



**FIRSTPOINT** USA

**CLIENT MANUAL**



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# TIMELINE 01





# 1 - 3 MONTHS

## WHAT WE DO

- Complete Academic Evaluation and Grade Translation Report
- Calculate Grade Point Average (GPA)
- Gather academic & sporting data
- Create a 'sporting profile'
- Build a video portfolio

## WHAT YOU DO

- Provide all of your academic and sporting information to our Client Services Team
- Book yourself in for a 'filming day' with our Media Team. This is used to build your video portfolio
- Start to think about your specific academic sporting and social needs

# 3 - 4 MONTHS

## WHAT WE DO

- Determine eligibility status: NCAA, NAIA or NJCAA
- Develop marketing & promotional strategy
- Consider academic, athletic & financial need
- Begin shortlisting suitable US colleges and universities

# 4 - 10 MONTHS

## WHAT WE DO

- Commence marketing to shortlisted colleges & universities
- Negotiate and broker scholarship deals
- Discuss offers and interest with athlete and their family
- Assist with university admissions process

## WHAT YOU DO

- Commit to scholarship offer of your choice
- Complete the university admissions process

# FINAL STAGES

## WHAT WE DO

- Assist with Student Visa process
- Final checklist

## WHAT YOU DO

- Complete Student Visa process
- Obtain health/travel insurance
- Book flights to the USA

# ONLINE PROFILE

# 03

As a FirstPoint USA client, an online profile will be created for you on our website, detailing your sporting and academic background, allowing interested coaches to contact you. This is very important in starting your promotion, and applies only to coaches you have shortlisted - ensuring that only certain people have access to your personal file, which is protected by a username and password.

In addition to this, your online profile will include edited sports footage, which the coaches will have full access to. This forms a massive part of your promotion, as coaches are able to note first hand how you perform as an athlete, and take into account any particular strengths or weaknesses you may have.

## **VIDEO PORTFOLIO:**

As a prospective student athlete, it is vital that you have access to good quality sports footage, which you can show to coaches who are interested in you. This means coaching staff can see clearly your strengths and weaknesses as a player, and are able to determine how well you would fit as a member of their department.

As a Firstpoint client, we will take care of the footage for you, if you wish. You can send footage to us, which we will edit, before adding it to your online profile and using it for your promotion. If you do not have pre-existing footage, we are more than happy to film you playing.

**FORMS A  
MASSIVE PART  
OF YOUR  
PROMOTION**







# NEW SAT 05

In order to gain academic acceptance to the college you have chosen, you must sit the SAT. The test has recently undergone a complete overhaul in 2016, meaning that the test is now shorter, contains 2 separate maths papers – non calculator and calculator – and the essay section is now optional. In addition to this, there is no longer a penalty for wrong answers, meaning you should have a go at answering questions you don't know.

However, despite these changes, it's important that you realise the importance of the SAT, and that the new format does not make the test any easier to sit. It's highly recommended that you study for at least a month before sitting the test, in order to get the highest score possible. Also, it is advised that you concentrate on studying documents like the Gettysburg Address, the Declaration of

Freedom or Roosevelt's Four Freedoms Speech – especially as these won't be familiar to you being a non-American student.

It is also important, however, to remain calm about the test. It is easy to become stressed and anxious, especially as your admittance to university can rely heavily on this score, but it's vital that you keep your options in perspective. Depending on where you're applying, some schools value your GPA over your standardised test score, meaning that, just because your test went badly, doesn't necessarily mean your chance at attending college is over. You should also keep in mind that you can resit the test as many times as you wish, and you are only required to admit your best score to the school. Therefore, there's no need to become disheartened if your first sitting didn't go as well as you hoped.

# CHOOSING A COLLEGE



When looking at prospective colleges, there can be a lot of aspects to take into account and it can easily get overwhelming. It is important to consider what you are really looking for in a school, and what you want to get out of your college experience. There are so many colleges and universities in America that you will undoubtedly find one that fits your needs perfectly, if you go into your search prepared and certain about what you want.

As a student athlete, it may seem that going to a Division I school is the only way to excel in your sport; this is somewhat true, as DI schools do have a certain reputation, and tend to be larger schools, with more excess funds to spend on facilities. However, the divisions are not based on ability, and sometimes Division II – or even Division III – schools can have just as talented players as those in larger schools.

You must take into account that, if you are elected to become a DI athlete, you will have less free time, you will have to work twice as hard to maintain your studies, and your college experience is destined to be much different to the typical perception of student life. However, there are obvious advantages to playing in Division I. You have much more attention on your skills as an athlete, you are given a massive amount of time to concentrate on a sport you love, and are given access to the best coaches and facilities.

Electing to play for a Division II or III team is often the best thing for some student athletes. It allows them to have more time to concentrate on classes, to see friends, and generally enjoy college life. It also means there is significantly less pressure, which often takes the joy out of the sport for DI athletes.







# RESEARCHING COLLEGES



Deciding which college to go to is a massive decision, and one that isn't made any easier by the massive variety of colleges and universities found across the country. In order to make sure you're making the correct choice for your education and athletic career, it is strongly advised that you do your research.

Visiting university and college websites are an excellent way to learn more about certain universities that may have caught your eye – or reached out to you. Every school will have an official website, on which you can find information about their sporting facilities, staff members and academic programmes, as well as the more social aspect of each campus.

It is important to decide if you should go straight to a 4 year school, or build grades and credits at a 2 year Junior College before transferring.

In addition to this, the Petersons Guide is also available for students looking at universities. Petersons is an excellent resource, which makes it easy to learn more about colleges and universities, as it includes a whole host of information about each school – from what kind of degrees are on offer, to the exact male to female student ratio found on campus. ([www.petersons.com](http://www.petersons.com))

# FORMER CLIENTS



## **KARIN MUYA**

University of Notre Dame,  
Indiana (Women's Soccer)

Karin joined the University of Notre Dame on a soccer scholarship in 2014, and hasn't looked back since. The former England U19 international became the first English-born player to ever join the Fighting Irish and she's certainly impressed coaches in the States.

So far she has only completed one season, despite going into her junior year – due to being unable to play because of an injury. Despite this, in her first season she sunk four goals, totalled 19 shots and 12 shots on goal. She is currently enrolled in the Notre Dame's Mendoza College of Business and plans to continue to balance her studies with her blossoming soccer career.



## **DANNY WILLETT**

Jacksonville State University,  
Alabama (Golf)

Since Danny Willett left Jacksonville State University in 2007, after just two seasons, his career as a professional golfer has continued to rise.

In 2008, he was ranked the No 1 amateur in the world. Later that year, he turned professional, going on to come 5th in the 2010 BMW PGA Championship, and winning the BMW International Open in 2012, his first win on the European Tour.

However, his real success would come in 2016 when he won the Masters Tournament in Augusta, and received the iconic green jacket.



## **RUSSELL KNOX**

Jacksonville University,  
Florida (Golf)

After graduating from Jacksonville University in 2007, Russell Knox has grown phenomenally as a golfer.

Currently rated 27th in the world rankings, he has gone from strength to strength since turning professional in 2007, something proved by his recent win at the WGC-HSBC Champions in November 2015.

This made him the first ever Scottish golfer to successfully win a WGC event and established him as a force to be reckoned with in the golfing world.



## **LIAM DOYLE**

Ohio State University,  
Ohio (Men's Soccer)

Liam was different to most scholarship recipients, in the way in which he previously attended Cincinnati State Technical and Community College, before transferring in order to attend Ohio State in 2014.

While he was there, he was awarded many honours due to the skill and strength he brought to the squad, namely receiving the NSCAA All-American in 2014.

Liam, born and raised in the Isle of Man, left the school in 2016, and currently plays for the USL side Harrisburg City Islanders, in Pennsylvania.



#### **JORDAN WILSON**

University of Kentucky,  
Kentucky (Men's Soccer)

Jordan joined the Kentucky Wildcats in 2013, and immediately fitted in well with the atmosphere of the team.

In his first year at the university, he was named to the Conference USA All-Tournament Team, and he quickly became a key member of the Wildcats defence.

Academically Jordan succeeded as well, being named on the SEC academic honour roll as a freshman. More recently, Jordan was ranked one of the top 10 defenders in men's college soccer, a huge honour for such a young player.



#### **DULCIE DAVIES**

Stanford University, California  
(Hockey)

Dulcie Davies enrolled in the world-renowned Stanford University in 2012, but unlike most students joining the prestigious school, she already had the title of former England U16, U18 and U21 international. However, she continued to develop and improve her skills as a player during her time at Stanford, with the help of her teammates and coaches.

During her time at the college, she was named the Defensive Player of the Year, Sportsperson of the Year twice, and was a two-time recipient of the David Furnell Trophy for Outstanding Sporting Achievement – all while balancing a degree in Science, Technology and Society. After graduating in 2016, her plans are to remain in California, coaching hockey.



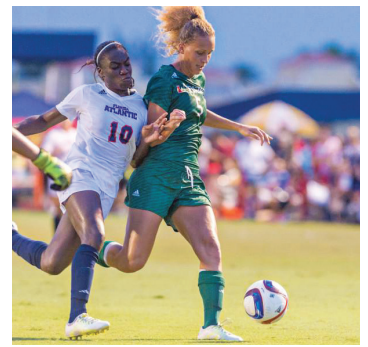
#### **VICTORIA STRATTON**

University of Louisville,  
Kentucky (Hockey)

Victoria, a New Zealander born and raised in Auckland, joined the Louisville Cardinals in 2012.

During her time at the school, she continued to better her playing skills, both athletically as part of the squad, and academically, while she majored in exercise science.

She was actually named on the Big East honour roll twice – first as a freshman in 2012, then again in 2013, during her sophomore year. As well as this, she was selected to the NFHCA Division I senior game, a huge honour which put her among the best collegiate hockey players in the country.



#### **MAISIE BAKER**

University of Miami (Soccer)

Maisie, a soccer player originally from the West Midlands, started at Miami University in 2015.

She played with Aston Villa ladies before moving to the States and helped the club to a fourth-place finish in Super League 2 in 2014.

Maisie has been capped at U19 level. She decided to attend Miami in part because of the quality of the ACC and the school's location. During her freshman year she played in 14 matches and started the first 13 contests of the season.





# MYTHS - SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

# 12

As the majority of British students have never experienced American college life, much less have they received athletic scholarships, there is often unreliable information and perceptions of what this might entail. This can lead to prospects getting understandably confused and anxious about the process, and therefore, it is important to separate the myths surrounding sports scholarships from the reality.

First of all, while some athletes do receive athletic scholarships paying for their entire education, or a “full ride”, these students are in the minority, and by no means does everyone receive a full scholarship. The majority of student athletes fund a percentage of their college education, while receiving a certain amount from the university.

Also, it's important to not be discouraged by the perception that coaches only recruit the top athletes. There are 5,300 colleges and universities across the US, and each college programme requires a balance of

players and abilities. If you wish to pursue collegiate athletics, you will find a university that fits your needs as an athlete, and that allows you to compete at a level suitable to you.

It is also important to remember that the process does not end when a coach makes you an offer. Your place at the college is not guaranteed until you are accepted academically, meaning you must now turn your attention to studies. It is required that you comply with NCAA or NAIA eligibility guidelines, meaning your SAT/ACT scores and your GPA must be at a satisfactory level.

Finally, while it is unlikely that your coach will revoke your scholarship, you must remember that a scholarship is year to year, and by no means lasts for the expected four years. This means that coaches can decide not to renew your scholarship if they see fit. However, this is exceptionally rare, and will only occur if you break team rules or let your studies slip and become academically ineligible by NCAA/NAIA guidelines.



# RULES 13

For someone who has never experienced the world of collegiate athletics before, the mountain of rules imposed by the governing bodies can feel intimidating and confusing. It is important to take time to consider and compare prospective universities, athletically, academically and socially, in order to ensure you choose the perfect school for you. However, it is also important to adhere to the regulations during this time, in order to make sure you don't jeopardise your opportunity.

It's important to realise that, while you may want to start looking at possible colleges in your sophomore year of high school, you are prohibited from having any written correspondence with coaches until after your 16th birthday. This is because when you turn 16, you become a student athlete, able to be recruited by coaches. This does not, however, mean the wait is over. College coaches must then wait until 1st September after

the prospect turns 16 before this written correspondence can contain anything related to their specific athletic program. After the 1st, coaches can send emails and texts, as well as letters and instant messages. However, these rules differ slightly for male basketball prospects: if this applies to you, you can receive material related to athletics on June 15th, following your 15th birthday.

There are also pretty stringent rules surrounding the level of contact you can have with coaches during the recruitment period. For example, a college coach in the NCAA can only phone you on one occasion per week, while you as a prospect – or your parents – can initiate a phone call as many times as you wish. This only changes on days where a coach is scheduled to visit a prospect; in this case, they can call as many times as they want. The rule is also waived following the signing to the NLI, and up to five days prior to any official visit.

# MONEY 14

Understandably, money is a major factor in choosing colleges for many families. The average cost, annually, to attend university in the states is an estimated \$36,564. However, this cost can be heavily subsidised by scholarships, offering students the chance to experience higher education. Coaches realise that money can be a worry, but they would much rather you chose their university because of things like their athletic facilities, their academics, or the opportunities they can provide you with.

It is important to know how to approach the subject of money with coaches. Honesty and remaining upfront at all times is vital, and attempting to play coaches off of each other will harm your chances and lose you respect. You, however, can discuss other offers you have received with coaches, and you can explain any trouble you may have in paying the expenses. Coaches are understanding and realise that the cost of college is simply impossible for some families to manage.

Despite this, you should never assume that any coach will offer you a full scholarship. The decision to award full rides is made because of certain criteria, ranging from the amount of money the programme was given during that particular year to your talent when compared to your teammates and your competitors. Therefore, just because you find the expenses to be out of the question, this does not mean the coach is at liberty to offer you a full ride to their institution.

**THE DECISION TO  
AWARD FULL RIDES  
IS MADE BECAUSE  
OF CERTAIN  
CRITERIA BY THE  
COACHES**



# SIGNING DAYS

# 15

National Signing Days mark the first day that high school seniors can sign the NLI, and therefore, commit to a university for a year. Despite the fact that every NCAA sport has at least one separate Signing Day, more NLI's are signed on the first Wednesday of February, as this is the date that football signings– among other things – are held. Signing Days for football normally attract massive amounts of media attention, and are followed by sports fans of all ages across America.

In recent years, Signing Days have been a source of entertainment and spectacle

for football and basketball players, as they hold ceremonies with audiences including their classmates, future coaches and sports fans, in order to announce which school they have chosen. However, for most other athletes, Signing Day is a much quieter affair, especially if they have already made a verbal commitment to a school.

**FOOTBALL NORMALLY  
ATTRACTS MASSIVE  
AMOUNTS OF MEDIA  
ATTENTION**

# OFFICIAL VISITS VS UNOFFICIAL VISITS

Visiting a campus you are interested in is a great way to experience the atmosphere of the school, and see if you can envision yourself spending the next four years there. Therefore, it is important to make sure you are familiar with the rules around on-campus visits, in order to get the most out of the recruitment process.

An official visit is the name given to visits where the university or college foots the bill – paying for all, or a substantial percentage, of the trip's expenses. Each student athlete is permitted to have five official visits to

different campuses across the country beginning after their 17th birthday, but can only officially visit each school once. Official visits must only last for up to 48 hours, and the school must provide a place to stay, a maximum of three meals a day, and flights there and back.

However, an unofficial visit is any visit undertaken at the student's expense. The school is therefore prohibited from providing transport, meals and accommodation free of charge, and is only allowed to give away three complementary tickets to an on-campus athletic event. These trips can last as long as the prospect wishes, and are often an excellent way to explore the campus and get to know the faculty in a more relaxed manner.

**EXPERIENCE THE  
ATMOSPHERE**



# NATIONAL LETTER OF INTENT (NLI)

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In order to fully commit to a school, you will most likely be required to sign a National Letter of Intent. Over 500 schools across America participate in the NLI program, in order to protect and benefit their athletes and their athletic program.

The signing of the NLI basically means you have committed to that particular university, and agreed to attend classes there for at least a year. In return, the school has agreed to provide a certain amount of aid financially – usually in the form of a scholarship. After signing the NLI, you are effectively taken off the table as a prospect, no longer recruitable by other schools.

Despite this, it is important to note that, even after the signing, you are still required to gain academic acceptance, and

therefore if you are deemed ineligible by the NCAA/NAIA Eligibility Centre, the NLI becomes void and you cannot attend the school. It should also be noted that, when signing the NLI, you are signing for the school, not the coach. If at any point the coach leaves the programme, you as an athlete are still committed to play for your university or college.

Because division III schools do not offer athletic scholarships, even though you may receive some financial aid from the school, athletes signing for these schools are not required to sign a NLI. In fact, it is vital that you are aware that this programme does not exist at a DIII level, and if coaches ask you to sign any letter of commitment, you must be aware that this will not be legally binding.

# ELIGIBILITY 18

In order to gain acceptance to the school of your choice, you must comply with the specific school's academic guidelines, as well as the NCAA's standards. Therefore, it is vital that you are aware of what is expected of you academically, and that you also are aware of any help that can be offered on behalf of the school.

To be eligible to compete in the NCAA or NAIA, you must have two of the three criteria detailed by the association:

- Achieve a minimum of 18 on the enhanced ACT or 820 for NCAA or 860 for NAIA on the SAT
- Achieve an overall high school GPA of 2.0 or better ("C" average)
- Graduate in the upper 50% of high school graduating class.

For Junior College you are required to have completed highschool with 5 core classes.

If you successfully meet these guidelines, you are eligible to practice, compete and receive financial aid as a full participant of the athletic program. However, if you only meet one of the two standards, you are referred to as a "Partial Qualifier" and, while being able to practice and receive scholarship aid, you are prohibited from competing as an NCAA athlete, until you become fully academically eligible.

**MUST COMPLY  
WITH THE SPECIFIC  
SCHOOL'S  
ACADEMIC  
GUIDELINES**



# STAYING REALISTIC

# 19

It's important to remain realistic about your options after your scholarship. Even though you may dream of becoming a professional athlete, and may even feel that you are good enough to be drafted at the end of your collegiate career, the odds are slim. Right is a table – estimated by the NCAA – that compares participation rates of six sports and the percentage of students that achieve their goal of participating in college athletics and then professional sports.

This reinforces the importance of maintaining a focus on your chosen major – attending classes, completing assignments and

taking advantage of study hall or tutoring laid on by coaches. Even if you feel you have the capability to go professional and to make a living through your sport, it is vital that you keep your options open, and graduate with a degree behind you, just in case things don't go to plan.

**IT IS VITAL THAT  
YOU KEEP YOUR  
OPTIONS OPEN,  
AND GRADUATE  
WITH A DEGREE  
BEHIND YOU**

# MAKING IT PROFESSIONAL

	Men's Basketball	Women's Basketball	American Football	Baseball	Men's Ice Hockey	Men's Soccer
High School Student Athletes	546,335	452,929	1,071,775	470,671	36,263	358,935
NCAA Student Athletes	16,571	15,096	61,252	134,477	10,361	102,553
NCAA Senior Student Athletes	3,682	3,355	13,612	6,393	883	4,398
NCAA Student Athletes Drafted into Pros	44	32	250	600	33	76
Percent High School to the NCAA	3.0%	3.3%	5.7%	6.1%	11.0%	5.5%
Percent NCAA to Professional	1.2%	1.0%	1.8%	9.4%	3.7%	1.7%
Percent High School to Professional	0.03%	0.02%	0.08%	0.45%	0.32%	0.07%





# COLLEGE COACHES

WHAT ARE THEY LOOKING FOR?

22

Every college coach is looking for an athlete to bring something different to their programme. What is worth noting is that your evaluation as an athlete is entirely subjective: what one coach may love might be a deal breaker for another. This is why you should not feel discouraged if a coach rejects you. This does not mean you are a bad player or should give up on looking for a scholarship entirely; it simply means your style and ability is not what that particular coach is looking for right now.

However, if your sport is one such as golf, track & field, or swimming, you will have to work to get your times and/or scores at the best level they can be. In these kinds of sports, it is glaringly obvious when an athlete is behind others, and in order to give yourself the best possible chance, you need to work hard on your numbers.

In addition to this, while it is important to coaches that you have experienced a satisfactory high school career, it is also more important that it wasn't too good. Too often, athletes

with so much potential, 'peak' too early and reach their prime in high school, meaning they are restricted from having an accomplished college career.

There are many different aspects to what college coaches look for in new recruits, and it differs widely from sport to sport. However, generally, it can be said that values like maturity – not only physically, but also mentally – and being able to work as part of a bigger team are important to every coach. Also, things like having strong self discipline (student athletes have a lot of early mornings and miss a lot of college parties), being open to learning new things and new techniques, and having a genuine love of the sport, are all vital parts of being a college athlete.

**STUDENT ATHLETES  
HAVE TO BALANCE  
STUDYING AND  
TRAINING**

# BASKETBALL

COACH DAVID HIXON

## ACADEMICS:

As Amherst is one of the most academically competitive schools in the states, it is vital that student athletes are able to show significant strength in the classroom throughout their time at college. It is also important to Coach Hixon that, if any player feels that they are struggling to uphold the academic standard expected of them at Amherst, they are provided with the assistance and help that they need to succeed.

## ATHLETICS:

One of the most important aspects that Coach Hixon looks for in any prospective athlete is their competitive nature. He believes that, for any prospect to excel and achieve on the court, they must be a competitive and ruthless player, and be able to deal with failure while improving as an athlete.

Coach Hixon also feels it is essential that he trusts his gut instinct during the recruiting process. He has found that, by using his intuition, he is often able to find a prospect who has the potential to develop into a successful collegiate athlete, simply by working hard and enhancing his talents.

## THE PERFECT ATHLETE:

- Smart
- Aggressive/competitive
- Confident
- Athletic

## MOST IMPORTANT ATHLETIC CHARACTERISTICS:

- Quickness
- Physical strength
- Timing
- Coordination
- Jumping ability

## PSYCHOLOGICAL & EMOTIONAL:

Coach Hixon feels that, in order for a freshman athlete to survive, they must maintain confidence: "During the first year as college student athletes, they need to be prepared for their confidence and ego to become bruised."

Too often, he explains, freshman athletes struggle to deal with going from being one of the best athletes at their high school, to being surrounded by better, more skilled players in college. It doesn't help that they are required to do "freshman chores" – things like picking up equipment and doing laundry – and that, typically, first year athletes can expect to spend a lot of time on the bench.

If you truly want to be successful, you must not be discouraged and use this as an opportunity to prepare yourself for your collegiate career.

## BEST PIECE OF ADVICE:

"Do not get discouraged. There will be disappointments along the way, but the ability to fight through these disappointments is what will build a successful character that everyone will be able to turn to in the future. Everyone experiences disappointment, but how a person responds to setbacks tells a lot."

**IF YOU TRULY  
WANT TO BE  
SUCCESSFUL YOU  
MUST NOT BE  
DISCOURAGED**

**ACADEMICS:**

It is extremely important to Coach McGraw that every prospect recruited to his programme has the potential to succeed, academically as well as athletically. He feels that this makes his job as coach a lot easier, as “no one wants an academic headache.”

**ATHLETICS:**

While most other golf coaches would only look at a prospect's score in order to get a good idea of a player's technical ability, McGraw also looks for finishing scores. He pays attention to how a golfer stays composed, in order to gauge whether they would crack under pressure.

Where golf differs from other sports, is that it isn't overly athletic in nature – even though it has become more vigorous in recent years, due to the rise of professional golfers like Tiger Woods. Coach McGraw does not consider an athletic player to be mandatory, however, it is a “bonus” for his programme.

Coach McGraw values prospects who are able to deal well with adversity. He states that the kind of player he wants in his programme “can deal with the ups and downs of a golf round and take everything in their stride.”

**THE PERFECT ATHLETE:**

- Open to learning
- Team orientated/team player
- Positive mental attitude and outlook
- Self-motivated
- Strong intrinsic values

**MOST IMPORTANT ATHLETIC CHARACTERISTICS:**

- Technique
- Core strength
- Flexibility
- Cardiovascular endurance
- Mental strength and strength of character

**PSYCHOLOGICAL & EMOTIONAL:**

Coach McGraw looks for young men who understand and value the tradition of golf, as well as the importance of a good team spirit. When his team won the NCAA National Championships in 2006, Coach McGraw stated that the team continued to grow together throughout the year: “Not only was everyone playing great golf, they were doing it for each other, the golf programme and the university.”

**BEST PIECE OF ADVICE:**

“Learn discipline away from your support system. You need to be able to stand on your own two feet, away from your parents and high school support system, and still be successful.”

**UNDERSTANDS VALUE AND TRADITION OF GOLF, AS WELL AS THE IMPORTANCE OF A GOOD TEAM SPIRIT**







# SOCCER

## 26

COACH JOHN COSSABOON

### **ACADEMICS:**

Coach Cossaboon adopts an unorthodox approach to recruiting prospects. He feels that student athletes are often prevented from achieving their full potential during high school, due to the lack of a real support system. He values the creation of opportunities for these athletes, as he feels that it is important that they, as well as more qualified students, are able to succeed.

### **ATHLETICS:**

The first thing Cossaboon notices about potential student athletes is their “athletic grace” – how relaxed and comfortable they look when playing. As well as this, he also considers how easily they recover when things go wrong: “It’s important to see how well players regain balance and flow, as well as their mental approach to diverse situations.”

He also values speed, but only when athletes are able to use and develop it properly. He argues that without the technical or tactical ability to be productive with speed, a fast player can end up disrupting the flow of their team, or the game as a whole. Instead, Coach Cossaboon looks for “forward lean”, – players who are willing to use their speed aggressively.

### **THE PERFECT ATHLETE:**

- At least 5 ft 8” or 5 ft 9” tall
- Balanced
- Fluid runner and quick over 5-20 yards
- Understands the need for development
- Strong, confident and able to deal with adversity
- Accepts that everything is not always perfect
- Selfless and does not criticise others
- Technically and tactically proficient

### **MOST IMPORTANT ATHLETIC CHARACTERISTICS:**

- Speed, when combined with knowledge and skill
- Agility, especially important when the student athlete has control of the ball
- Power, essential when accelerating the ball and important for defending
- Jumping ability, with proper heading technique
- Balance, controlled and graceful body movements
- Technique, most important when combined with knowledge of the game
- Endurance, a college soccer player is expected to be able to play for at least 90 minutes.

### **PSYCHOLOGICAL & EMOTIONAL:**

Coach Cossaboon often pays close attention to prospects’ body language during recruiting, in order to determine whether they would fit in with the current Gonzaga soccer program. He looks for players who have a good attitude, as well as being mature and confident.

In addition to this, Cossaboon always operates his programs under the mantra of “no drama.” He has no time for any prospect who attempts to create unnecessary drama that affects his programme, and he advises all potential players to be aware that it will not be tolerated.

### **BEST PIECE OF ADVICE:**

“Never think you have arrived.” Always continue to develop and be open to learning new skills and techniques, even if you have already signed.

# ALWAYS CONTINUE TO DEVELOP

# SWIMMING

## 27

COACH STEVE COLLINS

### **ACADEMICS:**

In addition to strong athletic talent, Coach Collins also pays close attention to athletes' academic ability when going through the recruiting process. In order for a programme to flourish, it is vital that diversity is seen in an academic sense, as well as athletically.

### **ATHLETICS:**

Swimming is different to soccer or basketball, in the way in which coaches are able to analyse race times in order to compare them with NCAA recruiting times. Coach Collins often does this with youth swimmers, allowing him to identify potential recruits from a young age.

Coaches definitely consider an athlete's 'natural speed' – the amount of talent and ability they show in the water – when looking for new recruits. However, it's also important to note that technique alone can develop, and so Coach Collins often recruits athletes who have times that may not be at such a high level.

Surprisingly, Coach Collins sometimes recruits students who are simply interested in the school, and who are not swimmers. He explains that these students often show the correct characteristics required in order to be a successful swim athlete, and so he feels if they focus on swimming, they have the potential to advance and potentially succeed as a swimmer.

### **THE PERFECT ATHLETE:**

- Academic ability
- Team player
- Tall
- Ability to build strength
- Accomplished

### **MOST IMPORTANT ATHLETIC CHARACTERISTICS:**

- Water speed
- Stroke power
- Cardiovascular endurance
- Agility

### **PSYCHOLOGICAL & EMOTIONAL:**

Coach Collins feels it is vital that all of his athletes are manageable, and are completely open to learning and developing their skills and ability in every way. He also feels that, in order for his programme to succeed, a positive team environment needs to be established, with a sense of mutual respect and a positive influence over all athletes.

As part of his time as coach, Collins has worked with athletes who have competed – and won – on an international level, as part of the Olympic and World Games. He feels that, when considering this experience, these swimmers were able to be so successful because they remained focused and were able to make the correct choices, in order to further their career.

### **BEST PIECE OF ADVICE:**

Coach Collins says that the secret to freshman success is balance. "Find a balance in your life. Realise that your primary goal is academic success, as well as the ability to succeed in the pool. Eating properly and resting effectively will also help the student athlete to be a success."

# ALWAYS CONTINUE TO DEVELOP

# TENNIS

## 28

COACH DEBBIE SOUTHERN

### **ACADEMICS:**

Furman has become recognised for its academic strength, and Coach Southern is adamant that her tennis programme is no different. Typically, she recruits athletes who have prospered academically in high school, as she feels this indicates how well they will cope with the expectations of Furman.

However, on some occasions, she has recruited students who otherwise would not have made it to Furman, based on their academic capabilities, as she feels through mandatory study halls, small classes, and academic monitoring, they will be able to develop in the classroom, and eventually graduate.

### **ATHLETICS:**

According to Coach Southern, the first thing she notices about a prospect is whether or not they show a genuine love of the game: "I love to see a player that loves to play."

Also, although a strong technical ability in tennis is obviously important, Coach Southern also admits that she does recruit less technically able athletes to her programme. She explains that as long as athletes are dedicated, and show a clear hunger to learn and develop, they are able to succeed as a tennis player.

### **THE PERFECT ATHLETE:**

- Good student
- Supportive family
- Hard working
- Motivated
- Focused
- Able to represent the university well

### **MOST IMPORTANT ATHLETIC CHARACTERISTICS:**

- Speed
- Agility/balance
- Power
- Endurance - tennis matches can go on for hours

### **PSYCHOLOGICAL & EMOTIONAL:**

Often tennis is viewed as solely an individual sport; however Coach Southern explains that this is not the case, and often prospects are excited about the opportunity to work as part of a team at Furman: "Prospects like being a part of a positive team environment, working under positive peer pressure, and developing their game."

She also believes that confidence is one of the most important aspects of playing tennis. When confident, she explains, a tennis player will stay relaxed and play more fluidly. She also makes sure that, within the programme, everyone is given equal opportunity to succeed. Furman's tennis programme is specifically designed without team captains, ensuring that everyone – even freshman – can be a leader, simply by working hard and performing well.

### **BEST PIECE OF ADVICE:**

For Coach Southern, she feels the simple message of 'you get what you give' is the most important lesson to learn as a freshman: "Prospects that are excited, open minded and prepared for diversity, who stay busy and make friends, will have a great chance of success in college athletics."

# COMMUNICATION WITH COLLEGE COACHES

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It is essential that you, as a prospective student athlete, are comfortable talking and contacting college coaches, and understand how to promote yourself in the best possible way. The recruiting process is a very important time for you as an athlete, as it provides you with an opportunity to make an impression on influential coaches who will be scrutinising your every move.

**REMAINING  
COURTEOUS AND  
RESPECTFUL TO ALL  
COACHES AT ALL  
TIMES IS OF UTMOST  
IMPORTANCE**

Remaining courteous and respectful to all coaches at all times is of utmost importance, even if you are not interested in their programme or school. You must always keep in mind that coaches do talk to each other, and it is very easy to become considered as rude, which can lead to a bad reputation among important figures – severely harming your chances. For the same reason, you should also be cautious when emailing prospective coaches. Always email each coach individually, and try to include as many personal touches as possible. This shows that you have genuine interest in their programme, and creates a good impression on coaches.



# COLLEGE VISITS & MEETING WITH COACHES

# 30

At some point during your recruiting process, you may get the opportunity to visit a college campus – either on an official or an unofficial visit. This can give you a chance to have a look around the campus, meet coaching staff and generally experience the atmosphere and feel of the university, academically, athletically and socially. On-campus visits play a significant role in the recruitment process for many clients: whether it be a final step before committing to a school, or a chance to impress the coaches and kick start recruitment.

There are also opportunities to meet with coaches without making a trip across to the states. FirstPoint will arrange client games, as well as events and talks, to which college coaches are invited over from US colleges, in order to take a good look at the variety of talent and ability we have. You may find at these events that coaches may want to discuss opportunities with your parents and yourself, if you particularly impress them.

## THERE IS A COLLEGE THAT IS A PERFECT FIT FOR EVERY STUDENT ATHLETE

Both you and your parents must realise that each school should be viewed individually and that, just because a school is in Division I, does not mean that it will necessarily provide a better experience for you, both athletically and academically. There is a college that is a perfect fit for every student athlete, and you should not feel pressured to take an offer, from any school because of its division, as this cannot fairly represent the experience or opportunities you will have there.



# VERBAL COMMITMENTS

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Recently, an increasing amount of coaches have encouraged athletes to verbally commit to athletic programs. This appears to expedite the recruitment process, meaning that the level of stress prospects are under is somewhat minimised. However, as the commitment is not legally binding, students are still required to wait until the signing of the NLI, as well as the completion of an actual athletic scholarship agreement.

Verbal commitments are said to have alleviated pressure from the client, brought on by the recruitment process, and ensure that, rather than focusing on recruitment and obtaining a scholarship, the athlete is able to focus on fulfilling their potential – both athletically and academically – during the remainder of their high school education. It also means that students can tailor their preparation for a particular programme, if they have already decided what school they will

be attending. Along the same lines, parents are also able to know in advance what to expect – financially and with regards to their child's opportunities.

Despite this, it should be noted that verbal commitments are not legally binding, and do not ever hold any standing in the eyes of the law. This effectively means that either party – the coaches or the student – can change their minds for any reason. It is important that clients do not take the word of a verbal commitment for granted, and do not deteriorate in any area. It is vital that athletes stay on top of their game in order to protect their chances, in case anything goes wrong with regard to the commitment.

**VERBAL  
COMMITMENTS  
ARE NOT LEGALLY  
BINDING**

# SCHOLARSHIP EXAMPLE

33

An estimation of how much it may cost to attend university in the USA, for one year can be written down as follows:

Tuition: \$19,890.00  
Activity/Fee: \$300.00  
Dorm Deposit: \$350.00  
Application Fee: \$50.00  
Room: \$4,450.00  
Food: \$2,880.00  
**Total: \$28,010.00**

However, a typical scholarship offer could be written as:

Soccer Scholarship: \$13,980.00  
Food: \$1,580.00  
Housing: \$4,450.00  
**Total: \$20,010.00**

The difference between the costs to attend the university and the scholarship package therefore is \$8,000 (£6,151) of which you would be responsible for paying for the year. In the off-season there are opportunities to find work on campus and therefore you would be able to cover the \$8000 cost yourself by doing some part time work. However, be careful. Under

NCAA rules, student athletes are prohibited from picking up a job alongside their studies that pays over \$2,500 a year. In addition to this, it is vital that you check the terms of your student visa to see whether they will allow you to work while you are studying. It is most likely there are limitations in place that restrict how much you, as a non-immigrant in the USA, can work and earn while at university. For example, international students can only work for a maximum of 19 hours per week, and are prohibited from working off campus. However, there are many jobs you can find on campus, which will help you earn your own money.

## Examples of On Campus Jobs:

- Tutoring
- Writing for school newspaper/website
- Waitressing or Bartending (over 21s only)
- Residence Assistant
- Gym



# I'VE COMMITTED TO COLLEGE, NOW WHAT?

# 34

As a student athlete, you must remember that the process does not end with the signing of the NLI, and the effective acceptance into the school. After this point, it is left to you to secure housing, obtain a student visa, ensure you have operating health and travel insurance, and book your flights to the states. In addition to this, if you are a full time sports athlete (soccer, American football, swimming, etc), you are required to attend a pre-season camp.

As well as this, you must check with the NCAA Eligibility Centre before you make any arrangements, in order to make sure that all of your high school results and SAT scores have been reviewed. Also, and possibly most importantly, you must – as an athlete – ensure that you are in prime physical condition and prepared for any fitness tests you may encounter in the states.

**ENSURE  
THAT YOU  
ARE IN PRIME  
PHYSICAL  
CONDITION**

Redshirt season is the name given to a season where a player does not participate in any kind of outside competition for their school, even though they still attend classes and might even practice with the team. There are many reasons why you may be forced – or decide – to take a redshirt season. Your grades may be deemed academically ineligible, and may be forced to wait a year to better your scores in order to be eligible under NCAA standards. You also may be forced to take a redshirt season due to injury, or if you choose to transfer schools, you will be required to wait a year until competing.



# REDSHIRT SEASON 36



However, as student athletes are only granted four seasons of competition under the NCAA rules, this can also lead to coaches deciding to 'save' athletes by putting them on redshirt seasons. This way, they are able to use a player's first year at school to develop them physically, and allow them to grow as an athlete. Similar to this, a coach might also decide to use a player's redshirt season in order to save them from effectively wasting a season of competition, which can occur when there is already a key player in the same position on the team, who may be older and more experienced, and unlikely to allow the newer player any opportunities to excel or grow.

# THE NCAA & NAIA ELIGIBILITY CENTRE 37

The Eligibility Centre works to ensure that no student athletes are wrongly deemed ineligible and unable to compete. They will check your GPA and SAT/ACT scores, as well as ensuring you are fulfilling the NCAA core curriculum. It is of utmost importance that you check your status online every couple of days, in order to make sure you will be accepted into the NCAA as an athlete. You must also take the responsibility of requesting another copy being sent to the NCAA, in the event that your eligibility is not declared by a week prior to pre-season.

It is vital that your eligibility is declared, as the university will not be able to allow you to play unless the Eligibility Centre deems your grades acceptable.

To obtain an up-to-date copy of NCAA DI and DII eligibility worksheets, visit the NCAA website, where you will be able to print a copy and complete the forms in order to determine your eligibility.

Clients are also able to complete the NCAA eligibility worksheet in order to determine their grade point average – which is taken solely from a student's group of core classes.

**IT IS VITAL THAT  
YOUR ELIGIBILITY IS  
DECLARED**







# DO I EVER GET A DAY OFF? 39

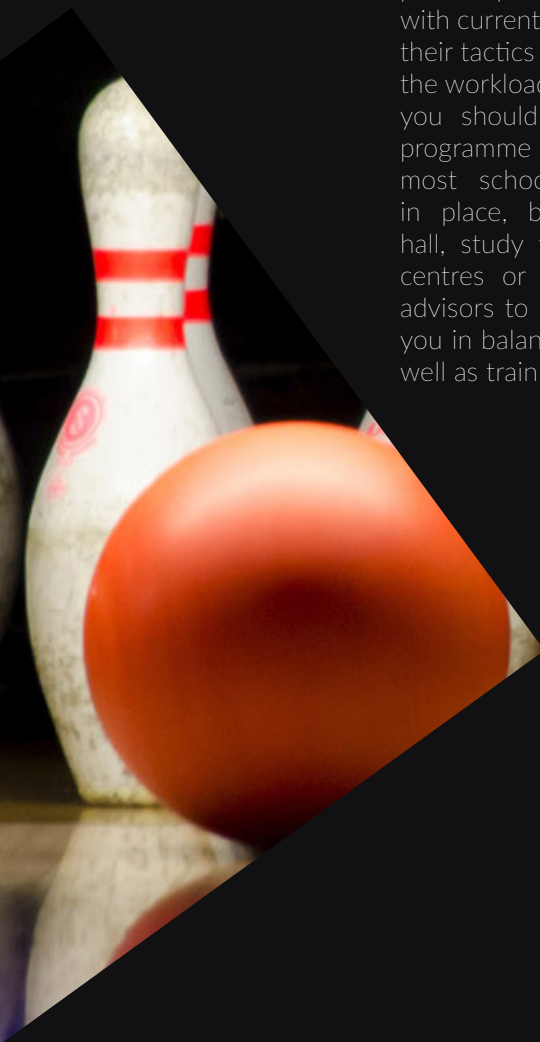




Attending college as a student athlete can be much more challenging than it seems. It is important that you learn how to create a balance between your athletic training and competition, while maintaining your studies. For this reason, it is vital that during the recruitment process you take the time to talk with current players, and discuss their tactics on how to deal with the workload. In addition to this, you should also research the programme you plan on joining: most schools have measures in place, be it nightly study hall, study facilities in practice centres or assigning academic advisors to players, that will aid you in balancing your studies as well as training.

As well as this, the NCAA has rules in place that attempts to prevent the overworking of student athletes. The association states that players can only work on their sport, whether it be practice, competition, meetings or training, for a maximum of 20 hours a week – which is most commonly split by 4 hours 5 days a week. Also, each individual sport is given a maximum number of days throughout the year on which they can train. These regulations are in place to ensure that college athletes are still able to somewhat maintain the experience of any other student, and are not suffocated by their athletic program.

Depending on your sport, you may be required to play during the school holidays. At this point, the hours you play and train will be decided by your coach, as you will not have classes to attend and so can focus solely on your sport. Have faith in your coaches; they will know exactly how much work and rest is best for you.









# BALANCING CLASS WITH SPORT

# 42

Make use of every hour. Time can be found between classes or practice that can easily be wasted. If you are struggling to keep up with your studies, make sure that you evaluate the amount of time you spend walking back to your dorm, or watching TV, and see if you could spare an hour a day to study. Days off from practice should – at least partly – be used to catch up on studying and prep for classes. Talk to your academic advisor or tutor to see if they can help you make the most of your time.

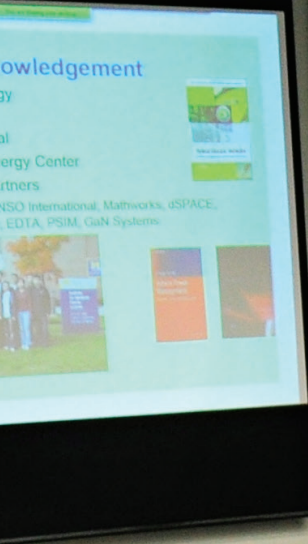
Make a study schedule. It can help to plan out clearly when you are going to study, in order to prevent yourself getting overwhelmed or stressed out. Once you see how much time

you need to study for your classes, you will be able to work around it better, and focus more when you are studying.

Always remember to take breaks. Having such a busy schedule can lead you to believe there is not a moment to spare, and you must spend every waking moment on your sport or hitting the books. This is not true, and you should always remember to take frequent, 10-15 minute breaks. This will help you get more out of your study time, and you will find it easier to focus.

## **ALWAYS REMEMBER TO TAKE BREAKS**







# CLASSES & DAILY SCHEDULES

In order to be able to compete as a NCAA athlete, you must take a suitable timetable full of classes as well as attending practices and training with your team. The core curriculum, currently accepted by the NCAA, consists of 16 classes - each one a year long - which will result in enough credits to qualify the athlete for competition.

The core curriculum states that, in order to fulfill NCAA requirements, you must take:

- 4 credits (or years) of English
- 3 credits of Maths
- 2 years of natural or Physical Science
- 1 additional year of English, Maths or Science
- 2 years of Social Science
- 4 years of additional classes (foreign languages, philosophy, non-doctrine religion)

There are many factors that could affect how the coaches will make up your schedule. It could depend upon your class schedules, as coaches aim to have as many student athletes training at the same time, or even your typical game schedules. For example, if your team usually plays night games, your practice might be held in the evening, in order to help players get used to the condition. Practice times might even depend on facility availability, as many different programs - especially smaller programs - will often share practice rooms and gyms. Finally, environmental factors can also determine players' schedules. For example, in some states in the South, where the temperatures can become extremely high after midday, teams will often train in the early morning - so as to avoid the heat.

**AS A STUDENT  
ATHLETE YOU  
WILL PROBABLY BE  
GIVEN PRIORITY  
REGISTRATION  
FOR CLASSES**

In addition to this, as a student athlete, you will probably be given priority registration for classes. This means you must attempt, as much as possible, to establish a class schedule that does not conflict with practice or training times. Make sure to use common sense when doing this, and leave yourself with enough time to study and relax.

# EXAMPLES OF DAILY SCHEDULES

# 45

During the season, Coach Hixon limits team practice to one and a half hours, in order to prevent the team from getting overly tired or burned out – affecting their performance during games. However, during pre season, practice can last as long as 2 hours and 15 minutes.

## BASKETBALL - COACH DAVID HIXON

ALL YEAR	Early Morning	Breakfast
	Morning/Early Afternoon	Classes, Individual Practice and/or Strength Training
	Afternoon	Team Practice or Watch film - when scheduled
	Evening	Study Time

Unlike most sports, swimming does not have a season, and is a year round commitment for it's athletes. Therefore, Coach Collins uses a land workout, in order to strengthen athletes and ensure they are in shape and always ready for competition.

## SWIMMING - COACH STEVE COLLINS

ALL YEAR	6.00am - 8.00am	Swimming Workout
	Morning/Early Afternoon	Classes
	2.00pm - 4.00pm	Dry Land Training & Swimming Workout
	Evening	Study Time



When the team are in season, Coach Cossaboon allows Mondays to be off days for the players, followed by two hard days on Tuesday and Wednesday. Fridays are game days, so Thursday acts as a preparation day, with Saturday being a recovery day for another game on Sunday.

# WOMEN’S SOCCER - JOHN COSSABOON

FALL	Morning/Early Afternoon	Classes
	Before Practice	Training Room/Meetings
	Late Afternoon	Practice including coach-led conditioning (2hours)
	Post Practice	Therapy (if needed)
	Evening	Study Hall/Study Time
SPRING	Similar schedule as the fall, dependent on whether the team is utilising the 20-hour or 8 hour per week training schedule and has training games. A larger emphasis is placed on soccer-specific conditioning and physical development.	

# **RULES TO PROTECT YOU**



You must also be aware, before entering the recruitment process, that some coaches will exaggerate the truth in order to get you to commit to their school. Although these cases are extremely rare, it is nevertheless strongly advised that you ask questions, not just to coaches or athletic faculty, but also current players.

No matter what, every coach will place the focus on the best parts of their programme, the most state of the art aspects of their facilities, or the most talented members of their team. It is important that you remain aware that these coaches will tell you exactly what you want to hear, in order to get you on their programme.

Be aware of all of your options. If you are prepared, you are much less likely to become swept up in exaggerated claims made by coaches and end up in a college that was ultimately too

good to be true. Keep copies of all correspondence between yourself (or your family) and coaching staff, and attempt to get everything important – playing times, positions, financial proposals – confirmed in writing. This will prevent any kind of misunderstanding or miscommunication happening, and ensure that you remain protected in your rights at all times.

If you are ever in the situation where you are a student at a school and have an issue making you uncertain or frustrated, you must always keep in mind that, in every school, there is a whole host of people who will help you such as the Athletic director, coach, Dean of Students, and International advisor as well as FirstPoint USA. It is important that you are able to discuss issues with your coach, and are proactive in initiating discussions and solving problems.

## CHAIN OF COMMAND

If there is no positive outcome from the first person on the list, move on to the next.

ISSUE	CHAIN OF COMMAND
Teammate Issue	Team Captain - Assistant Coach - Head Coach
Medical Problems	Trainer - Team Physician
Trainer/Physician Problem	Coach - Associate Athletic Director
Captain	Assistant Coach - Head Coach - Associate Athletic Director
Assistant Coach	Team Captain - Head Coach - Associate Athletic Director
Head Coach	Associate Athletic Director - Director of Athletics
Professor	Coach - Academic Advisor
Academic Advisor	Coach - Trusted Professor
Athletic Booster	Coach - Compliance Department
Roommate/Other Students	Coach & Residence Life - Counsellor
Law	Parent & Coach

# THE STUDENT VISA & SEVIS PROCESS 49

One of the final stages of the recruitment and scholarship process is obtaining a student visa. This will allow you to enter the USA as a student, and is required to get past airport security when arriving in the states. This will also mean you can stay in the USA while you are studying, and will make it easier for you to find things like internships and placements – during and after your schooling.

In order to apply for a student visa, you should visit the US embassy website, where it will allow you to complete an application form.

Your Clearing & Promotion consultant will be on hand to support and guide you during the application process

## HEALTH & TRAVEL INSURANCE & FLIGHTS

In order to ensure your time in the states goes smoothly, and without hassle, it is vital that you have both health and travel insurance before you leave. You must check the policy offered to you, even if it seems perfect, so that you are certain that you will be completely covered throughout your stay in America. Often, schools insist that you purchase health insurance through them, instead of a separate company, which will make this much easier! However, if your school doesn't, there are many places you can look to get covered.

Your Clearing consultant will be able to recommend companies that our clients have used in the past.

In addition to insurance, it is also your responsibility to book flights across to the states before starting your scholarship. You will find hundreds of websites online offering plane tickets, at a whole variety of different prices. However, it is again vital that you check these deals, and make sure you know they are legitimate.





# NCAA DIVISION I

Full scholarships available per department:

WOMEN'S SPORTS	MEN'S SPORTS
Basketball (15)	Basketball (13)
Volleyball (12)	American Football (85)
Gymnastics (12)	Baseball (11.7)
Tennis (8)	Cross Country/Track & Field (12.6)
Archery (5)	Fencing (4.5)
Badminton (6)	Golf (4.5)
Bowling (5)	Gymnastics (6.3)
Cross Country/Track & Field (18)	Lacrosse (12.6)
Equestrian (15)	Rifle (3.6)
Fencing (5)	Skiing (6.3)
Field Hockey (12)	Soccer (9.9)
Golf (6)	Swimming & Diving (9.9)
Lacrosse (12)	Volleyball (4.5)
Rowing (20)	Water Polo (4.5)
Rugby (12)	Wrestling (9.9)
Skiing (7)	
Soccer (14)	
Softball (12)	
Squash (12)	
Swimming & Diving (14)	
Synchronised Swimming (5)	
Team Handball (10)	
Water Polo (8)	

# NCAA DIVISION II

Full scholarships available per department:

WOMEN'S SPORTS	MEN'S SPORTS
Archery (9)	Baseball (9)
Badminton (10)	Basketball (10)
Basketball (10)	Cross Country/Track & Field (12.6)
Cross Country/Track & Field (12.6)	Fencing (4.5)
Equestrian (15)	American Football (36)
Fencing (4.5)	Golf (3.6)
Field Hockey (6.3)	Gymnastics (5.4)
Golf (5.4)	Ice Hockey (13.5)
Gymnastics (6)	Lacrosse (10.8)
Ice Hockey (18)	Rifle (3.6)
Lacrosse (9.9)	Skiing (6.3)
Rowing (20)	Soccer (9)
Rugby (12)	Swimming & Diving (8.1)
Skiing (6.3)	Tennis (4.5)
Soccer (9.9)	Volleyball (4.5)
Softball (7.2)	Water Polo (4.5)
Squash (9)	Wrestling (9)
Swimming & Diving (8.1)	
Synchronised Swimming (5)	
Team Handball (12)	
Tennis (6)	
Volleyball (8)	
Water Polo (8)	

# NUMBER OF WOMEN'S

Sports Programs in total:

SPORT	NCAA DI	NCAA DII	NCAA DIII	No of Athletes
Basketball	325	286	428	15,096
Bowling	24	15	5	383
Cross Country	322	265	371	13,228
Fencing	26	4	14	658
Field Hockey	77	27	154	5,468
Golf	231	130	143	3,981
Gymnastics	65	6	15	1,414
Ice Hockey	31	2	42	1,727
Lacrosse	80	38	153	5,999
Rifle	27	3	7	217
Rowing	86	15	41	6,902
Skiing	16	9	15	503
Soccer	301	220	409	21,709
Softball	267	266	399	16,609
Swimming/Diving	188	72	237	11,011
Tennis	310	218	360	8,534
Indoor Track	289	117	224	19,090
Outdoor Track	299	165	258	20,871
Volleyball	311	269	412	14,010
Water Polo	31	10	20	1,173
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,306</b>	<b>2,137</b>	<b>3,707</b>	<b>170,526</b>

PARTICIPATION SPORTS	NCAA DI	NCAA DII	NCAA DIII	No of Athletes
Archery	2	0	0	21
Badminton	0	0	3	30
Equestrian	15	6	24	1,286
Rugby	1	1	2	149
Squash	8	0	18	360
Synchronized Swimming	4	1	3	97
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>170,526</b>



# NUMBER OF MEN'S

Sports Programs in total:

SPORT	NCAA DI	NCAA DII	NCAA DIII	No of Athletes
Baseball	286	241	363	28,767
Basketball	326	289	398	16,571
Cross Country	299	234	346	11,893
Fencing	20	3	12	632
American Football	235	153	230	61,252
Golf	287	214	276	8,250
Gymnastics	17	0	2	321
Ice Hockey	58	7	68	3,973
Lacrosse	56	34	132	7,871
Rifle	26	2	8	207
Skiing	14	8	14	525
Soccer	199	166	387	19,135
Swimming/Diving	139	52	190	7,771
Tennis	266	173	315	7,599
Indoor Track	242	108	271	19,135
Outdoor Track	265	155	250	22,075
Volleyball	22	15	45	1,210
Water Polo	21	9	15	942
Wrestling	87	44	97	6,139
TOTAL	2,865	1,907	3,365	224,926

PARTICIPATION	NCAA DI	NCAA DII	NCAA DIII	No of Athletes
Archery	1	0	0	21
Badminton	0	0	0	0
Bowling	0	1	1	33
Equestrian	0	0	8	95
Rowing	26	4	30	2,139
Rugby	0	0	2	84
Sailing	7	1	16	417
Squash	8	0	17	395
TOTAL	42	6	74	3,184

# GLOSSARY

## ACADEMICS

### **Academic Year:**

The academic year at a university can be broadly divided into two semesters – each around 16 weeks, lasting from around September to December and January to May. At the end of each semester, there will be a final exam period. In addition to this there are often optional summer sessions, but their lengths vary across schools.

### **Assignment:**

Homework, which will be issued by professors and will be expected to be completed by a certain date. This can take the form of reading books, writing papers or doing lab reports, among other types of work.

### **Credit Hours:**

The amount of work you complete, as a college student, will be measured in credit hours. In order to complete your degree, and graduate, you must have a specific number of credit hours that match the amount your specific major requires.

### **Final:**

The name given to the final exams held at the end of each semester, which covers all the material taught in class.

### **Grades:**

The American collegiate grading system is measured in letters; A being excellent, B being above average and F being a fail.

### **I-20 Form:**

A certificate of eligibility for a F-1 student visa or F-1 immigration status.

### **Major:**

The field in which you are trying to earn your degree, and in which your studies are concentrated.

### **Mid-Term:**

A test given in the middle of the semester.

### **Quiz:**

A test given at any point during the semester, usually unannounced by the professor.

### **SAT/ACT Exams:**

Standardised tests used by colleges to admit students, and also by the NCAA to gauge eligibility. SATs favour those with skills in English more and are traditionally more popular on the East and West coasts. However, ACTs are more science based, and are heavily taken over SATs in the Midwestern states.

## RECRUITMENT

### **SEVIS:**

The Student and Exchange Visitor Information System. It is an internet based system, existing throughout the USA, which allows the government to maintain accurate and current information on all foreign students, exchange visitors and their subsequent dependents.

### **Visa:**

A travel stamp issued by the US Department of State. While it does not grant permission to enter or remain in the USA, it does allow the holder to apply for a port of entry for admission to the states. At the port of entry, the decision on whether you

can then be admitted, and in which status, is made by the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services.

### **Prospective Student Athlete (PSA):**

The name given to any high school athlete entering into their junior year.

### **Student-Athlete:**

A student who plays sport – varsity or club – for a college or university, who adheres to all NCAA and institutional regulations regarding academics and athletics.

### **Coach-to-Coach Contact:**

Unlimited conversation between college coaches and your club/team coaches.

### **Written Correspondence:**

Any conversation taking place over text – letters, notes, postcards, emails, texts, IMs.

### **Unofficial Visits:**

Any campus visits where the athlete visits the campus at their own expense, without the trip being paid for for them. There are no limitations of the amount of unofficial visits a prospect can take.

### **Official Visit:**

Any campus visit which the school has paid for. A prospect is prohibited from having more than five official visits per year.

### **Home Visit:**

A visit by the college coach to the home of the potential student athlete.

### **Contact:**

Off campus face-to-face encounter between the potential student athlete and coach. During the contact period, this can take place a maximum of four times.

### **Evaluation:**

Off campus activity designed to assess the academic and athletic abilities of a prospective recruit. This takes place during a designated evaluation period.

### **Quiet Period:**

No off campus contacts or evaluations are allowed. However, on campus contact is permitted.

### **Dead Period:**

No in person contacts or evaluations permitted, on or off campus.

### **National Letter of Intent (NLI):**

Signed commitment to attend and compete at an educational institution.

### **NCAA Eligibility Centre:**

A department within the NCAA that decides if an incoming recruit has satisfactory academic requirements in order to complete at a collegiate level.

### **Redshirt:**

A student athlete who is not participating in that specific season of competition, so as not to waste a season of eligibility. (See Redshirt section)

### **Freshman:**

A first year university/college student

### **Sophomore:**

A second year university/college student.

### **Junior:**

A third year university/college student.

### **Senior:**

A fourth year university/college student, or a student in their final year at school.

**Fraternities/Sororities:**

Social organizations established in most universities across America. Traditionally providing undergraduate students with brother and sisterhoods, some maintain a fraternity or sorority house, while providing members with dining facilities and accommodation.

**Full Rides:**

A full scholarship, providing the monetary value of tuition, board, books and fees at the school. Normally, it gets more expensive each year to provide these types of scholarships, as the price of a full scholarship increases annually by 5%.

**Walk on Athlete:**

Most commonly found at schools, like Ivy League colleges, where there is an established athletic department but athletic scholarships are not offered. Walk on athletes will participate in a "trial" or "scrimmage" match to impress coaches, once they are already enrolled at the school.

**Recruited Walk on Athlete:**

The name given to a potential player who was asked to join the programme, but will not receive any financial or admission assistance from the college's athletic department.

## STAFF

**Captain of Team/Programme:**

Each coach will define different roles for a team captain. Generally, the captain will act as a liaison between their teammates, and the coaches.

**Assistant Coach(es):**

These coaches help administer the programme under the direction of the head coach.

Assistant coaches may also have specified roles within the programme – for example, some take the responsibility of recruitment.

**Head Coach:**

The head coach has complete management of the athletic programme which they head, including supervision of the assistant coaches, other support staff, and of course, the athletes. He should take his responsibility of maintaining the wellbeing of the student athlete very seriously.

**Volunteer Coach:**

A non-paid member of the coaching staff, a volunteer is not able to recruit prospective athletes, but can participate in other duties of assistant coaches.

**Booster:**

Also known as a Representative of Athletic Interest, a booster is an individual or corporation who donates money to athletic programmes.

**Agent:**

This adult acts on behalf of a professional sports team or corporation in a bid to secure the athletic services of an athlete.

**Athletic Trainer:**

An athletic trainer is a member of the athletic department's support staff, who is qualified to administer a number of medical treatments. Their main role is to treat and rehabilitate injured athletes.

**Sports Psychologist/Counselor:**

Someone who may aid athletes through personal problems. Players may be referred to a psychologist or counselor, if they feel that there is something going

on outside sport, which is affecting them and preventing them from performing to the best of their ability.

**Sports Nutrition Expert:**

A nutrition expert may work in conjunction with coaching staff in order to provide athletes with essential nutrition information, and they also play an important role in preventing and helping to treat eating disorders and weight management issues.

**Team Physician:**

A qualified and licensed doctor, who oversees the medical care of athletes. However, larger collegiate programs may have other specialists – including dentists, orthopaedics and family practitioners.

**Academic Support Coordinator:**

Someone who will ensure athletes maintain effort and success in their studies, and are able to balance them with their sporting career. This may include class scheduling, study hall supervision or tutoring.

**Senior Women's Administrator:**

A women's administrator will work with athletic department staff to ensure the female perspective and presence is felt clearly within the programme, and to ensure issues like equality and gender based issues are taken into account.

**Director of Compliance:**

The Compliance Department administers all conference and NCAA regulations, and also monitors programmes to ensure they are upholding standards. The Director of Compliance will then make sure athletes are following all rules regarding things like eligibility, financial aid and recruitment.

**Sports Information Director (SID):**

The SID is responsible for all information given to the media regarding athletics and student athletes – including press releases and media publications.

**Director of Facilities:**

Responsible for the upkeep, scheduling and uses of the department's facilities.

**Faculty Athletic Representative (FAR):**

The FAR works with the athletic department to ensure that the programme is represented in the best possible way in the public eye. It is their responsibility to uphold the integrity of the school, while also ensuring the academic and social welfare of the student athletes. In addition to this, the FAR sits on any committee formed to address any student athlete appeals like transfer requests.

**Athletic Director:**

Responsible for the overall management of the department, and supervises all coaching and support staff, as well as the Compliance Office. The Athletic Director reports directly to the President or Chancellor of the Institution.

**Associate/Assistant Athletic Director:**

Assists the Athletic Director in overseeing the running of the athletic department. They occasionally may act as a middleman in discussions between the Athletic Director and coaching staff.

**President/Chancellor:**

The President of the school administers the total program of the institution, including athletics.



# DR ROBERT HYNES



## **Challenges for First-Year Student-Athletes in America**

**Dr Robert Hynes: Director of Counselling Services and Assistant Dean for Student Support Services, Fitchburg State College, MA**

I'm careful about the title I use in this section; specifically, the use of the term "developmental challenges." I choose my words here very much intentionally: first, to highlight that the transition from high school student athlete to college student athlete is, indeed, a developmental process, and like any developmental process, involves significant change and adaptation. Secondly, I use "challenges", as opposed to "problems," "issues," "obstacles" or any other language that implies that the processes involved in this important developmental step in the student athletes life should be viewed negatively. Growth and adaptation is simply that which it is: another of life's challenges. Thus, the following discussion works from the assumption that a healthy and positive outcome will be the end result of these new challenges presented to the college student athlete.

One of the basic rules of human nature that I have come to discover after a number of years doing psychotherapy with college students is that change, itself, is challenging. And "challenging" here should be taken to mean that significant life changes press our ability to find new attitudes and behaviours that will enable us to adapt to new life circumstances. The really good news here is that student athletes, taken as a group, have shown that they tend to embrace challenge with significant hard work and persistence, evidenced by the academic and athletic success that have allowed them to proceed to this "next level." The latter point not with standing, it is realistic to expect that like most human beings, the new college student athlete is likely to find this significant change in their life's routine disruptive, and probably somewhat stressful. This "stress" is most often the catalyst behind struggles that may emerge early in the new student athlete's collegiate career, and some common difficulties such as impaired academic or athletic functioning and social or emotional difficulties may catch the student athlete, and those close to him or her, somewhat off guard.

Sometimes it seems that parents, coaches and college faculty and administrators either underestimate, or have long since forgotten, just how much of an adjustment going to college is. The majority of college student athletes are residential; many have travelled a significance distance from home to pursue their education and continue to compete in their sport. Most have had little or no experience in the degree of independence and personal accountability now expected and required of a collegiate student athlete. Many, while likely to have excelled in their sport as a high school student, will be surprised at just how significant the jump is in the expectations (athletic and otherwise) that college coaches have for them. In addition, on a practical note, the large majority of today's' college freshmen have never had the experience of sharing bedroom with another person (chalk this up to smaller families, wealth, etc.); now, most will have to negotiate living peaceably with a roommate(s).

Against the above backdrop, we continue to tell incoming freshmen that they should expect to "experience the best four years of their life," effectively increasing, for many, the pressure to excel academically, socially, romantically, and athletically. When the student athlete has predictable bumps-in-the-road (and most certainly, every student athlete will, during their college career,) the continuing echo of our predication of "the best four years" may serve to increase the sense of failure and/or isolation that a student has perhaps begun to feel (e.g., "College is going pretty poorly for me right now, and yet everyone keeps telling me that this is the best time of my life. Something must really be wrong with me.")

I'd like to be able to confidently report that today's college freshman has preparation in place that is at least equal to the demands (e.g. independence, academic and athletic success, social pressures and expectations) of being a new college student athlete. Unfortunately, though, (and please don't take this as personal criticism) there is reason to believe that the opposite just might be the case. As an example, "helicopter parents" has become a buzz term among college administrators in the past couple of years. For the uninitiated, the so called "helicopter parent" is the Mum and Dad who has meticulously managed their son or daughter's life to this point in the development and will continue to try to do so during their child's college career. Faculty will bemoan the phone calls they get from home asking whether or not their son or daughter came to class that morning. Judicial officers will struggle through hearings in which Mum and Dad pricy legal counsel to help defend a minor on-campus conduct charge. Administrators will lament whether or not today's

college student can ever realize a sense of maturity with his or her parents (still) so intimately involved with their everyday affairs. And if we are to give any credence to the “helicopter parent” phenomenon, the logical concern becomes that fewer college students have had the experience of self-advocacy, the opportunity to practice appropriate assertiveness skills, or occasion to independently address concerns with authority figures in their life (e.g. scheduling a private meeting with Coach to discuss playing time.) Thus, when placed in remarkably common challenging situations on campus (e.g. roommate conflict, difficulty with advisement and registration, conflict with teammates or coaches), many students find themselves in uncharted waters, and are likely to regress (e.g. call Mum and Dad to fix the problem for them ASAP), or panic (e.g. consider withdrawing from the college, quitting the team, moving out of residence hall, etc).

So with respect to such “normative” developmental challenges associated with being a first year student athlete, the good news (again) is that the average student athlete, assuming no other complicating factors, will find the courage and strength to rise up and meet these challenges head-on. After all, we are talking about a group of people who have already demonstrated they are pretty resilient and remarkably tough. This is not to say there will not be doubts, tears, arguments and utter panic along the way (any college counsellor or coach can attest to this); it is to say, however, that all things held equal, the new student athlete, given the opportunity to struggle with new life challenges, will find a way to make this new environment work for them.

I occasionally get concerned with “adults” in this process (e.g. parents, coaches), who, well-meaning as they are, impede normal development. I’ve seen many times some variant of the following scenario: Freshman A is dissatisfied that his or her roommate’s alarm clock goes off at 7am every morning. Rather than address the concern promptly and appropriately, Freshman A calls home to Dad, who in turn angrily calls Freshman A’s Coach, demanding action. Coach calls the Residence Life Office, gets some information, and calls Dad back. Not satisfied with the answers he has received to this point, Dad then calls the Dean’s office, and eventually the President. Eventually some sort of “resolution” to the matter occurs, for better or worse, with Freshman A having had little opportunity to exercise any independence, assertiveness or communication skills. Sadly, another “learning moment” passes, and we’ve simply reinforced the message to Freshman A that he or she is not capable, on their own, of struggling through a problem and arriving at a solution, and that the first choice of action should always be to call a “helpful adult” in their life. I absolutely respect how difficult it is for a parent to sit by and watch their child struggle with some challenge, and I absolutely recognize that, on occasion, it may be appropriate for a parent or a coach to intervene in some matter occurring on campus. I caution, however, against depriving the young student athlete of the very developmental challenges that will result in the kind of growth and confidence we expect to see, eventually, in our college graduates.

As I’ve stated, it is my experience that the large majority of new student athletes end up transitioning remarkably well to college, even in the face of fairly significant developmental challenges. Each year, however, I do come in contact with some students who begin to manifest signs of more serious psychological concerns. More often, it’s a case of a student bringing some pre-existing condition to campus with them, or, on occasion, the stress associated with this major developmental step pushes the student past some threshold where a normal developmental struggle becomes an emotional or psychological problem. Some of the more typical (more serious) psychological concerns that we tend to see in college students would include:

#### Anxiety Problems:

Students may find that they have strong anxiety experiences, sometimes rising to the level of ‘panic’, either in specific situations or more generally. Anxiety may manifest itself as intense fear, physical symptoms (e.g. headaches, gastrointestinal disturbance) and/or avoidance of certain situations. Anxiety is notorious for creating a ‘vicious circle’ with some college students; strong negative emotional responses may tie themselves to a specific activity (e.g. football training). Students may avoid the situation that causes such emotional upset (occasionally coming up with plausible reasons why they skipped the activity), with the goal of avoiding the anxiety associated with it. Often, this avoidance makes it increasingly difficult to return to the activity, effectively removing the student from this part of their life which had been a source of accomplishment and pride and opening the student up to additional problems. In the general population, anxiety disorders are the most commonly-diagnosed of any psychological disorders, and this is likely the case in college as well.

#### Mood Problems:

It is not uncommon for students to have a first serious episode of depression during their college years. It should be noted that while every college student athlete will have moments of sadness, less-than-usual motivation and doubt; depression is a far less common (and far more serious) disorder that seriously impacts a student’s functioning and should be addressed professionally as soon as possible.

#### Eating Disorders:

Research indicates that just ‘being’ a college student athlete serves as a “protective factor” against most psychological disorders (i.e., all things being equal, the college student athlete is at less risk than other, same-age peers.) Eating disorders are the significant exception to the above rule. While disorders like anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa are still more common in females, prevalence rates in males are increasing at a higher rate. Perhaps because of the emphasis on fitness that is critical to more successful student athletes, and exacerbated in those particular spots where weight and/

or body image is such a critical component (e.g. wrestling, gymnastics), college mental health professionals are particularly attuned to the potential for eating disorders in our student athlete populations.

#### Substance Abuse/Dependence:

I recently appeared on a local television programme to discuss alcohol use among college students. The host of the show, a man likely in his fifties or so, remarked something along the lines of, "So what's the big deal? Experimenting with alcohol has always been part of the college experience." When I tried then to explain to him, and similarly explain to every new group of first year college students I meet in the fall, is that the way in which college students are using alcohol these days is quite different from the "experimentation" of generations ago. Sadly, drinking to many college students does not look like the picture we have in our mind of happy, healthy students having a beer with their pizza while watching the Red Sox game. Colleges today are expending tremendous resources in an attempt to curb what is termed "high risk" or "binge" drinking among students.

In many respects, as a mental health professional on a college campus, I worry less about student athletes. As stated earlier, they tend to be a remarkably healthy, well-adjusted, motivated, and goal-orientated group of young people. They typically arrive at our colleges with an impressive safety net in place, including parents, friends, teammates, coaches, and professionals on campus who have experience in helping students navigate the challenge that is college life. The struggles they will face, in most cases, are developmental in nature, and with appropriate guidance and support, they will arrive at resolutions that are healthy and adaptive. For the more serious concerns that may emerge, most colleges have the resource available (e.g. counselling and health services) to effectively help our student athletes stay in track. Though not without challenge, sacrifice and struggle, today's college student athletes should prepare themselves for an experience that is incredibly exciting and rewarding; one which will help provide them the tools to live a rich and rewarding life when their playing days come to an end.

(Excerpt taken from 'The Student Athletes Guide to Getting Recruited')

***About Robert Hynes: Dr Robert Hynes is Director of Counselling Services and Assistant Dean for Student Support Services at Fitchburg State College in Massachusetts. He earned his Ph.D. in Clinical and School Psychology from Hofstra University in 1996 and now works closely with college student athletes in a clinical and educational capacity.***



# RESOURCES

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FirstPoint USA:	<a href="http://www.firstpointusa.com">www.firstpointusa.com</a>
National Letter of Intent:	<a href="http://www.national-letter.org">www.national-letter.org</a>
NCAA:	<a href="http://www.ncaa.org">www.ncaa.org</a>
NCAA Eligibility Centre:	<a href="http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.com">www.ncaaclearinghouse.com</a>
NCAA Sports:	<a href="http://www.ncaasports.com">www.ncaasports.com</a>
NSCAA:	<a href="http://www.nscaa.com">www.nscaa.com</a>
NAIA:	<a href="http://www.nata.org">www.nata.org</a>
NJCAA/Junior College:	<a href="http://www.njcaa.org">www.njcaa.org</a>
University of Cincinnati:	<a href="http://www.uc.edu">www.uc.edu</a>
Dartmouth College:	<a href="http://www.dartmouth.edu">www.dartmouth.edu</a>
Harvard University:	<a href="http://www.harvard.edu">www.harvard.edu</a>
UCLA:	<a href="http://www.ucla.edu">www.ucla.edu</a>
College Board (SATs):	<a href="http://www.collegeboard.com">www.collegeboard.com</a>
Petersons Guide:	<a href="http://www.petersons.com">www.petersons.com</a>

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