

Steps to Follow for the College Athletic Recruiting Process

Once a student has decided she wants to continue her athletic career in college, here are some general guidelines or steps to follow.

1. Determine the general location and size of school you desire along with what your interests are for your academic major. When thinking about the location of a school, consider the mode of transportation to and from Omaha to get there.
2. Determine what division of athletics is a good fit. An important factor is what role are you willing to play? Many athletes are touted as division I athletes but if they go to a top 50 program in their sport, they may sit the bench for their collegiate career.
3. Using the NCAA website as a resource, narrow down schools that are the location, size, and sport level you have chosen. Another factor to consider is what Conference does the school compete in? This will greatly influence how many days a week you miss class. Do they travel by bus or by plane?
4. Now it is time to check out the academic programs offered. You obviously do not want to give up your career goals for a sports team. The schools you found to be a great athletic fit may not have the academic program you need to pursue your degree. It is important at this step to also check through email or phone correspondence what types of internships are offered in that school's location.
5. Create a student-athlete profile. This is similar to a resume'. Some examples of what to include are name, age, high school class, contact information, GPA and ACT or SAT scores, your height, position, applicable statistics, and honors. You will also want to include the names and contact information for your coaches.
6. Create an introduction statement. Most of your correspondence will be done through email or by phone. An introduction statement is addressed to the college head coach and tells them general things like your high school name, year, and position. An important part of this statement is why you are interested in their particular college. You should conclude with your enthusiasm to hear back from them about their recruitment needs for someone in your position and in your age group and offer to send game film.
7. Find a game film where it is easy for a college coach to identify who you are on the court/field and let them know which number you are and who the opponent is in the game. Most college coaches appreciate a game film rather than a "staged" highlight tape or at least like a combination of both.
8. Time to make some phone calls or visits! Once you have connected with some of the colleges you are interested in and have heard back from their coaches, it is time to either take an in-person visit or these days a virtual visit. The Admissions offices or the coach will set you up with a tour of the school, a visit with academic department chairs, and with the athletic department. There are both unofficial and official visits. Start with unofficial visits and save your official visits for when you have narrowed down your choices to around three schools. An exception to this is if you are being offered a scholarship on a timeline, then get your official visit scheduled as soon as possible.

9. Be persistent. Unless you are one of the top 50 recruits in the nation in your sport and position, you will need to consistently be an advocate for yourself. It may take several emails and phone calls to hear back from college coaches. It may take you inviting them to several of your games/competitions. The one thing you DON'T want to do is have your parents reach out to them instead of you! College coaches want highly motivated, self-sufficient student-athletes and you doing your own leg work to find a good fit for a college demonstrates that.
10. A word about recruiting services. If you have some extra money to spend and want to hire a recruiting service to save you some time, they can expand the amount of ground you can cover in a shorter amount of time. But make no mistake they should not replace the personal impression you will need to make in order to get recruited.
11. When should you start the process? There is no single magic age to start your recruiting process. Each sport varies as well as the division of college timelines for recruiting. Your best bet is to start your 9th or 10th grade year.

This is by far not an all-inclusive list of how to get recruited, but I hope it helps give you an outline of where to get started. If any student-athlete would like to set up a visit with me to help guide them through any steps of this process, feel free to email me or stop in my office to set up a time. I would love to help you out! 😊