong Photography

YEAR-BY-YEAR COLLEGE PLANNING CHECKLIST

More complete answers to specific academic questions can be found either with your academic counselor or Rugger's Edge advisor.

GRADES 9 & 10

- Start planning now!
- Work hard to get the best grades possible.
- Take classes that match your high school's list of college-approved coursework.
- If you fall behind, do not take shortcuts. Classes you take should be those that are four-year college preparatory.
- If you receive a less than satisfactory grade in a college-required course, there is time to repeat the course and improve your overall grade point average.
- Visit college campuses and start thinking about what you want out of a college.
- Create Rugby Resume
- Create initial college list
- Join activities at school

GRADE 11

- Study and register to take the ACT, SAT, or both and more than once, if needed.
- Continue to take college preparatory courses.
- Focus your college list.
- Begin contacting coaches.
- Explore career interests and majors.
- Before registering for classes for your senior year, check with your high school counselor (or with a Rugger's Edge advisor) to confirm the number of core courses you need to complete in order to graduate next year.
- Finalize college application list.
- Attend summer college rugby camp to increase recruitment odds.
- Take on leadership roles in your activities.
- Continue to update your Rugby Resume.



GRADE 12

- Take the ACT and/or SAT again, if necessary. The majority of colleges will use the best scores from each section of the ACT or SAT to determine your best cumulative score.
- Apply to colleges (and double-check deadlines!)
- Follow up with college coaches.
- Continue to take college-preparatory courses.
- Continue to work hard to get the best grades possible.
- Fill out FAFSA in October
- Graduate on time (in eight academic semesters).
- Write thank-you cards to everyone who helped you (e.g. teachers, counselors, coaches)
- Register by May 1 or other stated deadline.
- Send final transcript to chosen college.



Photo Credit: Dartmouth College Athletics & Doug Austin



COLLEGE RUGBY LISTS



Mount St. Mary's Men's Rugby
Photo Credit: Mike Miller Photography

FEATURED COLLEGES

SIENA RUGBY
A PROGRAM ON THE RISE

\$52,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS, GUARANTEED*

HOME TO ONE OF THE TOP RUGBY FACILITIES IN THE NORTHEAST AND SITE OF THE 2018 NSCR REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Siena.edu/Rugby

6-Time Big Ten Universities Champions '13 '14 '15 '16 '17 '19

Honoring Our Past, Empowering Our Future

Indiana University Men's Rugby Club

INDIANA INSC

Email us at hoosierugby@gmail.com for more information

www.IURugby.com @RugbyIU @RugbyIU

Aquinas College Mens Rugby

Head Coach: Lance Hohala
Email: lh006@aquinas.edu
PH: 616.426.1261

Website: aqsaunts.com/sports/mrugby

Recruit questionnaire: admissions.aquinas.edu/register/recruit_mensrugby

D1A Varsity Program
Academic and Athletic Scholarships Available

MOUNT ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY
Men's Rugby

THE MOUNT

@MOUNTRUGBY @MOUNTRUGBY

HEAD COACH | JAY MYLES
240.367.7431
MYLES@MSMARY.EDU
<https://www.mountrugby.com>

CBU

CHRISTIAN BROTHERS UNIVERSITY
MEN'S & WOMEN'S RUGBY
SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

ADRIAN COLLEGE
MEN'S & WOMEN'S RUGBY

BULLDOGS RUGBY

WOMEN'S HEAD COACH: John Gulden
MEN'S HEAD COACH: Benny Mateialona

Men's Rugby: @ac_mensrugby
Women's Rugby: @adrianwrugby

adrianbulldogs.com | 517.265.5161

NAZARETH RUGBY

Nazareth College Varsity Rugby
100% of student-athletes receive financial aid
Head Coach: Taye Daniel-Ayibiowu
E-mail: tdaniel5@naz.edu / Phone: 585-389-2794
www.nazathletics.com

BONNIES

ST. BONAVENTURE RUGBY

CSU MARITIME ACADEMY VARSITY RUGBY

JOIN A TOP SMALL COLLEGE VARSITY RUGBY PROGRAM AT A VERY AFFORDABLE CSU WITH INCREDIBLE JOB PLACEMENT RATES!

GOKEELAHULERS.COM

@CAL_MARITIME_RUGBY

ARMY WEST POINT
MEN'S RUGBY

University of San Diego
Rugby

www.usdrugby.org

AB

VARSITY MEN'S & WOMEN'S RUGBY

#mountaintoprugby www.gobattlers.com

VARSITY COLLEGE RUGBY PROGRAMS WITH RUGBY ATHLETIC SCHOLARSHIP

Below you will find a list of college rugby programs which have the ability to offer rugby scholarship money. As previously noted, your scholarship package will correspond to a number of factors including, but not limited to, your athletic talent and potential, your position, your leadership and character, and last but not least, your academic profile.

Adrian College

Private (Adrian, MI)
Men's Varsity
(1647 Undergraduate Enrollment)
<https://adrian.edu/>

Alderson Broaddus University

Private (Phillip, WV)
Men's Varsity & Women's NCAA Varsity
(910 Undergraduate Enrollment)
<https://ab.edu/>

American International College

Private (Springfield, MA)
Men's Varsity & Women's NCAA Varsity
(3,387 Total Enrollment)
www.aic.edu

Aquinas College

Private (Grand Rapids, MI)
Men's Varsity
(1,900 Total Enrollment)
www.aquinas.edu

Belmont Abbey College

Private (Belmont, NC)
Varsity Men's (New 2020)
(1,400 Total Enrollment)
www.belmontabbeycollege.edu

Bethel University

Private (Mishawaka, IN)
Men's Varsity
(1,285 Total Enrollment)
www.betheluniversity.edu

Bishop's University

Public (Quebec Canada)
Men's Varsity & Women's Varsity
(2,867 Total Enrollment)
www.ubishops.ca/

University of British Columbia

Public (Vancouver, BC Canada)
Men's Varsity & Women's Varsity
(66,747 Total Enrollment)
www.ubc.ca/

Central Washington University

Public (Ellensburg, WA)
Men's Varsity & Women's Varsity
(10,884 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.cwu.edu

Christian Brothers University

Private (Mephis, TN)
Men's Varsity Club & Women's Varsity Club
(1,745 Total Enrollment)
www.cbu.edu

Davenport University

Private (Grand Rapids, MI)
Men's & Women's Varsity Club
(5,087 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.davenport.edu

Drury University

Private (Springfield, MO)
Men's & Women's Varsity Club (New Fall 2021)
(3210 Total Enrollment)
www.drury.edu

Furman University

Private (Greenville, SC)
Men's Varsity
(2,687 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.furman.edu

Grand Canyon University

Private (Phoenix, AZ)
Men's Varsity Club & Women's Varsity Club
(20,500 Total Enrollment)
www.gcu.edu

Iowa Central Community College

Public (Fort Dodge, IA)
Men's Varsity
(5,696 Total Enrollment)
www.iowacentral.edu/

Lander University

Public (Greenwood, SC)
Women's NCAA Varsity
(3,227 Total Enrollment)
<https://lander.edu/>





Life University

Private (Marietta, GA)
Men's & Women's Varsity
(880 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.life.edu

Lindenwood University

Private (St. Charles, MO)
Men's Varsity & Women's Varsity
(5,668 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.lindenwood.edu

Long Island University, Post

Private (Brookville, NY)
Women's NCAA Varsity
(6,316 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.liu.edu/Post.aspx

Marian University

Private (Indianapolis, IN)
Men's Varsity (New Fall 2021)
(2,405 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.marian.edu

Marywood University

Private (Scranton, PA)
Men's Varsity & Women's Varsity
(1,803 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.marywood.edu/

Mount St. Mary's University

Private (Emmitsburg, MD)
Men's Varsity Club & Women's NCAA Varsity
(1,898 Undergraduate Enrollment)
<http://msmary.edu>

New England College

Private (Henniker, NH)
Men's Varsity
(1,869 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.nec.edu

University of New Haven

Private (West Haven, CT)
NCAA Women's Varsity
(6,793 Undergraduate Enrollment)
<https://www.newhaven.edu/>

Norwich University

Private (Northfield, VT)
Men's Varsity & Women's NCAA Varsity
(2,649 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.norwich.edu

Notre Dame College

Private (South Euclid, OH)
Men's Varsity & Women's NCAA Varsity
(1,240 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.notredamecollege.edu

Queen's University

Public (Kingston, Ontario Canada)
Men's Varsity & Women's Varsity
(24,143 Total Enrollment)
www.queensu.ca/

Queens University of Charlotte

Private (Charlotte, NC)
Men's Varsity & Women's NCAA Varsity
(1,733 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.queens.edu/

Quinnipiac University

Private (Hamden, CT)
Women's NCAA Varsity
(6,845 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.qu.edu

University of Rio Grande

Public/Private (Rio Grande, OH)
Men's Varsity & Women's Varsity
(2,400 Undergraduate Enrollment)
<https://www.rio.edu/>

Sacred Heart University

Private (Fairfield, CT)
Women's NCAA Varsity
(6,158 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.sacredheart.edu/

St. Bonaventure University

Private (St. Bonaventure, NY)
Men's Varsity Club & Women's Varsity Club
(1,840 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.sbu.edu/

Thomas More University

Private (Crestview Hills, KY)
Men's Varsity & Women's Varsity
(1,821 Undergraduate Enrollment)
<https://university.thomasmore.edu/>

Trinity Western University

Private (Vancouver, BC/ Canada)
Men's Varsity & Women's Varsity
(4,000 Total Enrollment)
www.twu.ca

Facts pulled from each college/university's respective website, or usnews.com if enrollment information was not listed.

University of Toronto

Public (Toronto, Ontario Canada)
Men's Varsity & Women's Varsity
(61,690 Total Enrollment)
www.utoronto.ca

Wheeling University

Private (Wheeling, WV)
Men's Varsity and Women's Varsity (New 2022)
(945 Total Enrollment)
www.wju.edu

West Chester University

Public (West Chester, PA)
Women's NCAA Varsity
(14,615 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.wcupa.edu

VARSITY COLLEGE RUGBY PROGRAMS

WITHOUT RUGBY ATHLETIC SCHOLARSHIP

The colleges below all have varsity status at their respective schools, but do not offer direct rugby athletic scholarship money. However, many programs are able to “sweeten the deal” by offering admission influence, alternative grants and scholarships to help make it affordable for your family.

Adrian College

Private (Adrian, MI)
Women's NCAA Varsity (New 2021)
(1,647 Undergraduate Enrollment)
<http://adrian.edu/>

University of California, Berkeley

Public (Berkeley, CA)
Men's Varsity
(31,361 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.berkeley.edu

Army West Point

Public (West Point, NY)
Men's Varsity & Women's NCAA Varsity *
(4,491 Cadets)
www.westpoint.edu

Cal Maritime Academy

Public (Vallejo, CA)
Men's Varsity
(911 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.csum.edu

Bowdoin College

Private (Brunswick, ME)
Women's NCAA Varsity **
(1,835 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.bowdoin.edu

Castleton University

Public (Castleton, VT)
Women's NCAA Varsity
(1,969 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.castleton.edu/

Brigham Young University

Private (Provo, UT)
Men's Varsity Club & Women's Varsity Club
(33,511 Total Enrollment)
www.byu.edu

Christendom College

Private (Front Royal, VA)
Men's Varsity
(493 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.christendom.edu

Brown University

Private (Providence, RI)
Women's NCAA Varsity **
(7,160 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.brown.edu/

Colby-Sawyer College

Private (New London, NH)
Women's NCAA Varsity
(1851 Undergraduate students)
<http://colby-sawyer.edu/>

* Fully-funded education

**Historically, these colleges have been generous for students who demonstrate need, making it affordable for them to attend.





Dartmouth College

Private (Hanover, NH)
Women's NCAA Varsity **
(4,459 Undergraduate Enrollment)
<http://home.dartmouth.edu/>

Franciscan University

Private (Steubenville, OH)
Men's Varsity
(2,242 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.franciscan.edu

Harvard University

Private (Cambridge, MA)
Women's NCAA Varsity **
(6,755 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.harvard.edu

Manhattanville College

Private (Purchase, NY)
Women's NCAA Varsity (New 2021)
(1,541 Undergraduate Enrollment)
<https://www.mville.edu/>

University of Mary Washington

Public (Fredericksburg, VA)
Men's Varsity Club & Women's Varsity Club
(4,182 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.umw.edu

McGill University

Public (Montreal, Quebec Canada)
Men's Varsity & Women's Varsity
(40,493 Total Enrollment)
www.mcgill.ca

McKendree University

Private (Lebanon, IL)
Women's Varsity
(2,499 Total Enrollment)
<https://mckendree.edu/>

Molloy College

Private (Rockville Center, NY)
Women's NCAA Varsity
(3,493 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.molloy.edu

Nazareth College

Private (Rochester, NY)
Men's Varsity Club
(2,282 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www2.naz.edu

University of New England

Private (Biddeford, ME)
Women's NCAA Varsity
(4,275 Undergraduate Enrollment)
<http://www.une.edu/>

New England College

Private (Henniker, NH)
Women's NCAA Varsity
(1,869 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.nec.edu

Norco College (Community College)

Public (Norco, CA)
Men's Varsity Club
(14,000 Total Enrollment)
www.norcollege.edu

Penn State University

Public (University Park, PA)
Men's Varsity Club & Women's Varsity Club
(40,639 Total Enrollment)
www.psu.edu

Paul Smith's College

Private (Paul Smiths, NY)
Men's Varsity
(875 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.paulsmiths.edu

Princeton University

Private (Princeton, NJ)
Women's NCAA Varsity (New Fall 2021)
(5,267 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.princeton.edu

Principia College

Private (Elsah, IL)
Men's Varsity
(455 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.principiacollege.edu

Vassar College

Private (Poughkeepsie, NY)
Men's Varsity & Women's Varsity
(2,441 Undergraduate Enrollment)
www.vassar.edu



CLUB COLLEGE RUGBY PROGRAMS WITH ALTERNATIVE SCHOLARSHIP

This section includes college rugby programs that do not have direct athletic scholarships but do offer various forms of alternative methods for off-setting your cost of college including, but not limited to In-State tuition waivers for Out-of-State applicants, Alumni Scholarships and much more. The majority of these programs offer both men's & women's programs, however, we only listed which group has access to an available "alternative" scholarship.

Arkansas State University

Public (Jonesboro, AR)
Men's Varsity Club
www.astate.edu

University of Central Florida

Public (Orlando, FL)
Men's Club & Women's Club
www.ucf.edu

Clemson University

Public (Clemson, SC)
Men's Varsity Club
www.clemson.edu

Emory & Henry College

Private (Emory, VA)
Men's Club
www.ehc.edu

Fairfield University

Private (Fairfield, CT)
Men's Club
www.fairfield.edu

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Public (Indiana, PA)
Men's Club
www.iup.edu

James Madison University

Public (Harrisonburg, VA)
Men's Club
www.jmu.edu

University of Kentucky

Public (Lexington, KY)
Men's Club
www.uky.edu

Kutztown University

Public (Kutztown, PA)
Men's Varsity Club & Women's Club
www.kutztown.edu

Loyola University Maryland

Private (Baltimore, MD)
Men's Club
www.loyola.edu

Radford University

Public (Radford, VA)
Men's Club
www.radford.edu

Regis University

Private (Denver, CO)
Men's Club
www.regis.edu

Sam Houston University

Public (Huntsville, TX)
Men's Club
www.shsu.edu

St. Mary's College of California

Private (Moraga, CA)
Men's Club
www.stmarys-ca.edu/

Texas A & M University

Public (College Station, TX)
Men's Club & Women's Club
www.tamu.edu

University of South Florida

Public (Tampa, FL)
Men's Club
www.usf.edu

University of South Carolina

Public (Columbia, SC)
Men's Club
www.sc.edu

Virginia Tech University

Public (Blacksburg, VA)
Men's Club
www.vt.edu

Wayne State College

Public (Wayne, NE)
Men's Varsity Club & Women's Varsity Club
www.wsc.edu

University of Wyoming

Public (Laramie, WY)
Men's Club & Women's Club
www.uwyo.edu





Photo Credit: Dartmouth College Athletics & Doug Austin



*Former RuggersEdge student Deke Behnam, EIRA Player
Photo Credit: Cyril Boyd Photography*



BEST RUGBY COLLEGES FOR ...

The lists that follow include colleges and universities with unusual strength in these pre-professional areas (as noted by the Fiske Guide to Colleges) and also maintain established rugby programs:

BUSINESS:

Private

Babson College (MA)
Baylor University (TX)
Boston College (MA)
Boston University (MA)
Brigham Young University (UT)
Bucknell University (PA)
Claremont McKenna College (CA)
Fordham University (NY)
Furman University (SC)
Georgetown University (DC)
Guilford College (NC)
Ithaca College (NY)
Northeastern University (MA)
University of Notre Dame (IN)
University of San Diego (CA)
Santa Clara University (CA)
Susquehanna University (PA)
Syracuse University (NY)
Texas Christian University
Tulane University (LA)
Wake Forest University (NC)
Washington & Lee University (VA)

Public

University of Arizona
University of British Columbia
University of California, Berkeley
University of Colorado, Boulder
University of Connecticut
Indiana University
James Madison University
University of Kansas
Miami University (OH)
University of Michigan
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
The Ohio State University
University of Oregon
Penn State University
University of Pittsburgh (PA)
Purdue University (IN)
Rutgers University (NJ)
University of South Carolina
SUNY - Binghamton University
U.S. Air Force Academy
Texas A & M
University of Texas, Austin
University of Utah
University of Virginia
University of Washington
University of Wisconsin, Madison

ENGINEERING:

Private

Brigham Young University (UT)
Brown University (RI)
Bucknell University (PA)
Catholic University of America (DC)
Dartmouth College (NH)
Duke University (NC)
Harvard University (MA)
Harvey Mudd College (CA)
Loyola University Maryland
Northeastern University (MA)
University of Notre Dame (IN)
Princeton University (NJ)
Rice University (TX)
Santa Clara University (CA)
Stanford University (CA)
Syracuse University (NY)
Trinity College (CT)
Tufts University (MA)
Yale University (CT)

Public

Army West Point
University of Arizona
University of California, Berkeley
University of California, Davis
UCLA
University of California, Santa Barbara
University of California, San Diego
Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
University of Cincinnati (OH)
Clemson University (SC)
Colorado School of Mines
University of Colorado, Boulder
Colorado State University
University of Delaware
McGill University
University of Michigan
Michigan State University
The Ohio State University
Penn State University
Purdue University
Queen's University (Canada)
San Diego State University
SUNY - Binghamton University
Texas A & M
University of Texas, Austin
University of Toronto
United States Naval Academy
University of Virginia
Virginia Tech
University of Washington





BEST RUGBY COLLEGES FOR ...

FILM/TELEVISION:

Private

Boston University (MA)
Brown University (RI)
Drexel University (PA)
Ithaca College (NY)
Loyola Marymount University (CA)
Occidental College (CA)
Pitzer College (CA)
Pomona College (CA)
Quinnipiac University (CT)
University of Southern California
Syracuse University (NY)
Wesleyan University (CT)
Yale University (CT)

Public

Arizona State University
Cal State Northridge
UCLA
University of Cincinnati (OH)
University of Kansas
University of Michigan
Penn State University
San Francisco State University
University of Texas, Austin

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES:

Private

Bowdoin College (ME)
Colby College (ME)
Colorado College
Dartmouth College (NH)
Eckerd College (FL)
Middlebury College (VT)
Oberlin College (OH)
Tulane University (LA)

Public

University of British Columbia
University of California, Berkeley
University of California, Davis
University of California, Santa Barbara
University of Colorado, Boulder
McGill University
University of New Hampshire
University of New Mexico
University of Washington
University of Wisconsin, Madison

POLITICAL SCIENCE

Private

American University (Wash DC)
Brown University (RI)
Bucknell University (PA)
Claremont McKenna College (CA)
Colby College (ME)
Dartmouth College (NH)
Denison College (OH)
University of Denver (CO)
Eckerd College (FL)
Georgetown University (DC)
Ithaca College (NY)
University of Mary Washington (VA)
Middlebury College (VT)
Occidental College (CA)
Princeton University (NJ)
Scripps College (CA)
Tufts University (MA)

Public

University of British Columbia
University of California, Berkeley
University of Pittsburgh (PA)
University of South Carolina

STRONG SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DIFFERENCES:

Private

American University (DC)
Curry College (MA)
University of Denver (CO)
Drexel University (PA)
Hofstra University (NY)
Marist College (NY)
Middlebury College (VT)
New England College (NH)
Northeastern University (MA)
University of New England (ME)
Southern Methodist University (TX)
Syracuse University (NY)

Public

University of Arizona
University of California, Irvine
University of Colorado, Boulder
University of Connecticut
University of Georgia
University of Iowa
Marshall University (WV)
Purdue University (IN)
University of Vermont



BIOLOGY/PRE-MED:

Private

Boston University (MA)
Bowdoin College (ME)
Brown University (RI)
Creighton University (NE)
Emory University (GA)
Georgetown University (DC)
Harvard University (MA)
Pomona College (CA)
Quinnipiac University (CT)
Stanford University (CA)
Tufts University (MA)
Tulane University (LA)
University of Rochester (NY)
Yale University (CT)

Public

University of British Columbia
University of California, Berkeley
University of California, Davis
University of California, San Diego
UCLA
University of Colorado, Boulder
McGill University (Montreal)
University of Michigan
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
North Carolina State University
University of Toronto
University of Vermont
University of Washington
University of Wisconsin, Madison



Mount St. Mary's Men's Rugby
Photo Credit: Mike Miller Photography

THE RUGGER'S EDGE "BEST BUYS"

This list includes colleges and universities that are noted as "Best Buys" by the Fiske Guide to Colleges 2020 and Business Insider's 25 Best Colleges for Your Money. This list is based on the quality of academic offerings in relation to the cost of attendance and also have established rugby programs:

Private

Babson College (MA)
Brigham Young Univ. (UT)
Claremont McKenna Coll (CA)
Colgate University (NY)
Dartmouth College (NH)
Harvard University (MA)
Harvey Mudd College (CA)
Pomona College (CA)
Stanford University (CA)
Williams College (MA)
Yale University (CT)

Public

University of California, Berkeley
University of California, Davis
UCLA
University of California, San Diego
University of California, Santa Barbara
Colorado School of Mines
Georgia Institute of Technology
University of Michigan
Purdue University (IN)
SUNY - Binghamton University
Texas A & M
Truman State University (MO)
University of Utah
University of Virginia
Virginia Military Institute
University of Washington
United States Merchant Marine Academy (NY)

WOMEN'S PROGRAMS ON THE RISE

Alderson Broaddus University (WV)
Bryant University (RI)
Catholic University of America (DC)
Claremont Colleges (CA)
University of Cincinnati (OH)
Colorado School of Mines
University of Connecticut
Davenport University (MI)
Hartford University (CT)
Indiana University of PA

Lee University (TN)
University of Minnesota-Twin Cities
Northern Michigan University
University of Pittsburgh (PA)
Salve Regina University (RI)
U.S. Air Force Academy (CO)
U.S. Coast Guard Academy (CT)
U.S. Naval Academy (MD)
Vassar College (NY)
Wayne State College (NE)
Winona State University (MN)
University of Wyoming

MEN'S D1A FALL 2020 TOP 20

1. University of California, Berkeley
2. Life University (GA)
3. St. Mary's College (CA)
4. Lindenwood University (MO)
5. US Naval Academy (MD)
6. Central Washington University
7. Arkansas State University
8. Kutztown University (PA)
9. Brigham Young University (UT)
10. University of Arizona
11. Davenport University (MI)
12. Notre Dame College (OH)
13. Army West Point
14. Pennsylvania State University
15. University of California, Los Angeles
16. Indiana University
17. The Ohio State University
18. Grand Canyon University (AZ)
19. St. Bonaventure University (NY)
20. University of Colorado



Photo Credit: US Navy Men's Rugby

For more detailed highlights of standout rugby programs, go to:

<http://www.ruggersedge.com/featured-colleges/>

COMMUNITY COLLEGE OPTIONS

A community college (or “junior college”) can always be a good option for many families and a great choice for students who:

- Need to save money. The cost of classes at a community college can be a fraction of what you would pay for essentially the same courses at your 4-year college.
- Need time to mature/figure out what they want to do with their lives. Studies have shown that students who take time to figure out a career path before diving straight into a 4-year college wind up being much more educationally invested and successful in the long run.
- Don't have the strongest high school academic record. If you perform well in community college, your application to a 4-year college will be based on your community college record. Many students “turn on” later in the game and unfortunately may have missed the boat on applying to their dream college as an incoming freshman. Community college may be your ticket in!

Many community colleges are feeders to their local 4-year university. For example, Santa Monica College transfers have a much higher degree of acceptance to UCLA than from any other community college in the state. Check your local community college to see if they have relationships with any 4-year institutions in your area.

Here are some notable community college options where you can continue to train and compete on an organized rugby team:

- **Santa Barbara Rugby Academy** (Santa Barbara, CA): www.sbrugbyacademy.com
- **Iowa Central Community College** (Fort Dodge, IA): www.ictritons.com/sports/mrugby/
- **Norco College** (Norco, CA): <https://athletics.norcocollege.edu/sports/mrugby/index>



Photo Credit: Iowa Central Community College Men's Rugby



NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS (2019)

USA RUGBY D1-A MEN

Champion – Life University

Runner Up – Cal Berkeley

USA RUGBY D1-ELITE WOMEN

Champion - Lindenwood University

Runner Up - Life University

USA RUGBY D1-AA MEN

Fall Champion – Iowa Central CC

Spring Champion – Dartmouth College

USA RUGBY D1 WOMEN

Fall Champion - Air Force Academy

Spring Champion – Brigham Young University

USA RUGBY D2 MEN

Fall Champion - Queens University Charlotte

Spring Champion - Univ. of Wisconsin, Whitewater

USA RUGBY D2 WOMEN

Fall Champion – Winona State University

Spring Champion – Fresno State University

USA RUGBY MEN 7S

D1A Champion - Lindenwood University

D1-AA Champion - Lindenwood Univ. - Belleville

D2 Champion - North Carolina State University

USA RUGBY WOMEN 7S

D1 Elite Champion - Lindenwood University

D1 Champion - Air Force Academy

D2 Champion - Bryant University

NIRA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Tier 1 Champion - Harvard University

Tier 2 Champion - West Chester University

Tier 3 Champion - Bowdoin College

NSCRO MEN 15S

Champions Cup – Claremont Colleges

Champions Cup Runner Up – Christendom College

Challenge Cup – Azusa Pacific University

Challenge Cup Runner Up – Washington & Lee Univ.

NSCRO WOMEN 15S

Champion – Wayne State College

Runner Up – Endicott College

NSCRO MEN 7S

Champion – New Mexico Highlands University

Runner Up – Claremont Colleges

NSCRO WOMEN 7S

Champion – Wayne State College

Runner Up – University of Rochester

COVID-19 UPDATE: No National Championships were played in 2020.





ADDITIONAL COLLEGE RESOURCES



Photo Credit: Life University Women's Rugby





Federal Student Aid

2020–21 Federal Student Aid at a Glance

WHAT is federal student aid?

Federal student aid comes from the federal government—specifically, the U.S. Department of Education. It's money that helps a student pay for higher education expenses (i.e., college, career school, or graduate school expenses).

Federal student aid covers such expenses as tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies, and transportation.

There are three main categories of federal student aid: grants, work-study funds, and loans. Check with your school's financial aid office to find out which programs the school participates in.

WHO gets federal student aid?

Some of the most basic eligibility requirements for students are that you must

- demonstrate financial need (for most programs—to learn more about financial need, visit [StudentAid.gov/how-calculated](https://studentaid.gov/how-calculated));
- be a U.S. citizen or an eligible noncitizen;
- have a valid Social Security number;
- be registered with Selective Service, if you're a male (you must register between the ages of 18 and 25);
- be enrolled or accepted for enrollment in an eligible degree or certificate program;
- be enrolled at least half-time (for most programs); and
- maintain satisfactory academic progress in college, career school, or graduate school.

See the full list of eligibility requirements at [StudentAid.gov/eligibility](https://studentaid.gov/eligibility).

Completing and submitting the FAFSA® form is free and quick, and it gives you access to the largest sources of financial aid to pay for college or career school—federal, state, and school sources. If you need a print-out of the FAFSA® PDF, call 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243) or 334-523-2691 (TTY for the deaf or hard of hearing 1-800-730-8913).

HOW do you apply for federal student aid?

1. **To apply for federal student aid, you must complete the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®)* form at fafsa.gov.** The FAFSA form is available every Oct. 1 for the next school year. If you plan to attend college from July 1, 2020–June 30, 2021, submit a 2020–21 FAFSA form.

Fill it out as soon as possible to meet school and state deadlines. Schools and states often use FAFSA information to award nonfederal aid, but their deadlines vary. Check with the schools that you're interested in for their deadlines, and find state and federal FAFSA deadlines at [StudentAid.gov/fafsa](https://studentaid.gov/fafsa).

2. **Students and parents are required to use an FSA ID (an account username and password combination) to sign their FAFSA® form online and to access information about their financial aid on U.S. Department of Education websites.** Your FSA ID is used to confirm your identity and electronically sign your federal student aid documents. Your FSA ID has the same legal status as a written signature. Don't give your FSA ID to anyone or allow anyone to create an FSA ID for you. To create an FSA ID, visit [StudentAid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch](https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch).
3. After you apply, you'll receive a Student Aid Report, or SAR. Your SAR contains the information reported on your FAFSA form and usually includes your Expected Family Contribution (EFC). The EFC is a number (not a dollar amount) used to determine your eligibility for federal student aid. Review your SAR information to make sure it's correct. The school(s) you list on your FAFSA® form will get your SAR data electronically.
4. **Contact the schools you might attend.** Make sure the financial aid office at each school you're interested in has all the information needed to determine your eligibility. If you're eligible, each school's financial aid office will send you an aid offer showing the amount and types of aid (from all sources) the school will offer you. You can compare the aid offers you received and see which school is the most affordable once financial aid is taken into account.

COLLEGE PLANNING RESOURCE

- **Know How 2 Go:** <http://knowhow2go.acenet.edu/>
- **College Board "Big Future":** <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/>
- **College Data "Prepare & Apply":** <https://www.collegedata.com/en/prepare-and-apply/>

COLLEGE APPLICATION RESOURCES

- **College Essay Guy:** <https://www.collegeessayguy.com/>
- **Common Application Youtube Channel:** <https://www.youtube.com/user/CommonAppMedia>

COLLEGE FUNDING RESOURCES

- **FAFSA Preparing for College (for Parents):**
<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/prepare-for-college/parents>
- **Federal Pell Grant:** <https://studentaid.ed.gov/types/grants-scholarships/pell>
- **Fastweb: Scholarships, Financial Aid, Student Loans and Colleges:** <https://www.fastweb.com>
- **The Smart Student Guide to Financial Aid:** <http://www.finaid.org>



Photo Credit: Quinnipiac Women's Rugby

THE FAFSA® PROCESS

We provide more than \$120 billion in grants, loans, and work-study funds each year to help pay for college or career school. To apply for this aid, you must complete the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®)* form. Also, state governments and many colleges and career schools use your FAFSA information to award you their aid.

DID YOU KNOW?

Some schools won't consider you for merit scholarships (scholarships based on academic achievement or other talents or skills) until you've submitted a FAFSA, so complete one even if you think you won't qualify for federal aid.

RELAX!

The FAFSA is designed to be simple to fill out. Tips throughout the application help you understand the questions. Most people finish filling out the FAFSA in less than half an hour!

PREPARING FOR THE FAFSA®

The FAFSA process is quicker and easier when you have a username and password called an FSA ID. (If your parent is providing information on your FAFSA, he or she will need his or her own FSA ID as well.) Learn more about the FSA ID and how to create yours at StudentAid.gov/said.

GATHER THIS INFORMATION

The FAFSA asks questions about you and your finances, so have the information below handy.

- Social Security number
- Alien registration number
- Federal tax information or tax returns
- Records of untaxed income
- Cash, savings, and checking account balances
- Investments other than the home in which you live

DON'T HAVE ALL YOUR INFO READY YET?

That's okay, you can start the FAFSA, save it, and come back later to finish it. (To find out whether you need to report info about your parents, visit StudentAid.gov/dependency.)

FILLING OUT THE FAFSA®

Each October, the FAFSA is available for the next school year. It's important to fill it out as soon as possible to meet school and state financial aid deadlines.

SUBMISSION OPTIONS

- Electronic form** (fill out at fafa.gov)
- Mail-in application** (download PDF at fafa.gov or request a printed PDF by calling us at 1-800-433-3243)
- Electronic submission by your college or career school** (ask if they can submit the FAFSA for you)

MEETING FINANCIAL AID DEADLINES

Each state and school has its own FAFSA deadline. Check a college's or career school's deadline on its website or by calling its financial aid office. Most state deadlines are at fafa.gov/deadlines.htm.

DID YOU KNOW?

You may be able to retrieve and transfer tax information into the form automatically using the Internal Revenue Service Data Retrieval Tool (IRS DRT).

PROCESSING THE FAFSA®

After you submit your FAFSA, your information will be sent to the colleges and/or career schools you listed on the form.

PROCESS TIMELINE

You'll receive an e-mail within a few days, letting you know your FAFSA was processed.

Your college or career school might request additional information from you. Make sure you respond by any deadlines.

FIRST-TIME APPLICANTS

You'll receive an aid offer from each college or career school you applied to and listed on your FAFSA, stating the amount of aid you could receive at the school.

Review and compare your offers, and decide which school to attend based on the school's net cost and how well the school suits your needs.

RENEWAL APPLICANTS

You'll receive an aid offer from your school stating the amount of aid you could receive at the school.

RECEIVING FINANCIAL AID

Formally accept the school's aid offer - and remember, if you're offered student loans, borrow only as much as you really need.

Your school will handle your aid. Ask the financial aid office when and how your aid will be paid out, what it'll cover, and how much (if any) money will come directly to you once tuition and fees are paid.

Get free assistance and answers at fafa.gov or 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243).



INTRODUCTION TO RUGBY



Photo Credit: St. Joseph's College (Ipswich) Rugby



RUGBY 101: BASIC LAWS

Many parents are new to the game of rugby ("Rugby Union"), so we thought it would be helpful to provide a little bit of background about our sport. While many have described rugby as a combination between American football and soccer, there are some specific details about the sport which we have found helpful for all supporters of the game:

OBJECTIVE:

The objective of rugby is the same as in American football: to advance the ball into the opposition's end zone. In rugby this area is called "in-goal." While a player scores a touchdown in American Football when he reaches the end zone, in rugby the player has to touch the ball down in-goal to be awarded a 'try'.

Similar to American football, a team advances the ball by running it up the field while the opposition attempts to stop the advance by tackling the player with the ball. Passing the ball forward is not allowed in rugby. A forward pass, or even a ball dropped forward, results in a turnover and the opposition is awarded a scrum (see below). Much of the game is aimed at passing the ball backwards until a player has open space to advance the ball to the opposition's in-goal. This happens either by the player going untouched, or in a one-on-one situation where the player can break a tackle and score.

SCORING:

- **Try:** Scoring by touching the ball down in the opposition's in-goal. Worth five points.
- **Conversion:** Similar to an extra point in football, this kick is taken after a try. The kick is attempted from any point straight back from the location of the touch down. Conversions are worth two points.
- **Penalty kick:** Similar to a field goal in football. When a penalty is awarded, that team has the option of "kicking for points." This kick is taken off of a tee, similar to a conversion, and just like in football it is worth three points.
- **Drop goal:** These kicks are taken in live play. A player drops the ball on the ground and kicks it as it bounces off the ground. It is very difficult and rare. Drop goals are also worth three points.

KICKING:

- **Kick and chase:** In addition to running the ball up the field, a team may advance the ball by kicking it and chasing after it. All players need to be behind the kicker to chase after the ball. If they are in front of the kicker, they must wait until one of the "onside players" runs past them before they can chase the ball.



TACKLE SITUATION:

- **Releasing the ball carrier/releasing the ball:** When a player is tackled to the ground, the tackler must immediately release the ball carrier and the tackled player must immediately release the ball.
- **Ruck:** Once the player is tackled to the ground, the ball is fair game. The teams compete for the ball by trying to drive the opposition away from the ball in the direction of their opposition's in-goal. Usually the team that was tackled with the ball has the advantage in winning the ruck, as the tackled player will place the ball in his team's direction.
- **Maul:** Created when a player is tackled but not to the ground. Teams will attempt to strip the ball away from the tackled player and resume open play.

OPEN PLAY:

Teams continually try to advance the ball up the field, usually with multiple rucks happening, until they breakthrough for a try or an infraction is committed.

- **Infractions:** For the most part these are either for dropping the ball forward (called a knock-on), a forward pass, or a penalty.
- **Penalties:** There are many different penalties in rugby. To name a few: dangerous tackle, leaving the feet in a ruck, and offside (probably the most common). A severe penalty may result in a yellow or red card, at which time the player spends 10 minutes or the remainder of the match in the 'sin-bin' while his/her team plays a person down (similar to hockey). After a penalty is committed, teams have the option of kicking to touch (out of bounds) and having a 'lineout' (see below) from where the ball traveled out of bounds, going for points if within kicking range, touching the ball to their foot and resuming open play (called a quick tap), or taking a scrum (this is rare).

RESTARTS:

- **Scrum:** Players bind together by interlocking arms across their teammates' shoulders and try to drive the other team off the ball.
- **Lineouts:** Happens when a ball travels out of bounds. The teams line up side by side, with the advantage going to the team throwing the ball in as they call out a play. Two players then lift up a jumping player, who tries to catch the ball.
- **Kickoffs:** These occur at the start of each half and after a score.



Want to learn more?

Watch the All Blacks "Rugby 101" Videos:

<https://partner.allblacks.com/rugby-education/rugby-101/>



RUGBY 101: 15's POSITIONS



Photo Credit: Encyclopedia of New Zealand

A rugby team consists of 15 players and are divided into two groups: forwards and backs. Forwards are typically the larger, stronger players on the team (numbered one to eight). Their main job is to win possession of the ball. The backs are often smaller, faster, more agile, and typically make use of ball possession, which is won by the forwards. Both the forwards and backs play at the same time.

Positions #1 through #5 are known as the "tight five" or "pack"; #1 through #8 are all known as forwards; #9 through #14 are known as backs.

Props (#1 & #3): The prop positions are typically the two biggest, strongest players on a team. In scrums, (rugby's version of a face-off or jump ball), props are the players in the front row who engage and begin the drive to win possession. them to win the ball.

They bind with their hooker/striker who is in between

Hooker/Striker (#2): The hooker is typically one of the biggest players on the team but tends to be a bit shorter than the props to make it easier to bind and hook the ball back. The hooker is located between the two props in the front row. The hooker's primary job is to "hook," or kick back the ball to retain possession. Hookers are also typically the throwers in a line-out.

Locks (#4 & #5): In a scrum, the locks are the two players that line up behind the props. The locks supply the majority of the pushing power in a scrum, and as a result they are often the tallest players on the team, given their long legs and strength. On throw-ins, they are usually lifted in the air to try and grab the ball.

Flankers (#6 & #7): The final row in a scrum, the flankers supply the last bit of push, while also commonly being used as ferocious defenders. While the flankers tend to be a bit smaller than the players up front, typically they are also very athletic and possess the highest work rate on the team.

Number 8: The final player who can be found at the back of a scrum is known as the number 8. This individual may help in pushing a scrum or ruck, as well as handling the ball on his or her own. Number 8's are a perfect blend of the forwards and backs with strong athletic running and defensive abilities, but also possess field vision and solid passing technique.

Scrumhalf (#9): The scrum-half has a similar role to a quarterback or point guard and tend to be one of the smaller players on the field. They are the first person to get their hands on the ball out of a scrum or ruck and have the responsibilities of understanding what the defensive alignment is giving them, calling out the plays, and making key passes. Scrum-halves are also commonly expected to be able to kick.

Fly-half (#10): Another position that holds quarterback-like responsibilities, the fly-half is typically the first “back” position to receive the ball from the scrumhalf. Once he has the ball, he has to make the judgment as to whether he should pass the ball, run with it, or kick it to get better field position. For this reason, fly halves are typically the best kickers on a team.

Centers (#12 & #13): When the fly-half makes his first pass, it will usually be to one of the centers. The centers are primarily offensive threats, possessing both speed, evasiveness, and power. #12 is called “inside center” and #13 is called “outside center.” Although both positions are similar, many times a #12 will be bigger and provide more of a “crash up” style of running, while #13 can be more evasive and have stronger passing skills. Often centers and flankers can be inter-changeable.

Wings (#11 & #14): The wing has one major responsibility: to run, very, very fast (and score lots and lots of points). Wing size can vary since newer, smaller players may be placed into this position at first, however a growing trend sees taller wings with lean, strong builds. Located on the two sides of the field, teams will often try to get the ball into the hands of the wingers and hope they can fly their way down to in-goal. On the defensive end, wingers have to be capable and agile tacklers, as they are often matched up one-on-one with the opposing team’s wing.

Full-back (#15): The full-back is almost like the kick returner of the team, except that any given play in rugby could be a return. Waiting towards the far end of the field, full-backs wait for the other team to attempt a kick for field position. Upon catching it, a full-back can either run the ball back or try to kick it for field position. The fullback must also be an extremely confident defender as they are a team’s last line of defense on a line break.



Photo Credit: Lindenwood University Women's Rugby



Want to learn more?

Watch the All Blacks “Rugby 101: Positions” Video: <https://partner.allblacks.com/rugby-education/rugby-101/>

SKILLS TIP: PRACTICE ON YOUR OWN!

Something I will always remember one of my first coaches telling me I needed to do if I truly wanted to become a better player was that I had to find time to practice passing and working with the rugby ball on my own. All of your premiere rugby athletes in the world include individual training to their schedules in order to maintain their topflight skills. Many times I meet players and ask what their training regimen entails. I am always surprised to find out that some don't even have their own rugby ball at home to help hone their passing and kicking skills! This is one of the easiest ways you can continue to build your ball skills when not out on the training pitch.

Simply buy a standard rugby ball, mark an X on a wall (preferably outside on a garage or the side of your house/building), and practice throwing left and right-handed at varying distances for 15-20 minutes a day. For increased development, check out the Gilbert Morgan Training Ball which is a weighted ball that builds your hand, wrist, and arm strength, meaning more accurate passing on game day.

If you have a park or a school field nearby, try different styles of kicking (box kicks, long kicks for touch, grubbers etc.) as well as practice kicking for points. One of the sore spots in all of US rugby is our lack of kicking skills. Developing this skill will surely put you ahead of the recruiting class!

Check out some great kicking tips and videos from various Youtube Channels such as World Rugby or The Rugby Site. Have fun!



Photo Credit: USA Rugby Boys High School All-American

SKILLS TIP: BETTER HAND-EYE COORDINATION = BETTER RUGBY

It is no wonder that hand-eye coordination is a huge skill when it comes to the top rugby performers. Being able to catch, pass, kick, tackle and more all require a strong ability to connect what you are seeing to what you want to do! Here are some great ways to improve your hand-eye coordination at home which will translate into some amazing gains on the pitch!

#1 PLAY CATCH

To improve central vision, start by tossing a tennis ball against a wall and practicing catching it with one hand, and then the other. Playing a fast-paced game of catch with a partner can be a great way to boost eye-hand skills, too.

Take it to the pro level by using several balls at once, and put a small dot of color, or a letter or number, on each. Pick up the balls at random and toss them one after another. As they're coming back toward you, try to pick out which ball is which.

You can also use catch to improve your peripheral vision. Instead of tossing balls directly at you, your partner should throw them overhead or slightly to your left or right. You'll miss a lot at first, but as your brain adapts, you'll get faster.

#2 EXERCISE YOUR EYES

Another important part of eye-hand coordination is the ability to switch your focus quickly between things close to you (like a defender bearing down on you) and far away (like fielding a high deep kick). And you can actually improve this skill by spending a few of minutes per day on a simple near-far drill, says Josh Sandell, DC, a sports medicine specialist and conditioning coach.

Take two similarly-sized, detailed objects—like playing cards, book covers, or magazines—and place one about 18 inches away from you and the other about 10 feet away. Focus on the nearer object for five seconds, studying as many details as you can, then switch to the far object. Switch back and forth for a minute or two, each time trying to notice new details.

#3 STAY CONSCIOUS WHILE YOU PLAY

Eye-hand coordination probably isn't something you think about consciously when you head out for a pick-up game or a workout, but it should be, says Sandell. He cites a well-known study about basketball players who improved their free-throw percentage by 22 percent by using a "quiet eye" technique – essentially, focusing on the hoop's front rim for at least one second before shooting.

"This kind of focus can be incorporated during any form of athletic movement, but it's got to be conscious—at least at first, until it becomes second-nature and you don't realize you're doing it," says Sandell.

Bottom line: Eye-hand coordination may seem like something you're either born with or not, but it can also be a learned skill. For more sport-specific drills and suggestions based on your current abilities, ask your eye doctor or a sports vision specialist. (You can find one using the American Optometric Association's advanced doctor search.)

Adapted from: <https://www.outsideonline.com/1959876/4-easy-drills-improve-hand-eye-coordination>





HOW TO PREPARE FOR COLLEGE GAME DAY

As a high school athlete preparing to take the next step into college rugby, one of the biggest challenges I hear from college coaches is having new players show up unable to manage themselves without a parent to help. One way to help with this is to make your game day preparation solid and consistent. Here are my top tips to help you show up ready to play:

THE NIGHT BEFORE

Pack Your Kit Bag

This includes ensuring you have all your essentials like apparel (jerseys, shorts, socks), mouthguard, and water bottle as well as necessary extras like tape, scrumcap, foam roller, etc. Check the weather forecast for the next day and make sure to bring appropriate pre- and post-game wear (warm ups, windbreaker, hat, etc.). Even better, think through the entire day/weekend.

Include easy-to-digest snacks for quick fuel. You should always be prepared for potential delays. Pack some granola bars, GU, trail mix etc. for these unplanned moments.

Pack extras! I can't tell you how many times I have seen athletes rip their shoelaces, tear their socks or shorts, lose a mouthguard – the list goes on and on. Always pack spares in your bag so you are never left hanging. Also, if you happen to wear contacts – bring saline and spare contacts. At least a few times a year, I witness someone losing a contact on the field.

Pro Tip: make a checklist of everything you need and put it in a clear sleeve in your kit bag. You can simply refer to this list before each game day and not have to rethink everything!

Confirm Game Time and Location

Use Google Maps ahead of time for an estimate of how long it will take to get there, then add an extra 30 minutes to account for traffic accidents or other unforeseeable events. Find out if there is anything specific you need to know about parking (e.g. a parking fee). If you arrive on time, you are late! Aim to arrive 15 minutes before your coach has told you be at the field.

GAME DAY

Eat a Solid Meal

Ruck Science has a much more detailed plan on what to eat on game day, but the bottom line is to eat something that will sustain you and give you the right fuel for the game (or games!) ahead. One of the easiest ways to spot players who are unprepared are those who show up to the pitch with a bag of McDonald's in their hand. Not only will these foods take too long to digest, but the extra fats, salt and other additives will only slow your performance. When every inch is worth fighting for, this is an easy part of your game day prep you can take care of.

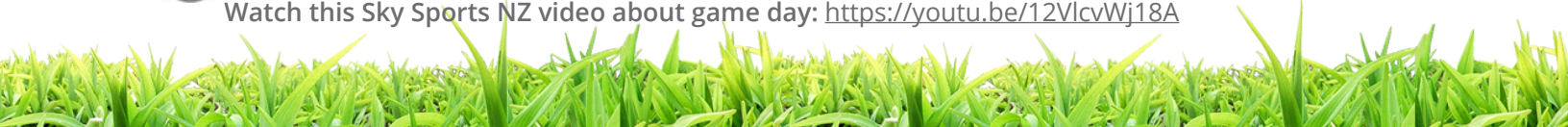
Review Your Game Plan

Do you keep a journal with notes on areas you want to focus on or what your team strategy is for this week (e.g. focusing on defensive alignment)? If not, this is a good time to start. All high performance athletes keep a running journal to track their goals and what they need to do to attain them. Once you have your journal, you can review this on game day to refresh yourself on what you need to do today.



Want to learn more?

Watch this Sky Sports NZ video about game day: <https://youtu.be/12VlcvWj18A>



CLASS OF 2020 ACCEPTANCES

University of Arizona#	Univ of Mass, Amherst
Auburn University	University of Miami
Babson College	Michigan State University
Bishop's University (Canada)*	Mount St. Mary's University\$
Brown University*	Northeastern University*#
Boston University	University of Oregon\$#
Cal Berkeley***#	Oregon State University
Univ of Calif., Davis#	University of Pacific*
Univ. of Calif., Santa Barbara**#	Penn State University**#
University of Calif., San Diego#	Pepperdine University*
Cal Poly Univ., San Luis Obispo*#	University of Portland
Cal Poly Univ., Pomona	University of Puget Sound\$
Central Washington Univ. \$*#	Quinnipiac University#
Chapman University*\$	Rutgers University
Clemson University#	Sacramento State University
University of Colorado, Boulder\$#	San Diego State#
Colorado School of Mines	Santa Clara University#
Colorado State University	St. Bonaventure University\$
Connecticut College\$	St. Mary's College of California#
Univ of Connecticut\$	St. Olaf College\$
Cornell University*	University of Southern California*
Eckerd College	University of Tampa
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University	University of Tennessee
Emerson College*	Texas A & M*
Florida State University#	Texas Christian University#*\$*
University of Florida*	Union College\$
University of Georgia	University of Utah#
Georgia Tech University	University of Vermont#\$
Gonzaga University	University of Washington*#
Harvard University*	West Chester University
Humboldt State University#	
Indiana University Bloomington	
Iowa Central Community College*	
Kutztown University*\$	
Lafayette College	
Marymount California University	
University of Mary Washington	

Acceptances as of 6/25/2020

* Denotes where a student has committed to enroll

Denotes multiple acceptances

\$ Scholarship offered (Merit or Athletic)

BOLD Denotes student's Top Choice

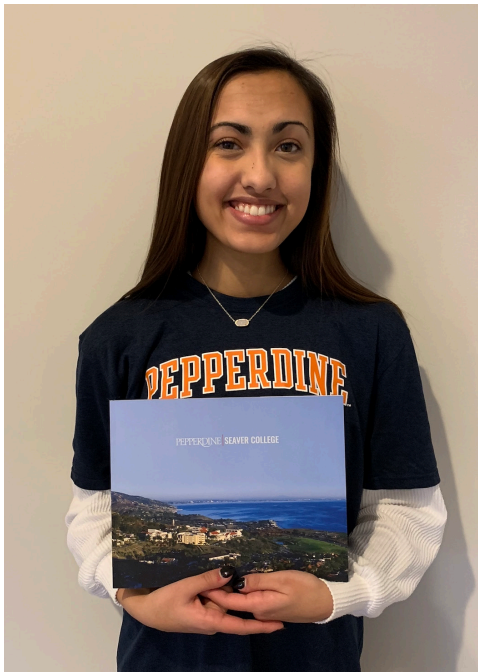
See real-time acceptances from the Class of 2021:
<https://www.ruggersedge.com/post/class-of-2021-college-acceptances>



TESTIMONIALS

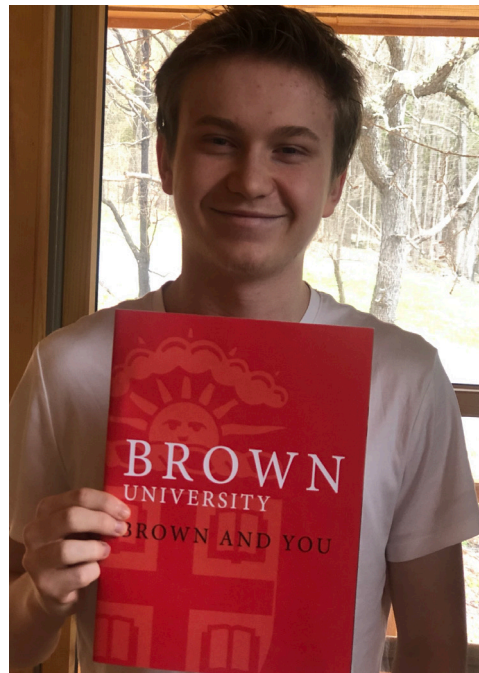
"Karen helped my son a few years ago with his application (and acceptance!) to Dartmouth. It was a very positive experience so I did not hesitate to reach out again when it was my daughter's turn to apply to college. She doesn't play rugby or any other sport, but Karen's knowledge of the college application process is invaluable whether or not your child is hoping to be a student-athlete. Karen is great to work with; professional, kind, and completely removes the stress out of applying to college! I am so delighted that my daughter was accepted to her first-choice school, Pepperdine University. Thank you Karen!"

***Vinita Weir, Daughter Asha
Pepperdine University
Class of 2024***



"After living in the US for 6 years my son announced casually one day that he would like to study and play rugby at a US college! Panic set in! We had no idea how to navigate the US educational system. Karen took all the stress away from us as parents from Day 1 and guided my son through the exam selection process To the college selection, through to the application process. Karen's knowledge and expertise were paramount in securing my son a place in his first choice university! We couldn't have done it without you Karen!! Thank you from the bottom of our heard from our family."

***Lynnette L., Son to Brown
University, Class of 2024***



Read more testimonials:
<http://www.ruggersedge.com/testimonials/>



WE'RE HERE TO HELP. CALL US!

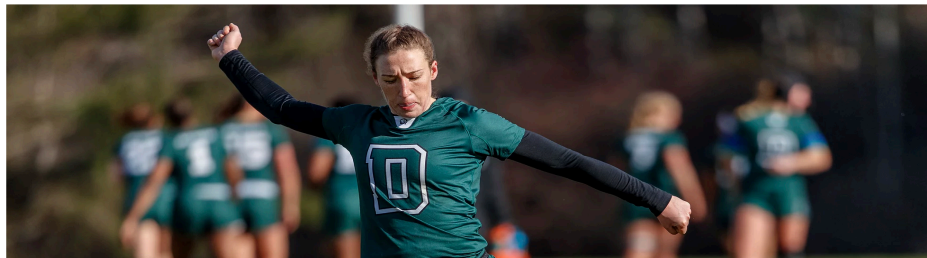
VISIT THE RUGGER'S EDGE WEBSITE: <http://www.ruggersedge.com>

HOME WHO WE ARE WHAT WE DO RESOURCES TESTIMONIALS CONTACT



THE RUGGER'S EDGE

info@ruggersedge.com



A college advisory firm focusing on the unique needs of rugby players.

CONTACT US TODAY!

- Sign up for the email newsletter
- Access College Search Resources
- Research College Rugby Programs
- Register for Upcoming Events
- Get Advice from College Coaches
- Explore Rugby Summer Camps
- Watch RETV Videos
- Hear from Rugger's Edge Students
- Purchase the College Playbook
- Learn from the Rugby and Academic Tips of the Month

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS





*Former Rugger's Edge student Bianca Pallen-Ortiz
Photo Credit: Thompson Sports Photo*

THE RUGGER'S EDGE PLAYBOOK

7th Edition 2021

By Karen Fong Donoghue

Photos provided courtesy of:
Carolyn Fong Photography
and College Rugby Programs

Layout by:
Motion Consulting

The Rugger's Edge is a registered
trademark of The College Try Corporation.

THE RUGGER'S EDGE:
COLLEGE RUGBY
STARTS HERE

www.ruggersedge.com