

Recruiting Information

The following information and guide can be used by Palmyra players and parents who are interested in learning more about the college recruitment process for lacrosse. Remember, this is a guide rather than a strict blueprint...your experience and journey to college lax may be different, but it certainly can help you in your planning. Your mileage may vary. Good luck !

Recruiting Info: Advice to College Recruits and their Parents

The following is some information and guidance about college lacrosse and the recruiting process. This is important information to every player and parent in this club. This information is “real world” ideas about planning to play lacrosse in college. Playing college lacrosse is probably not what you think. We want to be instrumental in helping every boy who wants to play lacrosse at the college level, but we also want to get good information out early so everyone knows what they might expect.

Money: Athletic scholarships for undergraduate student-athletes at Division I and Division II schools are partially funded through the NCAA membership revenue distribution. About \$1 billion in athletic scholarships are awarded each year. Over 126,000 student-athletes receive either a partial or full athletic scholarship. These scholarships are awarded and administered directly by each academic institution, not the NCAA. Division III schools offer only academic scholarships. They do not offer athletic scholarships. They offer financial aid through tuition grants (school or alumni), Federal or State aid, or federally subsidized loans. A DIII coach may want you to play for his school and may help you get in academically, but he cannot give you money.

Not all DI sports can give full ride athletic scholarships to every athlete like football and basketball; most are classed as “equivalency sports”, like college lacrosse. This simply means that coaches can share their financial aid allocation between a larger numbers of players. The NCAA allows a fully funded DI men’s lacrosse program to only give out 12.69 tuition scholarships. (Note: No book money, No room and board and No transportation.) In DII, there is even less. The NCAA only allows DII schools 10.8 tuition scholarships. Few DI and DII programs are fully funded. Penn State for instance is not, they offer only (6) full scholarships. A player who selects a DI program like Towson University (and starts for the team) may only get \$1000 his Freshman and Sophomore year. He might get \$3000 Junior year and maybe \$6000 Senior year. For a full time, year round commitment, this is very little money. Many DI lacrosse players get no money at all. If you are good enough; of course a full ride scholarship could be in the cards. However, there are very few of these instances, and if so, those opportunities are typically reserved for the premier blue chip recruits.

Academics: Student-Athletes will get tired of hearing this, but if you don’t take care of your academics (grades and core course requirements) it won’t matter how talented you are on the lacrosse field, number of awards won or impressive stats you’ve accumulated. If your dream is to play lacrosse at the college level, academics are a part of the package. Lacrosse can enhance your

academic package. If you are a good student, and want to play lacrosse in college, a coach can “endorse” your admittance package and help you get in a school you might not otherwise get in. We’re talking about a student with a 1200 or so SAT who wants to go to a school like Bucknell University. A 1200 SAT would never get you in otherwise, but a good lacrosse game will help out. You still will need good academics to pull this off. This is the best deal in the game, so be sure to focus on schools with your major, not the best lacrosse team. Academic scrutiny doesn’t end when you’re in college either; most college teams strive for a team GPA of 3.0. Due to the demands of being a college athlete, you MAY need to go an extra semester or two to meet your graduation requirements. (dependent on time management skills)

Fun: Fun and love of the game are the only reasons to play the game at any level. Frankly, nothing else makes sense. The demands of college lacrosse are extensive. You must train year round. You must play and practice 3 seasons a year. You will sacrifice academics, social life and free time. You play only at the pleasure of the

coach. You can be benched at any time, replaced by a new recruit, switched to a new position and an injury could end it all. (along with any financial help you are receiving) All your friends will have more time, more fun and get more studying done. You will get to play college lacrosse. You have to love it. While looking at schools, it would be wise to consider whether you can play right away, within a reasonable period of time, or ride the bench. There is nothing worse than sitting for four years. What happens if you get injured or just lose interest in playing? Will you be at the right school to complete your degree? Don’t pick a school simply for lacrosse. The school should fit for other reasons; location, type of degree you are seeking, amenities, cost, etc. Remember, this will be the place you spend your next 4 years!

Being an active participant in the recruiting process: Get started early, be aware of NCAA guidelines and most of all be realistic. It doesn’t matter how good you are, to get recruited and be in line for NCAA lacrosse scholarships you need to tell the college coaches who you are and why you deserve to be recruited. COACHES CANNOT EVALUATE YOUR POTENTIAL IF THEY DON’T KNOW YOU’RE OUT THERE. Many fine young athletes are overlooked each year because they didn’t submit their athletic profile to the “right” colleges or left out important information. It’s also a fact that many colleges simply don’t allocate all of their lacrosse recruiting funds because “suitable” athletes did not approach them. Never wait to be “seen” by a coach. It does not happen that way. There are just too many players in the game right now. You must write the coach and tell him honestly you are interested in attending his college with or without playing lacrosse. Most lacrosse players will have to market themselves and should not make the mistake of ONLY concentrating on the top DI college. The competition is very intense; unless you are an absolute top player you won’t receive an offer. There is nothing wrong with a smaller DI school. What would you rather have a partial or full financial aid package at a DII school or the offer of a walk on at one of the top schools? At the end of the day it’s your education that’s important.

The numbers: Within the NCAA there are 70 DI schools, 65 DII schools, and 230 DIII schools currently participating in men’s lacrosse. NJCAA offers 27 men’s teams. At many schools, lacrosse is also a club sport organized by students independently of the athletic department. Club teams even coexist with varsity teams at numerous colleges.

Fame and Glory: Do not go to the NCAA championship game and think ‘WOW’ I want to play in front of 49,000 people too. The fact is you probably never will. Most lacrosse games at the college level are attended by 100 or so folks who are mostly parents and/or girl friends of the team. Nice weather and an inter-division rival may swell the stands to nearly 500 at a big school. That is roughly the equivalent of a High School basketball game. Most lacrosse players will never see a crowd of 1,000. One other note, nobody makes a living playing the game after the college level.

Be Realistic: As a high school lacrosse player you should be aware that the standard of NCAA college lacrosse is very high. We recommend that you attend a few games to gauge the actual intensity of lacrosse at this level. Do not pin all your hopes on an upper DI school unless you are an outstanding lacrosse player. You will most likely have to be the best player in your high school and maybe in the county at your position. You might have to be an All-American. You will have to possess exceptional speed and skills. Most players you see at any school are DII or DIII prospects. Every player’s career ends at some point, either before or after college. Be realistic and make decisions that are good for you. Don’t play the game for your mom, dad, brother, sister or for your girlfriend. Play it for you. Play it because you love to play the game. When it is time to quit the game, quit the game because it is best for you and your future.

Notes: You might have heard of a lot of money in girl’s sports recently. Understand what has happened in the last 20 years. Universities fearing lawsuits under the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 -Title 9, have funneled a lot of money into girl’s sports (taken from boy’s revenue sports) and created many play opportunities for girls. This has limited play opportunities for boys. Universities must have roughly the same number of male and female athletes. (The exact formula is not important) Towson University for instance, currently has 7 male

varsity sports and 13 female varsity sports. The NCAA however permits the same maximum number of scholarships for girls as for boys.