

Recruiting Myths

Showcases, camps, and clinics alone will get me recruited

With few exceptions, college coaches go to showcases with a game plan to evaluate current prospects, not find new ones. The coaches have already identified the top tier student-athletes that will be there, and they use the showcases as a means of evaluating those specific players. If you are intent on going to showcase events, it is critical for that athlete to pinpoint schools they are interested in and find out which showcases those schools will be attending. Just showing up to any random showcase and hoping to get discovered is not a good idea. Also, realize many of these events main purpose is to generate revenue.

Bad grades won't matter if your talent is good enough

If you are one of the best athletes in the nation, then part of this statement is true. However, grades are such an important factor in the recruiting process. Grades are a huge part of financial aid, scholarship packaging, and athlete retention. Most coaches won't invest their time and money recruiting an athlete who may not be admitted into their school, or is going to fail out or become academically ineligible. If you don't have a 3.0 GPA or higher, over 50% of college programs won't be able to get you past the admissions office. Grades are becoming the single most important factor in recruiting. Admissions and administration offices are putting more pressure on athletic departments to recruit athletes that succeed once they get into school. Sure you may be 'eligible' to be recruited with poor grades, but many schools are going to recruit you.

All NCAA Division I & II programs offer athletic scholarships

While the NCAA mandates how many maximum scholarships a school can offer for a particular sport, it is up to the school whether or not they want to and can offer the number of scholarships allotted to them. Some schools choose to offer no scholarships, and many give out less than the NCAA allows.

All colleges offer athletic scholarships

Only about 50% of the colleges in each sport actually offer athletic scholarships. NCAA Division I & II colleges can offer athletic scholarships (plus Junior Colleges and some NAIA schools). NCAA Division III Programs can only offer aid based on financial need and academics. Even schools that do offer athletic scholarships often times have very limited amounts of scholarship money to be divided up amongst a large number of athletes.

I can't go to an NCAA Division III School because I need an athletic scholarship

Many NCAA DIII schools offer attractive financial aid programs and you should not overlook any school, even if they do not offer athletic scholarships. Many student-athletes go to DIII schools for free because they are good students with family need and used leverage to get the best deal. If you get a \$5,000 athletic scholarship at a \$30,000 DI or DII school you still have \$25,000 a year to pay! The amount of scholarship is not important. The bottom line price you have to pay is.

NCAA Division III Schools are weaker athletically

In some cases yes, but in many cases no. Many NCAA Division III programs have very talented athletic programs that are better than many DII's and even DI schools. They are still talented and dedicated athletes who wanted to continue their athletic career in college. If you think you can just stroll onto a DIII program you are in for a surprise. If you haven't watch a top 25 DIII game and you think this way you are making a huge mistake.

Division I programs have big recruiting budgets

Some of the larger schools with top notch football and basketball programs do have large recruiting budgets, but most do not. There are very few college coaches that have the ability to fly around the country to recruit athletes they don't already know about.

You shouldn't send your profile to a school unless you know you would like to go there

In order to give yourself as many options as possible when it comes time to pick a college, you need to send your profile to ANY school in which you may have an interest in attending. This way you can slowly narrow your list of potential choices after you gauge which schools have an interest in you. Remember, if you do not send your profile to a school, there is very little chance that they will find you.

High school coaches are qualified to determine if I am college athletic material

While many coaches are, some are not and many never played their sport in college. Many high school coaches see college recruiting through the D1 lens. The bottom line, there are many factors that determine if you can play in college and your high school coach may not know what your potential may be, or at what level.

My coach handles all of the recruiting stuff for me, I don't need to worry about it

Some coaches are very good at helping their players get the opportunity to play sports in college and have a great feel for the recruiting process and how it works. However, there are a lot of coaches who don't feel like this is a large part of their job description and don't do as much as others in terms of contacting college coaches. Whether or not your high school coach excels in this area or not, you must realize that this is YOUR life and that you and your parents have to do everything in your power to make your dreams a reality. You must send your profile to every school that you are interested in.

Coaches do not like being contacted by prospective athletes

Quite the opposite, coaches hope to hear from good athletes who are interested in their program. Some blue-chip athletes come to their attention naturally, but often there aren't enough for a coach to fill his or her roster. Many high school athletes don't want to make contact with college coaches because they are afraid the coach doesn't want to hear from them. For smaller schools, even some minor Division I schools, they need and want to hear from potential players. These schools don't have the budgets to fly around the country looking for qualified players. These schools rely on word of mouth recruiting and they also rely on some potential athletes making contact with them.

College Coaches just delete mass mailings

It really depends on the school and sport. Many college programs make sure somebody takes a look at ALL incoming profiles and they at least send an e-mail or form letter to that prospect. Still other college coaches have admitted that they do delete them or only look at a few. It's best to follow up mailings with a personal note. Many schools will respond. Some will not recruit you. That's why you need to target 100 schools, not 10.

I can walk on at the school of my choice and eventually get the chance to play

Most walk-ons end up playing Intramurals. The media glorifies the walk-ons that make it, for good reason, because few do. Coaches over-recruit because college coaching is competitive. Thousands of kids each year find themselves cut after "try-outs" that are little more than admissions tricks to raise school enrollment.

College coaches only recruit top players

Top level NCAA DI schools only do. But in some sports there are as many as 2,000 colleges to choose from. College coaches recruit anyone they think can help their program. Just because you are not the star of your team does not mean you cannot play in college. There are many players that do not excel in high school because there are other talented players at their positions or because they are a late bloomer, that end up being successful college athletes.

Recruiting starts Senior year

While some of the more aggressive parts of the process do happen when you are a Senior, those who wait to START the process as Seniors are often disappointed. It's a common occurrence to have verbal offers out and accepted for a graduating class as early as 18 months before high school graduation. In high profile sports, verbal offers are accepted as early as middle school! Regardless of the level of play, recruiting starts behind the scenes far earlier than you think or know about.

Only the schools that send you letters are interested in you

The schools that send you letters initially got your name from somewhere (colleagues, scouting services, camp list, all-conference lists, your coaches, or your personal contact). Just because you have never received a letter from a school doesn't mean they are necessarily not interested, it may just mean they don't have your information. The only way you will truly know if they have any interest or not is if you contact them so they can evaluate you as a prospect.

I made All-State so coaches will be calling me

Making an All-State or even All-Conference/Region team is a good sign as you have proven success over other high school athletes. However, there are a lot of States and Regions and far fewer colleges than high schools. Most of the athletes you are competing against for scholarships or playing opportunities have similar recognition. Coaches also have limited resources and if you don't let them know that you are interested in their school and are a good fit for what they are looking for, they are likely to miss you. The athlete who contacts coaches first and takes control of their recruiting is the one who will get the phone calls.

If you receive a letter from a coach, you are being recruited

Getting a letter from a coach is better than not getting one. However, college coaches send out thousands of letters to high school athletes they may or may not have heard of and there are probably 500 kids tearing open the same exact letter you received. Receiving a letter means a coach knows your name and knows you play the sport they coach. Respond to the letter and follow-up with the coach. Until the coach calls you, invites you to the school and makes you a formal offer to join their program, the letters don't mean too much.

If you are good enough, college coaches will find you

This is an age-old adage that is often heard throughout the recruiting process and is both out-dated and incorrect. These words are often spoken by a coach who wishes to dismiss any thoughts by the student-athlete or parent that they should market themselves to institutions by sending out their information. The fact is that this statement is true if you are one of the top 100 players in the country, have already received a great deal of accolades by your sophomore year, and most likely already have several scholarship offers in hand. This is simply not true for most student-athletes outside of the top 100. The only way they will know about you for sure is if you send them your profile and express your interest in them. Recruiting is now a global process and despite your skills or success in high school, it is extremely easy to be overlooked by college coaches who have thousands of athletes to scout and hundreds of potential venues to scout them at. College coaches don't read your local town paper and they probably don't attend your games. Only the top 1% of high school athletes are truly discovered. Your performance on the field or court will go a long way toward determining whether or not you get a scholarship offer. However, coaches are looking for more than just your ability. They are looking to find prospects that are a good fit for their school. This includes grades, character, work ethic, coach-ability, etc. If a coach is not introduced to a prospect, it's unlikely they will know about them to be able to decide whether or not to recruit them.

NCAA Division I

Among the three NCAA divisions, Division I schools generally have the biggest student bodies, manage the largest athletics budgets and offer the most generous number of scholarships. Schools who are members of Division I commit to maintaining a high academic standard for student-athletes in addition to a wide range of opportunities for athletics participation.

With nearly 350 colleges and universities in its membership, Division I schools field more than 6,000 athletic teams, providing opportunities for more than 170,000 student-athletes to compete in NCAA sports each year. Division I is subdivided based on football sponsorship. Schools that participate in bowl games belong to the Football Bowl Subdivision. Those that participate in the NCAA-run football championship belong to the Football Championship Subdivision. A third group doesn't sponsor football at all. The subdivisions apply only to football; all other sports are considered simply Division I.

About NCAA Division II

Division II is a collection of more than 300 NCAA colleges and universities that provide thousands of student-athletes the opportunity to compete at a high level of scholarship athletics while excelling in the classroom and fully engaging in the broader campus experience. This balance, in which student-athletes are recognized for their academic success, athletics contributions and campus/community involvement, is at the heart of the Division II philosophy.

All three NCAA divisions emphasize athletics and academic excellence for their student-athletes; after all, the NCAA's overall mission is to make athletics an integral part of the educational experience at all member schools. The differences among the divisions emerge primarily in how schools choose to fund their athletics programs and in the national attention they command.

Most Division I institutions, for example, choose to devote more financial resources to support their athletics programs, and many are able to do so because of the large media contracts Division I conferences are able to attract, mostly to showcase the publicly popular sports of football and men's basketball.

NCAA Division III

More than 180,000 student-athletes at 450 institutions make up Division III, the largest NCAA division both in number of participants and number of schools. The Division III experience offers participation in a competitive athletic environment that pushes student-athletes to excel on the field and build upon their potential by tackling new challenges across campus.

Academics are the primary focus for Division III student-athletes. The division minimizes the conflicts between athletics and academics and helps student-athletes progress toward graduation through shorter practice and playing seasons and regional competition that reduces time away from academic studies. Participants are integrated on campus and treated like all other members of the student body, keeping them focused on being a student first.

NCAA Eligibility Center

<https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>. At the top, there is a maintenance notice: "Eligibilitycenter.org will be unavailable from 9pm-12am EST on Saturday, September 23 due to site maintenance." Below this is the site's header, which includes the NCAA Eligibility Center logo, a login form with fields for "Student Email" and "Password", and a "Login" button. There are also links for "Help" and "High School Administrators", and a "Forgot your password?" link. The main content area is split into two columns. The left column is titled "DIVISION I OR II" and contains the text: "You need to be certified by the NCAA Eligibility Center to compete at an NCAA Division I or II school. Create a Certification Account and we'll guide you through the process." Below this is a sub-note: "You need to create a Certification Account to make official visits to Divisions I and II schools or to sign a National Letter of Intent." At the bottom of this column is a blue button labeled "Create an Account". The right column is titled "DIVISION III OR UNDECIDED" and contains the text: "Create a Profile Page if you plan to compete at a Division III school or are not yet sure where you want to compete." Below this is another sub-note: "You'll get an NCAA ID, and we will send you important reminders as you complete high school." At the bottom of this column is a blue button labeled "Create a Profile Page". The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows the time as 12:55 PM.

About the NAIA

The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), headquartered in Kansas City, Mo., is a governing body of small athletics programs that are dedicated to character-driven intercollegiate athletics. Since 1937, the NAIA has administered programs and championships in proper balance with the overall college educational experience.

The student-athlete is the center of all NAIA experiences. Each year more than 60,000 student-athletes have the opportunity to play college sports at NAIA member institutions.

The seed of the NAIA began in 1937 with the tipoff of a men's basketball tournament in Kansas City that has become the longest running event in college basketball. Out of the tournament grew the NAIA, an association that has been an innovative leader. The NAIA was the first collegiate athletics association to invite historically black institutions into membership and the first to sponsor both men's and women's national championships. In 2000, the NAIA reaffirmed its purpose to enhance the character building aspects of sport. Through [Champions of Character](#), the NAIA seeks to create an environment in which every student-athlete, coach, official and spectator is committed to the true spirit of competition through five core values.

In 2010, the association opened the doors to the [NAIA Eligibility Center](#), where prospective student-athletes are evaluated for academic and athletic eligibility. It delivers on the NAIA's promise of integrity by leveling the playing field, guiding student-athlete success, and ensuring fair competition.

NAIA ELIGIBILITY CENTER

<https://www.playnaia.org/>



The screenshot shows the NAIA Eligibility Center website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the "PLAYNAIA" logo on the left, and "ELIGIBILITY CENTER REGISTER | FORGOT PASSWORD" in the center. To the right of the logo are input fields for "Email" and "Password", and a red "SIGN IN" button. Below the navigation bar is a dark red banner with a home icon and the text "NAIA Eligibility Center". The main content area features the question "Do you want to play at an NAIA college or university?" followed by a sub-headline: "The NAIA requires all student-athletes who have never played a championship sport in the NAIA to have their eligibility determined before they can play." Below this is a call to action: "Get started by choosing the path for U.S. or International Students!" and a blue "REGISTER NOW" button. Underneath, there is a section titled "Get Started Here" with three columns of images and captions: "U.S. Students" (showing a group of diverse students), "International Students" (showing three students in athletic wear), and "High School Admins & Counselors" (showing a man in a blue shirt).