

# Information for Prospective College Athletes



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## **WHAT EVERY HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT RECRUITING**

For students who consider themselves “recruitable” athletes, the college process can be a complicated and potentially exciting experience. Balancing the interest of the college coaches with the search for the right college and the demands of the admissions offices requires honest self-reflection, active communication, thorough research, a level of persistence and a willingness to be patient.

### **Self-Assessment**

Take the time to be honest with yourself about your abilities and potential. As you consider collegiate athletics, talk to people who know you as a player and whom you trust. Your high school coaches, athletic director, outside coaches and college counselor can help you assess yourself as a potential collegiate athlete. A frank and candid assessment of your abilities will offer you direction as you research appropriate athletic programs to pursue. Research the difference between D-I, D-II and D-III and see what is best for you both academically and athletically.

### **Commitment**

You need to ask yourself if you really want to play sports in college. Participating in collegiate-level varsity athletics will make strong demands on your time, energy and academic commitments. Are you willing to spend 18-24 hours a week involved in one activity? Conditioning, weight training, captain’s workouts and pre-season sessions may be year-round activities. Coaches and teammates expect a total commitment to the program. Athletics should not be used simply to gain an edge in the admissions process. You must be willing to commit to the college team once you arrive on campus. If not, your actions could have an impact on the future relationship between college coaches and Packer coaches and athletes. It is also important to assess the personality, style and philosophy of the coaches who contact you. In reality, you will spend more time with your college coach than any other adult at the school, so carefully research not only the opportunities for yourself in the program but also the people who make up the organization including potential future teammates.

## STUDENT-ATHLETE'S HIGH SCHOOL PLAN

### **Before Junior Year (if appropriate)**

- Talk to your coach(es) to assess your athletic ability and understand the recruiting process.
  - If your coach sees you as competitive for D-I programs, the timeline for your college process may be accelerated. If you believe this applies to you and may need college counseling support earlier than junior year, please see your dean who will communicate with Packer's college counselors.
- Familiarize yourself with the NCAA rules and regulations governing athletic recruiting.
- Learn about the different levels of competition (NCAA Division I, II or III).
- Keep a file of your achievements, awards, newspaper clippings.
- Film your competitions for future use.
- Attend camps, clinics, showcases and/or other programs; be aware that coaches are observing and evaluating you. Reach out to coaches directly beforehand if you know who will be attending.
- Communicate with the college coaches who have been present at your competitions via follow-up emails.
- Fill in questionnaires that you receive from any colleges you might be interested in.
- Develop athletic goals for the remainder of high school.
- Make sure that your junior year courses are NCAA-approved if you plan to pursue opportunities at DI/DII schools.

### **Junior Year**

- Talk with your counselor about your desire to pursue varsity athletics
- Talk with your coach about a realistic assessment of which college level you can play
- Refine your list of possible college choices. Know their admission requirements
- Create a sports resume/highlights reel or create an account on websites such as huddl.com
- Contact college coaches expressing your interest
- Fill in and return any questionnaires you receive from college coaches
- Plan to visit colleges and schedule meetings with the coach and team members
- Film competitions to be sent to coaches on request
- Apply for eligibility to the NCAA Clearinghouse at the end of junior year (not necessary for Division III athletics)
- Attend sports camps in the summer, if appropriate
- Inform college coaches of the camps you will be attending
- Make sure that your senior year courses are NCAA-approved if you plan to pursue opportunities at DI/DII schools
- Narrow down your choices and continue communication with coaches
- Know the NCAA rules and regulations governing athletic recruitment by July 1 before your senior year
- Be aware of recruiting rules regarding campus visits

- Make sure to take the ACT and/or SAT by the spring of your junior year. Most college coaches will be interested in knowing your scores before considering you. Some recruiting starts early and may require you to adjust your testing calendar

### **Senior Year**

- Continue to meet with your counselor
- Refine your college list and apply for admission
- Fill in and return any additional questionnaires you receive from college coaches
- Update coaches on a regular basis when there are changes in your performance, highlights, improvements, injuries or sicknesses.
- Have your coach call or contact the college coach to recommend you if they have not already done so
- Plan visits to your top schools
- Ask coach about a visit to the college (review NCAA rules on official and unofficial visits)
- Do an overnight visit if invited to help develop a sense of the sports and school culture
- Sit down with your parents and/or coach to list the pros and cons of each school you are considering
- Be sure of your final choice before making any commitments
- Let coaches know when their school is no longer in the running. Thank them for their time and attention
- Make your final college decision based on a meaningful education and a satisfying athletic experience—*in that order*

## CONTACT WITH COLLEGE COACHES

You need to take the initiative to contact college coaches directly. Let them know of your interest in applying to their school and your desire to participate in their program. Coaches are not only measuring your athletic ability but your willingness to commit to their program. It is important to show your interest through regular and positive communication. The following steps will help you get organized:

- Research the colleges that fit your academic and athletic needs. Establish a tentative list of colleges that you'd like to contact. Your counselor can help you assess the academic fit of the colleges that interest you as well.
- Show your list to your coach and ask for feedback on how realistic your chances would be for each school with respect to your athletic abilities. Ask if your coach would be willing to make/receive contacts on your behalf. If the answer is yes, provide your coach and counselor with the following information:
  - A list of the colleges you plan to contact with each college's coach name, phone number, e-mail address, and mailing address
  - Copies of the documents you're sending to each college
  - A copy of your current high school transcript and resume

These documents will allow your counselor and coach to advocate for you knowledgeably. It is important to have their support.

- Send an introduction letter and your athletic resume to each college coach or complete the questionnaires provided on their website. (The samples that follow are designed to serve as guides. You will need to provide statistics that are appropriate to your sport). You can also make video available with this initial information, or you can offer to send them "upon request." (Note: you may want to find out how the coach prefers to receive this material; some will want you to upload your video to a website.)
- Make sure to take the ACT and/or SAT by the spring of your junior year. Most college coaches will insist on knowing your scores before considering you.
- If you are pursuing NCAA Division I or II programs, file a completed NCAA Clearinghouse release form at the end of your junior year or beginning of senior year. You can find the release form at [www.ncaaclearinghouse.net](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net).
- Colleges will often respond by asking you or your coach to complete an athletic questionnaire. Be your best advocate by staying in touch with coaches. If you receive a questionnaire from a school you are not yet actively considering, take the time to fill it out and return it promptly as it will allow you to be registered as part of their recruiting prospects. You never know when an unexpected opportunity might come your way.
- Keep in mind that summer sports camps and tournaments provide excellent opportunities for networking with college coaches. Just be sure that you are familiar with the rules that

regulate such contact (see page 11 for NCAA website information). Not knowing the rules will not be an excuse for a recruiting violation. Moreover, coaches are as interested in your personality and sportsmanship as they are in your skill. Be prepared to make a good impression.

### **QUESTIONS TO ASK COLLEGE COACHES**

- What is the coach's relationship to the school? Are they the head coach or assistant coach? (Assurances carry different weight depending on whom they come from.)
- Ask about the coach's philosophy and the direction of the program.
- How many current team members are in your position/events? (Does the team need you?)
- What kind of playing time might you expect to see? And will this change based on your grade level?
- Ask the coach to describe a typical practice.
- Ask for details about athletic scholarships. Typically, athletic scholarships (or grants, as they are sometimes called) are for one year, renewable at the coach's discretion. If you get benched or injured, do you start paying your own way from then on?
- Ask coaches what they expect of players: time commitment, behavior, appearance, etc., and decide whether you can work with her/him.
- What is expected of players during the off-season?
- Most importantly, ask yourself if the school would be right for you even if you weren't competing in athletics and are there limits to your academic options because of sports.

### **QUESTIONS TO ASK OF OTHER PLAYERS AT THE SCHOOL**

- What does your typical daily schedule look like? In-season? Off-season?
- How rigorous is your travel schedule?
- Is the coach approachable? How would you describe your relationship with the coach?
- What are the coach's strengths? The team's strengths?
- What are the coach's priorities with respect to athletics and academics?
- Approximately how many hours a night do you study?
- What assistance is available if you have academic problems?
- Were changes made to any promises once you committed/enrolled?
- Is the program what you expected based on your recruiting experience?
- What is the team culture like? How insular is it?

### **POTENTIAL PITFALLS**

Remember that your interests and a coach's interests do not always overlap to your advantage. A coach's goal is to build the best team possible. Typically, coaches are allowed to present to the admissions committee a list of their desired candidates from among the applicant pool. There is no guarantee that the admissions committee will admit all candidates on a coach's list nor follow the order of preference; academic and personal factors have to be taken into consideration.

Coaches' promises are not a guarantee. Coaches who do guarantee your admission are probably overstepping their bounds. It is to a coach's benefit to keep the most athletes interested the longest. The admissions committee makes admissions decision, not the coaches. Coaches may lead you to believe that you will make their list, but there are no guarantees. You could be bumped from a list at the last minute if the coach finds a better athlete or an equivalent or even a somewhat less talented athlete with stronger academic credentials who is more likely to make it through the admissions process.

It is not unusual for a coach to ask you to state which college is your first choice. After all, in choosing which athletes to support in the admission process, coaches do not want to waste energy or a high position on their list on a candidate who is not likely to enroll. We do not want you to mislead coaches nor do we want your honesty to put you at a disadvantage in the admissions process. If coaches start asking you to commit, it is of critical importance that you discuss this with your college counselor, parents and coach before responding.

It is important that you keep your college counselor posted throughout the process about all communications with college coaches. Our work as your advocate is strengthened if we know which college coaches seem most interested in you. We can also work with admissions offices and athletic liaisons to confirm what coaches are telling you.



**SAMPLE EMAIL FROM HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETE  
TO COLLEGE COACH**

Dear Coach So & So:

I am currently a junior at Packer Collegiate Institute. My counselor suggested that I look into College X, and I'm very interested in (list a few things that appeal to you about the college).

I have played high school volleyball for three years, starting as a setter for all three. I am 5'8" and weigh 145 pounds. I have been All-Conference for the past two years and All-State this year. I was also selected for the North All Star Team this year.

My cumulative GPA is a 3.7 on a 4.0 scale. My SAT scores are 620/600. I intend to retake it in the fall of my senior year. I am interested in pursuing a four-year degree in biology. I also hope to continue playing volleyball on the college level. I'd love to learn more about your program and to have the opportunity to discuss whether you see me as a good fit for your team.

I have included a skills video and a game video. My jersey number is #1 in the light-colored uniforms. Also included is a schedule of our upcoming volleyball season. I want to also let you know that I will be playing in the tournament at the Walker Athletic Center in Westfield, CT next month should you happen to have the opportunity to see me in action. In the meantime, please let me know if there is additional information that my coach or I can provide. My coach's name is Mary Jones. Her contact information is included on the attached information page. She has indicated to me that she would welcome your calls. E-mail is a reliable way to reach her as well.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Athlete's Name  
Address  
Email  
Phone #

## SAMPLE STUDENT-ATHLETE RESUME

### AMY ATHLETE Volleyball Information

*1225 Any Street, Any Town, Any State 81234  
Telephone: (500) 111-1111 or (500) 222-2222  
Athlete@gmail.com*

**High School:** Packer Collegiate Institute  
170 Joralemon St.  
Brooklyn, NY 11201  
(718) 250-0256 (Athletic Director)

**Volleyball Division:** New York State Independent Athletic Association  
Athletic Conference Independent Schools  
Private School Athletic Association

**Position:** Setter

**Jersey:** #1 Light/#10 Dark

**Offense Used:** 5-1 Offense

**Years Starting Varsity:** 3 years

**Awards/Honors:** Best Setter (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior years)  
Most Valuable Player (Junior year)  
All Conference (Sophomore and Junior year)  
All State (Junior year)  
North All Star Team (Junior year)

**Experience:** AAU Volleyball (Freshman, Sophomore and Junior years)  
Coed Power Outdoor & Indoor Tournaments (Sophomore and Junior year)  
Aspen Volleyball Camp (Freshman and Sophomore years)  
Any University Summer Camp (Sophomore year)

**Height:** 5'8"  
**Weight:** 145 lbs.  
**Vertical:** 23"  
**GPA & Rank:** 3.74 on 4.0 scale  
**Test Scores:** 31 ACT, February 2015  
**Graduation Date:** June 2016

**References:** Mary Jones, Packer Volleyball Coach ([Mjones@packer.edu](mailto:Mjones@packer.edu))  
718-250-0250

718-250-0284

Al Edwards, Packer Athletic Director ([Aedwards@packer.edu](mailto:Aedwards@packer.edu))

349-3467

Fred Smith, AAU Volleyball Coach ([Fsmith@aau.com](mailto:Fsmith@aau.com)) 212

718 250 0265

Sarah Brown, Packer College Counselor ([Sbrown@packer.edu](mailto:Sbrown@packer.edu))

## NCAA INFORMATION

### **For general information on:**

- ◆ Academic Eligibility for Divisions I, II, and III
- ◆ Recruiting Policies for Divisions I, II, and III
- ◆ Information on Approved Core Courses
- ◆ Information on Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse
- ◆ And much more!

1. Go to [www.ncaaclearinghouse.net](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net)
2. Click on “NCAA College-bound Student Athletes”

### **To find information on what schools sponsor your sport:**

1. Go to:  
<http://www.ncaa.org/about/who-we-are/membership/composition-and-sport-sponsorship-ncaa-membership>
2. You may choose from the following:
  - ◆ Schools sponsoring each sport sorted by *division or conference*
  - ◆ Schools sponsoring each sport sorted by *sport*

### **To apply for NCAA academic eligibility:**

1. Go to [www.ncaaclearinghouse.net](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net)
3. 2. Click on “NCAA College-bound Student Athletes” and then register as a US or international student
4. Complete the online form. Be prepared for the following:
  - ◆ Our school code is “330790”