

DEVELOPING COMPLETE ATHLETES

The 315 Elite White Paper 2026

A White Paper by 315 Elite Lacrosse

TRAIN • DEVELOP • COMPETE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Youth sports are evolving rapidly. Participation in club lacrosse continues to grow, while competition for roster spots, high school playing time, and collegiate opportunities becomes increasingly challenging.

Families today face an important question:

What type of environment best prepares an athlete for long-term athletic, academic, and personal success?

For many organizations, success is measured by tournament wins and national rankings. While competition is important, the most successful athletes are developed through a comprehensive system that prioritizes skill development, athletic performance, character growth, and long-term planning.

315 Elite Lacrosse was founded on the belief that every athlete deserves access to elite-level coaching, structured development, and opportunities to maximize their potential—regardless of where they begin their lacrosse journey.

This white paper examines:

- Current challenges in youth lacrosse development
 - The science behind long-term athlete development
 - What college coaches actually evaluate
 - The 315 Elite development model
 - Why facilities, coaching, and culture matter
 - Recommendations for families evaluating club programs
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ABOUT 315 ELITE LACROSSE

Founded in 2021 by Coach Eric Taetsch, 315 Elite Lacrosse was created with a mission to provide high-quality lacrosse training and competitive opportunities to athletes throughout Central New York.

Since its founding, 315 Elite has grown into one of the region's fastest-growing development-focused lacrosse organizations while remaining committed to individualized athlete growth and long-term success.

Program accomplishments include:

- Every graduating player earning a collegiate opportunity
- Multiple All-League selections
- Academic All-Americans
- Section statistical leaders
- Championship-winning teams
- Consistent year-over-year program growth

315 Elite serves athletes from 2nd Grade through High School and provides year-round development opportunities designed to help players reach their fullest potential.

THE CURRENT STATE OF YOUTH LACROSSE

Increased Competition

Today's athletes compete in an environment dramatically different from even a decade ago.

Players now face:

- Year-round competition
- Increased specialization
- Earlier recruiting exposure
- Larger club participation
- Greater athletic demands

The growth of club lacrosse has created tremendous opportunities, but it has also created challenges.

Many athletes spend significant time traveling to tournaments while receiving limited developmental instruction. While competition has value, development must remain the priority.

THE PROBLEM WITH THE TOURNAMENT-FIRST MODEL

Many club programs focus heavily on:

- Travel
- Exposure events
- Rankings
- Tournament results

While competition is valuable, athletes do not improve simply by playing games.

Without structured training, athletes often experience:

- Stagnant skill development
- Limited athletic growth
- Reduced confidence
- Increased injury risk

Exposure may create opportunities, but development creates recruitable athletes.

College coaches ultimately recruit players who possess the skills, athleticism, character, and work ethic necessary to succeed at the next level.

WHAT COLLEGE COACHES REALLY WANT

Families often assume recruiting begins with exposure.

In reality, exposure only matters when athletes possess the qualities coaches seek.

College coaches consistently evaluate:

Skill Development

Can the athlete perform fundamental skills at a high level under pressure?

Athleticism

Can the athlete run, change direction, accelerate, and compete physically?

Lacrosse IQ

Can the athlete understand game situations and make smart decisions?

Coachability

How does the athlete respond to feedback and instruction?

Character

How does the athlete interact with teammates, coaches, officials, and opponents?

These qualities are developed over time through consistent training, accountability, and proper mentorship.

THE SCIENCE OF LONG-TERM ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT

Elite athletes are not created through tournaments.

They are developed through years of consistent repetition, progressive training, and purposeful coaching.

Successful athlete development includes:

Technical Development

- Stick work
- Position-specific training
- Shooting mechanics
- Defensive fundamentals

Physical Development

- Strength
- Speed
- Agility
- Mobility

Tactical Development

- Game awareness
- Team concepts
- Decision-making

Mental Development

- Confidence
- Resilience
- Leadership

Long-term success requires a balanced approach that develops every aspect of an athlete's performance.

THE 315 ELITE DEVELOPMENT MODEL

TRAIN

Training is the foundation of athletic development.

Athletes receive structured instruction designed to build technical proficiency, confidence, and consistency.

Through position-specific coaching, small-group instruction, and individualized feedback, players develop the skills necessary to perform at a high level in competitive environments.

Athletes receive:

- Position-specific instruction
 - Skill development sessions
 - Small-group coaching
 - Individualized feedback
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DEVELOP

Development extends beyond lacrosse skills.

Athletes participate in age-appropriate strength, speed, agility, and mobility training designed to improve athletic performance while reducing injury risk.

The objective is to develop complete athletes capable of excelling both on and off the field.

Athletes receive access to:

- Strength training
- Speed development
- Athletic performance coaching
- Injury prevention education

COMPETE

Competition provides athletes with opportunities to apply what they have learned through training and development.

Athletes participate in:

- Regional tournaments
- National recruiting events
- Showcase opportunities
- Championship competitions
- Discounts to premier regional showcases

Competition serves as a measurement of growth—not the sole purpose of participation.

PLAYING TIME: DEVELOPING PLAYERS FOR THE LONG TERM

One of the most common questions families ask when evaluating a club program is:

"How is playing time determined?"

At 315 Elite, our philosophy is straightforward:

Playing time is earned—not guaranteed.

Every athlete who joins our program deserves quality coaching, meaningful development, and opportunities to compete. At the same time, we believe one of the greatest lessons sports teaches is that opportunities are earned through preparation, commitment, and performance.

Our responsibility as coaches is not simply to divide minutes equally. Our responsibility is to prepare athletes for long-term success at the middle school, high school, collegiate, and ultimately adult levels.

Development Before Results

Many youth programs measure success by tournament championships and national rankings.

We measure success differently.

Our goal is to develop athletes who continue improving year after year. Championships are rewarding, but they are never the primary objective. The greatest accomplishment is seeing athletes become confident varsity contributors, collegiate players, and successful young adults.

Every coaching decision is guided by one question:

"What gives this athlete the greatest opportunity for long-term success?"

Sometimes that means allowing a player to learn through mistakes.

Sometimes it means asking a player to compete through adversity.

Sometimes it means reducing or increasing playing time based on effort, preparation, and performance.

Every decision is made with development—not punishment—in mind.

Elementary & Middle School Athletes

For our younger athletes, development remains our highest priority.

Players will receive meaningful opportunities throughout the season to develop confidence, improve skills, and learn the game in competitive environments.

However, equal playing time is **not guaranteed** in every tournament or every game.

Playing time may vary based upon:

- Practice attendance
- Work ethic
- Coachability
- Preparation
- Knowledge of team concepts
- Positional needs
- Competitive effort
- Tournament situations

Players who consistently invest in their development naturally earn greater opportunities over time.

High School Athletes

High school club lacrosse serves a different purpose.

These athletes are preparing for varsity competition and, for many, college recruiting.

College coaches evaluate athletes in competitive situations where performance matters.

Because of this, playing time becomes increasingly performance-based.

Our coaches evaluate:

- Current performance
- Practice habits
- Decision-making
- Competitive effort
- Ability to execute team concepts
- Leadership
- Consistency under pressure

This reflects the expectations athletes will encounter in high school varsity athletics and at the collegiate level.

Showcase Events vs. Championship Events

Every event has a different purpose.

Showcase Events

The emphasis is player exposure.

Our coaching staff works to provide opportunities for athletes to demonstrate their abilities in front of college coaches while continuing to develop team concepts.

Championship Events

The objective shifts toward competing to win.

Playing time becomes more performance-based as coaches make decisions that give the team the greatest opportunity for success while continuing individual player development.

Learning how to compete under pressure is itself an important developmental experience.

Growth Requires Challenge

Real growth rarely occurs inside an athlete's comfort zone.

Throughout the season, players may:

- Learn unfamiliar positions.
- Experience different roles.
- Play against stronger competition.
- Receive less playing time than they hoped.
- Be challenged to improve specific aspects of their game.

These moments often produce the greatest growth.

Rather than shielding athletes from adversity, we teach them how to respond with resilience, accountability, confidence, and determination.

Our Commitment

Every athlete deserves honesty, consistency, and coaching that serves their long-term interests.

Our commitment is to communicate clearly, coach with purpose, and make every decision based upon what is best for the athlete's overall development.

We believe:

- Playing time is earned.
- Leadership is earned.
- Recruiting opportunities are earned.
- Confidence is earned through preparation and hard work.

At 315 Elite, our mission is not simply to build better lacrosse players.

Our mission is to develop complete athletes who are prepared to succeed on the field, in the classroom, and throughout life.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FACILITY ACCESS

Beginning in September 2026, 315 Elite will operate from a new dedicated training facility featuring:

Indoor Turf Field

Nearly three times larger than the current facility.

Strength & Performance Area

Dedicated space for athletic development and performance training.

Recruiting Center

Personalized recruiting guidance and education, including one-on-one recruiting meetings for players and families.

IWLCA SportsRecruits Pro Account

Included for all high school athletes as part of the program.

Player & Family Lounge

A welcoming environment designed to strengthen community, culture, and connection throughout the organization.

Film Room

Video analysis and educational opportunities to accelerate player development.

315 Elite remains the only club lacrosse organization in Central New York with its own dedicated indoor training center.

CASE STUDY: THE DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY

Elementary School

Focus

- Fun
- Fundamentals
- Confidence

Outcome

Athletes develop a love for the game while building foundational skills.

Middle School

Focus

- Skill mastery
- Athletic development
- Position understanding

Outcome

Athletes become confident, competitive players prepared for the next level.

High School

Focus

- Advanced concepts
- Recruiting preparation
- Leadership development

Outcome

Athletes become college-ready players and leaders.

WHAT FAMILIES SHOULD LOOK FOR IN A CLUB PROGRAM

Coaching

Who is teaching and mentoring my athlete?

Coaching quality remains the single most important factor in player development.

315 Elite continues to expand its coaching staff by bringing current and former Division I collegiate athletes into the program to provide mentorship and position-specific instruction.

In addition, Coach Eric remains actively involved with all age levels throughout the organization. His hands-on approach and development philosophy continue to serve as the foundation of the program.

Development

How often are athletes training?

Skill acquisition occurs through repetition and consistency.

315 Elite offers more year-round training opportunities than any club program in the region, allowing athletes to continue improving while still participating in other sports and activities.

Training—not tournaments—remains the most important factor in long-term player development.

Facilities

What resources are available?

Access to quality facilities significantly impacts athlete development.

As the only club lacrosse organization in Central New York with its own dedicated indoor training center, 315 Elite provides athletes with increased opportunities for skill training, strength development, speed training, and athletic performance programming.

Athlete progress will be tracked and shared with families to ensure measurable growth.

Recruiting Support

What guidance is offered?

Every high school athlete receives a complimentary IWLCA SportsRecruits Pro Account as part of their membership.

Player profiles are monitored and reviewed by the coaching staff, and progress is discussed through personalized recruiting meetings with athletes and families.

Recruiting support is included within program fees and is not offered as an additional add-on service.

Culture

Will my athlete grow as a person?

At 315 Elite, we believe strong character is just as important as athletic ability.

We strive to develop athletes who demonstrate accountability, respect, leadership, and resilience.

These qualities not only help players succeed on the field but also prepare them for success in life.

Long-Term Vision

Is the focus on development or short-term wins?

Many organizations focus on identifying the best players today.

At 315 Elite, we focus on developing the best players tomorrow.

While assembling talented rosters may create short-term success, long-term athlete development requires patience, consistency, and individualized coaching.

Time and again, we have seen athletes surpass more naturally gifted peers through commitment, hard work, and proper development.

Our responsibility is not simply to identify talent—it is to build it.

THE FUTURE OF ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT

The future belongs to organizations that prioritize:

- Education
- Development
- Accountability
- Character
- Consistency

Athletes who receive comprehensive training gain advantages that extend far beyond sports.

The goal is not simply to create better lacrosse players.

The goal is to develop better athletes, teammates, leaders, and young adults.

CONCLUSION

At 315 Elite Lacrosse, success is measured by more than wins, rankings, or recruiting commitments.

Success is measured by growth.

We believe athletes thrive when they are challenged, supported, and provided with the resources necessary to reach their full potential.

Through elite coaching, structured training, dedicated facilities, and a commitment to character development, we strive to prepare athletes not only for success in lacrosse but for success in life.

The mission remains unchanged:

TRAIN • DEVELOP • COMPETE

Because the goal is not simply to create better lacrosse players.

The goal is to develop complete athletes.

For more information:

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