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Parents, Students, Coaches, and Guidance Counselors:

Welcome to ***The Athlete's Guide to College Recruiting and Admissions.***

Designed to help you get started on the college athletic recruiting process, this guide covers basic information on NCAA rules, financial aid, tips for parents, researching programs, and recruiting terms. For those interested in a comprehensive college selection and recruiting guide, we have included information on ***The Making of a Student Athlete***, by David Galehouse and Ray Lauenstein.

Please note: The authors have given permission to customers of Digital Scout to reprint this nine-page guide for distribution to interested athletes and their families.

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### **Please note:**

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## 5 TIPS FOR PARENTS OF PROSPECTIVE STUDENT-ATHLETES

### 1. Understand who is responsible.

Most families assume that their high school coach is responsible for their recruiting process. High school coaches are great people; they work really hard, and often are teachers who have papers and tests to grade. Most of them have families to take care of. The recruiting process is ultimately your responsibility. You are responsible for researching and evaluating schools, contacting college coaches, visiting schools, and making decisions along the way. The high school coach can help by determining where an athlete's skills might fit in with different college levels and programs, writing recommendations, and even placing phone calls on an athlete's behalf to college coaches after the athlete has initiated contact. Don't be the parent of the senior who says, "I thought our coach would take care of the recruiting process for us."

### 2. Be proactive.

It is important to be proactive and research as many schools as possible. The recruiting and college selection process is not something that should sneak up on your son or daughter senior year. Success in recruiting is about matching academic talents, athletic talents, and desires with a given college program. The families who find a great athletic, academic, and social match are the ones who usually have taken the right steps in the recruiting process. They have already done much of the work for the college coach, and the coach has confidence in recruiting a smart and talented athlete who wants to attend his or her school. There are over 1,100 NCAA colleges at the Division I, Division II, and Division III levels and 500+ Junior College and NAIA schools.

### 3. Don't follow the herd.

Many students put themselves in a position to fail by simply following the herd and applying to well-known popular schools. The problem is that everyone is applying to these schools, and competition for admission is extremely difficult. Harvard annually receives over 20,000 applications and admits roughly 10 percent. Each year Harvard is going to turn down over 18,000 students, many of whom are incredibly smart and gifted. Juniata, a small Division III school in Pennsylvania received just over 1,500 applications last year and accepted about 1,100 students or roughly 75 percent. Few have heard of Juniata because it is not Harvard. You won't find its basketball team on TV in March Madness or its football team in a bowl game. Juniata recently appeared in the *Unofficial Guide to the 320 Most Interesting Colleges*, published by

Kaplan Publishing. If your list of colleges includes only those well-known schools everyone has heard of, you will find competition for athletic spots and acceptance extremely difficult.

### 4. Be realistic.

One of the best quotes I ever saw was the following, "A kid scores 20 points in basketball at the age of 8, his parents think he's the next Jordan; if a kid gets 100 on a math test, they don't think he's the next Albert Einstein."

The love, time, money, and passion you have poured into your son or daughter's athletic career can often cloud your judgment of his or her potential for a college scholarship. Most parents dream of athletic scholarships and all the money they will save and are not realistic about the chances of receiving money. While your child's talents may garner some athletic scholarship dollars, after Division I football and basketball, there is very little scholarship money to go around. Most coaches, even at the Division I level, have a limited amount of money that they divide amongst 10-20 players (even more for some sports). There is far more money in the form of grants, merit aid, outside scholarships, institutional aid, and federal financial aid, than there is athletic scholarship money. You need to explore your options at all programs at all levels and not focus your search solely on an athletic scholarship. You also need to seek out people who can give you a realistic evaluation of your son's or daughter's ability and how it applies to different levels.

### 5. Be Educated.

There are a lot of confusing topics and terms that you will come across in the recruiting process: official visits, early decision, EFC, red shirts, greyshirts, scholarship blending, head-count sports, NLI, Clearinghouse. Your job is to learn the basics, understand your role in the recruiting process, recognize how coaches recruit and what they look for, and understand what admission departments and schools look for. It's not about rules; it's about understanding and working with the process. (Note: That's why we developed *The Making of a Student-Athlete*, the most complete guide to recruiting on the market today. We take the secrets out of the recruiting process and provide everything you need to know to succeed. See page 8 for details.)

## BASIC CONTACT RULES

The NCAA rulebook is thicker than a big city yellow pages and certainly more difficult to interpret. There are some very detailed rules for college recruiting efforts, such as colleges cannot use multicolored paper in recruiting materials or provide business cards that are magnetic. Generally speaking, following some basic rules will keep you out of trouble. However, you do need to understand some specifics of person-to-person contact:

### TELEPHONE CALLS

In all sports, phone calls from faculty members and coaches (but not boosters) are permitted, however certain restrictions apply, including sports-specific regulations for football and basketball, as follows:

**NCAA Division I** – College coaches can place one call in March of the athlete’s junior year in all sports except football and basketball. Coaches can call one time per week starting July 1 following completion of the athlete’s junior year in all sports except football (after September 1) and men’s and women’s basketball (visit [www.ncaa.com](http://www.ncaa.com) for basketball call regulations as they are extensive).

**NCAA Division II** – College coaches can place one call (per week) after June 15th after completion of the junior year.

**NCAA Division III** – Unlike Division I and Division II, there are no restrictions as to when a Division III coach can call a prospect in high school. It is possible that the NCAA feels that smaller Division schools do not have the time, money, or resources to abuse this privilege, which will often be true.

**Football Specific:** In Divisions I-A and I-AA football, ONE telephone call to a prospect may be made during the month of May of the prospect’s junior year in high school and not again until September 1.

**Basketball Specific:** In Division I basketball (men’s and women’s), an institution’s coach may telephone a prospective student-athlete (PSA) one time in March of the junior year and not again until June 21. Finally, only three telephone calls to a PSA may be made during the month of July following the junior year, with no more than one telephone call per week.

**NOTE:** In any grade, coaches, other than basketball coaches, may receive calls from students who are paying for the call. However, if a message is left, the coach cannot return the call until the proper time. The exception is basketball—a player cannot call a coach until after sophomore year.

### OFFICIAL VISITS

Student-athletes are allowed five official visits to different schools, provided the school has extended an invitation.

The visits can begin at the start of the senior year (except for basketball—visits can begin January 1 of the junior year). These visits are paid for by the school and include round-trip transportation, lodging, food, and tickets to a game for the athlete and, in some instances, for parents. Official visits cannot exceed 48 hours. Choose your visits wisely as it would not make sense to take an official visit to a school that is 20 miles from your house when you could use that visit to check out a school a thousand miles from your house. What will be cheaper for you? The high school coach can accompany the athlete if the transportation is by automobile, but a college will not pay for a coach’s transportation.

A student-athlete cannot have an official visit unless he or she has given the college a high school academic transcript and a score from a PSAT, an SAT, or ACT.

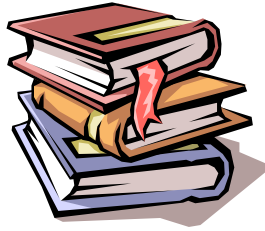
**Division II** – The same rules apply for official visits for Division II schools. Regardless of the division classification of the schools, five total official visits to NCAA Division I and Division II level schools are permitted. The five official visits may be to any combination of Division I and Division II schools.

**Division III** - Student-athletes are allowed the same expense-paid official visits to Division III schools as to Division I or Division II schools. While a prospect may make only one visit per school, he or she can visit an unlimited number of schools, as the limit of five does not apply for Division III.

Many Division III schools cannot offer paid official visits due to the expense of bringing a student-athlete to campus.

## ELIGIBILITY

The NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse, located in Iowa City, is the organization that handles ALL inquiries regarding an individual's initial eligibility status to play NCAA Division I and Division II athletics. The Clearinghouse maintains and processes all initial-eligibility certifications. Their Web address is: **[www.ncaaclearinghouse.net](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net)**



If you have any aspiration of playing college athletics (regardless of your grades or SAT/ACT scores), you must register with the NCAA Clearinghouse by the end of your junior year. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

### The Quick Facts:

- NCAA Division I and Division II have standardized minimum academic requirements for student-athletes entering college. If you want to play, you have to register and qualify according to the requirements. No one is exempt! (Except Division III bound student-athletes)
- Register at the end of your junior year by going to [www.ncaaclearinghouse.net](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net) and working with your high school guidance counselor to get all the necessary documentation.
- If you attended more than one high school, you need official transcripts from each school attended, mailed directly from the school to the Clearinghouse. Don't mail them yourself.
- The Clearinghouse is in NO way part of the admissions process to a particular college.
- NCAA member institutions (schools recruiting you) will request your information from the Clearinghouse. You will never send it to anyone yourself.
- You must submit a final transcript of your high school grades to the Clearinghouse when you graduate.

### How is eligibility calculated?

The Clearinghouse uses a sliding scale that compares GPA and SAT/ACT scores. For example, an athlete with a 2.5 GPA, will need a minimum score of 820 on the SAT to compete at the Division I or Division II level the first year of college. Unfortunately, most schools have far higher standards than what the Clearinghouse sets, so it's possible to be eligible according to the

Clearinghouse, but not get accepted to many individual colleges.

### CORE Courses Requirements:

In order to be eligible the student-athlete must also complete a number (14)\* of core courses in high school, as follows:

- 3** Years of English
- 2** years of math (Algebra 1 or higher)
- 2** years of natural/physical science (1 year of lab)
- 2** year of additional English, math or natural/physical science
- 2** years of social science
- 3** years of additional courses (from any area above or foreign language, non-doctrinal religion/philosophy, computer science)

NOTE: Computer Science is being eliminated as an acceptable core course for students entering college on or after August 1, 2005

\*\* The Clearinghouse Web site has a list of all high schools and approved core courses. If you are in doubt about a particular class, research it online or ask your counselor.

### Junior College Requirements

The student-athlete must be a high school graduate.

### NAIA Requirements

The prospective must meet two of the following criteria:

- (1) Score 18 on the ACT or 860 on the SAT's on a single test
- (2) Have a GPA of at least 2.0 on a 4.0 scale
- (3) Graduate in the top half of his or her high school class

\*For students entering college in the fall of 2008, the Core Course requirement will be increased to 16.

## FINANCIAL AID

Financial Aid is often a resource that many families fail to take advantage of. Some don't understand how it works; some don't start the process early enough; and some, thinking they will not qualify, don't even apply. There is far more money in financial aid and grants than there is in athletic scholarship money.



There are many types of aid so don't dismiss any school because of cost until you have explored all the financial possibilities at your disposal. While there will be many schools out of your reach financially, you may also find many colleges offering generous financial aid packages based on need and academic record. Smaller and lesser known colleges will often offer more aid in an attempt to attract more talented students with the goal of increasing the school's ranking and exposure.

The Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC) has established a number for assistance: 1-800-433-3243. The Center also publishes *The Student Guide: Financial Aid from the US Department of Education*, which can be obtained free of charge. The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) Web site also has detailed information on the process.

### Where can I get the FAFSA form?

You can get the FAFSA form at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)

### When does the form need to be submitted?

Submit as soon as possible "after" January 1.

### What type of information will I need to provide with the FAFSA form?

- Student's Social Security number
- Student's income tax returns, W-2, and 1099 Forms
- Parent's income tax returns, W-2, and 1099 forms for previous year
- Bank statements and mortgage information
- Records of untaxed income
- Information regarding stocks, bonds, and mutual funds that your family holds
- Information on childcare costs, medical expenses, and other unusual family expenses

### What problems do people often encounter when applying for financial aid?

Probably the biggest problem is getting information submitted as early as possible. Since your EFC (Expected Family Contribution) and your financial aid reward is calculated on your previous year's income, you have to estimate your taxes before you have probably begun to even think about your taxes, since your tax forms are not due until April. This means that if your son or daughter is enrolling in school in September of 2005, the Federal Government will use your earnings from January 1, 2004 to December 31, 2004. Your financial aid information is due as soon as possible after January 1. You need to estimate your earnings and taxes for the previous year. This often sends people scrambling around trying to estimate their tax rates and earnings, and, if your tax information is not accurate, you could miss out on financial aid money.

### What mistakes can be avoided when filling out the FAFSA form?

1. Do not report retirement money. FAFSA does not ask for this, but some people report it anyway. When schools find out that you have \$800,000 saved in your 401K program, you are not going to be getting a lot of aid. The only retirement money you need to report is money utilized for retirement in the tax year used to apply for financial aid.
2. Do not report savings as an asset of the student. Parental assets are counted at 5 percent and student assets are counted at a much higher 25 percent. Some parents set up an account for their son or daughter and think this will save them money. If the income is truly the student's, count it as such, but, if scholarship aid is a priority, do not move your money into the name of your child. The same applies for grandparents wishing to give grandchildren money for college. It may be preferable to give the money to the parents than to the student.

## COMMON RECRUITING TERMS

**REDSHIRT** – A student-athlete who does not compete in athletic competition and is granted an extra year of eligibility. A redshirt may practice and travel with the team. This is more common in football and basketball at the upper Division I level.

**NLI** – The NLI or National Letter of Intent is a legally binding document that a high school athlete signs with a school. It signifies the award of athletic scholarship money for one year. It is used at all NCAA Division I and some NCAA Division II institutions. The student-athlete may sign only one with an NCAA school.

**PROSPECTIVE STUDENT-ATHLETE** – Any student-athlete entering the ninth grade. This is an NCAA term that has little meaning!

**FAFSA** – Free Application for Federal Student Aid –the form to complete and submit to determine Expected Family Contribution. Colleges use this to calculate and award financial aid.

**EFC** – Expected Family Contribution is the amount of money any college can expect a family to contribute to a student's education based on information provided on the FAFSA.

**EARLY DECISION** – This program allows a student to apply early to one school. In most cases, it is a binding decision. If accepted, a school expects you to attend. In other cases, it is not binding. Check the policy at each school.

**EARLY ACTION** – This program allows a student to apply early to a school, but, unlike Early Decision, Early Action is non-binding. More schools are switching to this program for admissions. In most cases, students may apply to only one school early action, but may usually apply to others during the regular admissions period.

**ACADEMIC INDEX (AI)** – Used by Ivy League schools to determine eligibility, this is a combination of SAT 1, SAT 2, and GPA. An applicant's individual score is then compared to the average for all students, and admissions decisions are based on comparative placement on the scale. Ivy school athletes have minimum AI's that they must achieve for acceptance.

**NEED BLIND** – Schools that are need blind do not use family financial situations when evaluating applications. This can be a benefit for applicants with a low EFC.

**CORE COURSES** – Courses such as math, English, science, history, and social studies required for Initial Eligibility at the Division I and Division II levels.

**CONTACT PERIOD** – During this time, a college coach may have in-person contact with the student-athlete or his or her parents on or off the college's campus. The coach may also watch the athlete play or visit the athlete's high school. During this period, the athlete and his or her parents may visit a college campus, and the coach may write and telephone.

**DEAD PERIOD** – A college coach may not have any in-person contact with prospective athletes or their parents at any time in this period. However, the coach may write and telephone the prospective or his or her parents during this time.

**EVALUATION PERIOD** – The college coach may watch an athlete play or visit the athlete's high school but cannot have any in-person conversations off the college campus. The athlete and parents can visit a college campus during this period. A coach may write and telephone during this time.

**QUIET PERIOD** – The college coach may not have any in-person contact with the student-athlete or parents off the college's campus. The coach may not watch the athlete play or visit the high school during this period. However, athletes and their parents may visit a college campus during this time.

## RESEARCHING SCHOOLS

One of the common misconceptions in recruiting is that athletes are discovered. While the very best high school athletes who play in high-level traveling programs and showcase camps are discovered, most college coaches rely on student-athletes contacting them. The most successful recruits are usually those who possessed a combination of athletic skill and academic talent and worked hard to research different colleges that might be a potential fit for their skills and desires. As we stated earlier, there are over 1,000 NCAA colleges at three levels, and it is important to explore all options.

At the end of the day, finding a match is about answering YES to the following questions:

**1. Can I be accepted to this school based on my academic record?** If you cannot get accepted, your recruiting process is over. It doesn't matter how good you are or how much the coach wants you. Most coaches won't even talk about athletics until they have qualified you academically!

**2. Do I have the athletic skill to play for this school?** If you don't have the skills to play for a certain program, it doesn't matter how badly you want to go there. No one wants to get cut or sit on the bench. It's important to find programs that fit your athletic level.

**3. Does the coach have the ability to evaluate my skill?** If a coach cannot physically see you play through an actual game or through a video, he may have a difficult time feeling confident in your ability and might lean toward other recruits who he has seen perform in live competition.

**4. Is this coach truly interested in having me play for his or her program?** Some coaches encourage athletes to "try out" or "walk on." Other players are used as tackling dummies or to warm up pitchers in the bullpen. You need to know if a coach is interested in you as a person and as an athlete.

**5. Can I afford to go to this school?** The national tuition average for private colleges is over \$19,000 a year, and some are approaching \$40,000 per year. College is not cheap, and, despite your desires and the availability of financial aid, there will be some colleges you probably cannot afford to attend.

This is a reality that needs to be accepted, and you need to apply your energy to other schools that are more affordable. It's important to note that you should never dismiss any school because of cost until you have explored all financial options with the coach and with the institution.

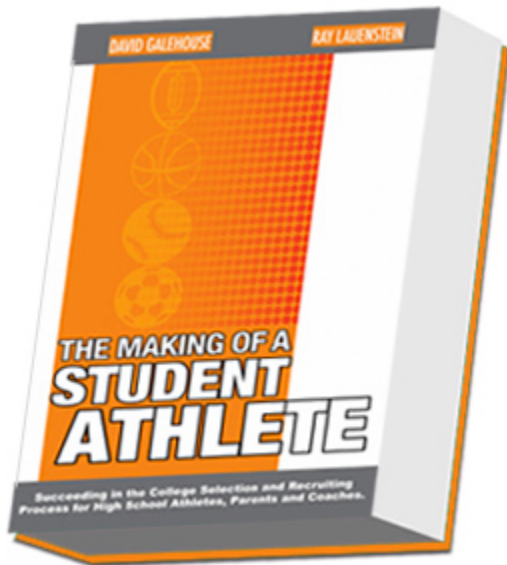
**6. Does this school offer academic programs I am interested in?** If you want to be an architect or an engineer, it is important to find schools that offer those programs. If you have no idea what you want to do, it is important to find schools that have a wide variety of programs that you can explore. You are going to school for an education and to enter the working world after college, so it's important to find schools that offer academic programs you are truly interested in.

**7. Will I be happy and successful at this school?** This is a difficult question to answer until you actually arrive at school. Schools may look great on paper or in person, and then after a semester you might not like the players on the team or some other aspect of the school. When visiting and evaluating colleges, we try to encourage families to ask as many questions as possible of coaches, players, other parents, students, teachers, and anyone else you can find. Only then will you get a sense of the school before you actually enroll and arrive. The national graduation rate for students who enroll in four-year institutions is 60 percent from the institution in which they first enrolled. At some point, 40 percent of all college students transfer or drop out of the school in which they first enrolled. Much of this can be traced back to their decision-making before they enrolled. Wanting to participate in college athletics makes finding a match that much more difficult.

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## ***The Making of a Student-Athlete: Succeeding in the College Selection and Recruiting Process for High School Athletes, Parents and Coaches***

In this comprehensive 290-page athletic recruiting and college selection guide, Ray Lauenstein and Dave Galehouse dispel the myths surrounding the college athletic recruiting process and show how common assumptions can get in the way of your success.

Now in its third edition, ***The Making of a Student-Athlete*** walks student-athletes and parents through the steps involved in the recruiting process from researching programs, understanding athletic scholarships, evaluating

financial aid, contacting coaches, gaining exposure, and making an informed decision as to the right program. ***The Making of a Student-Athlete*** helps the student-athlete balance the rigors of athletics and academics by teaching how to manage classes, games, and practices to become successful at any college level. Includes detailed information on NCAA rules and regulations, youth athletic training, athletic camps, researching college programs, college applications, and much more...

***The Making of a Student-Athlete*** includes 10 chapters and 96 individual topics on recruiting.

Introduction - Researching and Visiting Schools - College Applications - Financial Aid - Other High School and College Options - Athletic Recruiting - Life as a College Athlete - Strength and Conditioning - Athletic Camps - Private Instruction - Recruiting Rules, Eligibility and Guidelines - Conclusion.

### **ORDERING**

The Making of a Student-Athlete is available by credit card or check or money order directly from [www.athletesadvisor.com/mosa](http://www.athletesadvisor.com/mosa)

### **TESTIMONIALS**

*"I have had the unique experience of coaching football at the Division I, Division II, and Division III levels as well as high school for the last 25 years, and in that time, I have not come across a finer guide on the college recruiting and college selection process than **The Making of a Student-Athlete**. If you have any desire to play at the college level, I implore you to read this book!"*

- John Papas, Director, New England Elite Football Clinic

*"During my 19-year career as a coach at both the high school and collegiate levels, I have never read a more comprehensive and well-written recruiting guide for high school athletes than **The Making of a Student-Athlete**. Dave and Ray explain every aspect of the college search process from choosing the right college or athletic program, to what to watch out for in the recruiting process."*

- Steve Johnson, Head Basketball Coach, Ursuline Academy, Wilmington, Delaware

*"I would like to thank you for the wonderful book you wrote for all student-athletes. We would not have had the knowledge necessary to make the final decision without it. It has been like a Bible for us these last few months. I told you I would follow up and let you know the results of Michael's choice. We found the perfect fit. Michael will be the Big Fish in the Little Pond but I really believe it fits him well and he received a \$70,000 scholarship. The coach has also given us an indication that he will see significant playing time as a freshman. Again I would like to thank you very much. I will be recommending your book to anyone in our position that will listen."*

- Mike, Parent, Dorr, Michigan

## **ABOUT ATHLETESADVISOR.COM**

The Athlete's Advisor was founded by Ray Lauenstein in 1995 and took the form of a subscription newsletter sold to high school athletic directors and guidance counselors looking for a one-stop resource about recruiting, college admissions, athletic development, current trends, sports science, and all subjects relating to the student-athlete.

Utilizing his experience as a high school baseball coach, as well as his masters degree in Sports Psychology from Florida State University, Ray filled a need in the baseball market by writing one of the first comprehensive guides to the college baseball recruiting process in 1998. ***Baseball: Playing Outside the Lines – A guide for players, parents and coaches*** was completely revised in February 2005. ( [www.athletesadvisor.com/potl](http://www.athletesadvisor.com/potl))

In addition to the book, Ray has managed the Web site [www.athletesadvisor.com](http://www.athletesadvisor.com), a resource with hundreds of articles, book reviews, and resources for the student-athlete, since 1997. This site includes a partnership with noted sports nutritionist Nancy Clark, *Next Step Magazine*, and [Varsityedge.com](http://Varsityedge.com), a leading recruiting information Web site for student-athletes.

Ray, having lectured at area camps, recruiting seminars, high schools, baseball training centers, and Rotary clubs, has extensive public speaking experience.

In high school Lauenstein was a three-sport athlete and played football and baseball at Hamilton College (NY) where he captained the baseball team in 1991. Following undergrad he enrolled at Florida State University in the Sport and Exercise Psychology program. During that time he coached baseball at perennial power Florida High and tutored in the FSU athletic department.

For additional questions on any of the topics above or anything related to the college application and athletic recruiting process, please contact us at: [info@athletesadvisor.com](mailto:info@athletesadvisor.com).