



Guiding Parents Through the Recruiting Process by Andy Beal of Max Preps

A realistic assessment of your son or daughter's athletic talent is an important first step. This assessment will help you determine the appropriate level of play for your son or daughter at the college level. Don't rule out [NAIA](#) or [NCAA Division II and III](#) schools if they can help your child attain their academic goals. Casting a wide net will improve your child's chance of being successfully recruited.

Having a realistic expectation with respect to athletic scholarship money is helpful. In addition to athletic scholarships, many colleges offer other types of financial assistance and the pool of available money to your child will be substantially increased with strong academic results.

Some schools do not offer athletics scholarships, or need to allocate scarce scholarship money to more players than their program is funded to carry. It is not uncommon in smaller schools, or less prominent sports at larger schools for scholarships to cover only a portion of the costs associated with attending college. You should keep these opportunities open, too. Remember, your child can supplement their total financial package through other forms of financial aid such as academic or community-based scholarships, student loans. They can also earn up to \$20,000 in financial assistance from the [Army National Guard](#).

Many companies and consultants exist to help match graduating seniors to collegiate athletic opportunities. Some are quite effective and others fall short. Before hiring somebody else to help your child achieve their collegiate athletic dream, some self-help is highly recommended.

Here are some important things you can do:

- ✓ Talk to your high school coach for advice
- ✓ Ask for an assessment of your child's appropriate next level of play
- ✓ Gauge coach's interest in promoting your athlete to college scouts and coaches
- ✓ Ask if coach is willing to take the next step of reaching out to colleges coaches on behalf of your child
- ✓ Have your son or daughter attend off-season exposure tournaments or combines
- ✓ Do some research to ascertain that college coaches will actually be at the event
- ✓ Have your athlete prepare for the event – don't go in cold during the off-season
- ✓ Post a highlight package on [YouTube](#), [TRUpregs.com](#), or other video sharing site and let college coaches know how to find it by including the full URL in your correspondence
- ✓ Short – three minutes max with in-game highlights that show off athletic ability or extraordinary skills – music and special effects are not desirable
- ✓ Include your athlete's contact information in the video
- ✓ Prepare a DVD that contains both highlights and a full game

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Please contact kcowden14@gmail.com for more information

- ✓ Send this to coaches that ask to see video
- ✓ Label the DVD and put contact info into the video at the start and conclusion
- ✓ There is nothing wrong with sending your athlete's best full-game video
- ✓ Contact colleges and let them know of your child's interest
- ✓ A complete database of all NCAA coaches at all levels is available from "[College Coach Connection](#)" for only \$49.95.
- ✓ Register your athlete at the [NCAA Eligibility Center](#) (also known as the NCAA Clearinghouse). If you hope to obtain an athletic scholarship from an NCAA-affiliated college, your athlete must register with the eligibility center and academically qualify.

A letter, or e-mail, to colleges alerting them to your athlete's interest along with a link to the highlight video can be effective in peaking interest. Your note should also include some other salient points about athletic achievements and academic results. Conduct an outreach campaign and follow-up with a phone call from your child to the coach.

Several factors will weigh into a school's interest in recruiting a particular athlete. Is there a strong need at the position played? Does the athlete qualify academically? Is the athlete a fit into the program socially? Just because there is not a fit at one school should not be discouraging – schools, teams and coaches value different things at different times. Timing and circumstances are huge factors.

If a school displays some interest, it is important to reciprocate the attention. Nothing is more discouraging to a college coach than to show interest in an athlete only to not get called back.

In addition to your son or daughter's athletic ability and academic standing, the most important factor is reaching out to the schools you would like to consider. Have an open mind – lots of great athletic and educational opportunities are available at smaller schools and many offer combinations of athletic scholarships and financial aid. Reach out to these schools to broaden your choices.

Check out each college's website for contact information, or to be more efficient, subscribe to [College Coach Connection](#) to search for schools that meet your criteria and then communicate to coaches directly by using its updated live e-mail addresses provided by the service.