

NWIUFC – College Recruiting Session February 2010

The NCAA Divisions

NCAA Division I: Division I member institutions have to sponsor at least seven sports for men and seven for women (or six for men and eight for women) with two team sports for each gender. Each playing season has to be represented by each gender as well. There are contest and participant minimums for each sport, as well as scheduling criteria. "D-I" schools are the major collegiate athletic powers, with larger budgets, more elaborate facilities, and higher numbers of athletic scholarships. Soccer specifically, can grant 9.9 (equivalent) full scholarships to its athletes. This is the maximum allowed; some programs do not have the full equivalent for various reasons. Most programs will offer a few full rides, but most athletic scholarships will complement academic scholarships and institutional grants.

EX. Indiana University, Valparaiso University, Butler University, IUPUI, IPFW

NCAA Division II: Division II institutions have to sponsor at least five sports for men and five for women, (or four for men and six for women), with two team sports for each gender, and each playing season represented by each gender. There are maximum financial aid awards for each sport that a Division II school must not exceed. Division II teams usually feature a number of local or in-state student-athletes. Many Division II student-athletes pay for school through a combination of scholarship money, grants, student loans and employment earnings. Division II athletics programs are financed in the institution's budget like other academic departments on campus. Traditional rivalries with regional institutions dominate schedules of many Division II athletics programs.

It offers an alternative to both the highly competitive (and highly expensive) level of intercollegiate sports offered in NCAA Division I and to the non-scholarship level offered in Division III. Division II schools tend to be smaller public universities and many private institutions. Athletic scholarships are offered in most sponsored sports at most institutions, but with more stringent limits as to the numbers offered in any one sport than at the Division I level. For example, Division II schools may give up to 36 football scholarships (whereas Division I FBS, the highest level, is allowed 85 football scholarships), although some Division II conferences limit the number of scholarships to a lower level. Soccer, specifically, can grant 9.0 (equivalent) full scholarships to its athletes. Like Div. I, Div. II coaches allocate this money differently, depending on the academic and institutional awards given to the student.

EX. University of Indianapolis, St. Joseph's (Indiana), University of Southern Indiana

NCAA Division III: Division III institutions have to sponsor at least five sports for men and five for women, with two team sports for each gender, and each playing season represented by each gender. Division III athletics features student-athletes who receive no financial aid related to their athletic ability and athletic departments are staffed and funded like any other department in the university. Division III athletics departments place special importance on the impact of athletics on the participants rather than on the

spectators. The student-athlete's experience is of paramount concern. Division III athletics encourages participation by maximizing the number and variety of athletics opportunities available to students, placing primary emphasis on regional in-season and conference competition.

The division consists of colleges and universities that choose not to offer athletically related financial aid (athletic scholarships) to their student-athletes. There are over 420 member institutions, making Division III (D-III) the largest of the three divisions sanctioned by the NCAA.

D-III schools range in size from less than 500 to over 10,000 students. D-III schools compete in athletics as a non-revenue making, extracurricular activity for students; hence, they may not offer athletic scholarships, they may not “redshirt” freshmen and they may not use endowments or funds whose primary purpose is to benefit their athletic programs. *EX. Wabash College, DePauw University, Earlham College, Franklin College, RHIT*

NAIA: The National Association of Intercollegiate Sports is a separate entity from the NCAA Division I, II, and III organization. The NAIA puts forth legislation that has nothing to do with the NCAA or any member schools within the NCAA. Though NCAA and NAIA schools may compete on a limited basis, there is a separate set of rules and regulations within the NAIA.

NAIA schools can grant up to 12 full athletic scholarships.

The NAIA has 50,000 student-athletes participating at nearly 300 member colleges and universities throughout the United States and Canada. With smaller campus communities, there are more opportunities for students to participate in activities. There are greater possibilities for students to experience leadership roles in student organizations, academics and intramural and intercollegiate athletics. The NAIA offers 23 championships in 13 sports and more than 90% of NAIA schools offer athletic scholarships. One of those championship sports is soccer (men’s and women’s). Much of the decision making, as far as the amount of athletic scholarship money, is left up to the individual institution...not regulated by the governing body of the NAIA. Therefore, each institution will have different guidelines and rules when granting athletic scholarship money.

EX. Taylor University, Bethel College, Marian College, Huntington University

Recruiting Timeline

Summer after Sophomore year:

- 1) Start compiling a list of schools you may be interested in, both academically and athletically. Make sure you consider the following aspects:
 - a) Distance from home, geographic region, can my parents see me play...is that a priority to me/them?
 - b) Academic programs offered in your area of interest
 - c) Financial aid opportunities available. If I am NOT awarded scholarships, can I afford the school? Will I need to take out loans or get employment to pay for school? Does the school offer athletic scholarships?
 - d) Consider other schools within the athletic conference of your school of interest, are they worth looking at? Yes, they are. Usually, conferences are grouped by geographic and institutional similarities.

- 2) Once you have compiled a list of 10-20 schools, start to contact the coaches via email or recruiting forms on the team's website. Request information about the school and the soccer program.
 - a) Don't be surprised if the coach doesn't contact you back. At the Div I level, coaches cannot regularly call a student until July 1 of his junior year. Before that, they are only allowed ONE call to a junior between March 1 and July 1. However, you can call the coach as much as you want. If you leave a message, he cannot return it until the July 1 date. Make sure to follow up any recruiting forms with a phone call.

- 3) Prepare a personal resume that includes academic, athletic, community, and social involvement (see included example). Also include a high school game schedule. Keep in mind that many coaches rarely recruit high school games, unless they are convenient and need another look at a player. Coaches recruit the club level, at college showcases, and at State Cup and tournament venues.
 - a) Some players prepare a DVD/Video along with this resume. Make sure that you consider what your strengths are and show THAT in the video. Don't send an entire game, the coach will not watch it. Send highlights of passing and receiving, tackling, scoring goals, technical strengths and tactical awareness. The simple stuff is what gets a coach's attention first.

Fall of Junior year:

- 1) Send your high school schedule to coaches at your schools of interest along with any updates on awards, tournament wins, or team accolades. If you reach the State Tournament, update the coach on your schedule for Sectional games, Regionals, etc. Be sure to confirm game locations, jersey color and number, and position you will most likely be playing. We don't want to search, we want to find you right away.
- 2) Once your spring club plans/schedule has been confirmed, send that immediately.

- 3) Update your personal resume GPA, ACT/SAT test scores, and any other academic honors (National Honor Society, AP classes, extra-curricular involvement)

Winter of Junior year:

- 1) Consider visiting local schools to take a tour and meet briefly with the coach. Remember that his focus will be on his Seniors, at that point, but putting a face to a name is always valuable. Don't expect him to have a good idea of the role you will play on the team, if any, at that point. He's still 6 months away from focusing on your class. However, this will get you acclimated to campus visits and give you an idea of what to expect on later campus visits.
- 2) Update resume with 1st semester grades and send it out.
- 3) If participating in college showcases, be sure to send out the schedule and location to coaches.

Spring of Junior year:

- 1) Send letters requesting the presence of college coaches at club games, tournaments, and showcases. Be specific in location, time, date, and jersey color/#.
- 2) Create an organized filing system for any letters or information you may receive. Coaches send these out hoping you will read and gather information from them. If we call and you say you lost the info, it tells us you don't care about the school.
- 3) If a letter is received from the coach, be sure to follow up by calling him/her within a week of the date received. This will impress the coach and look great in your favor.
 - a) Have some questions about the school and soccer program ready...don't be silent with one-word answers. Show your enthusiasm for the program and school.
 - b) Ask if there are any camps/clinics in the summer that you can attend.
 - c) Ask if there are any recruiting dates in the spring/summer that the program will be hosting.
 - d) Ask when the best time to make a campus visit is (spring/summer/fall?).
 - I recommend visiting a campus when classes are in session. It will give you a true feel for the campus environment. However, a first visit in the summer is also a good thing...allows you to meet with admissions dept, financial aid, and the coach.
 - e) Update him on your club schedule and/or State Cup results.

Summer before Senior year:

- 1) Make VISITS! Request a campus tour, meeting with admissions, meeting with financial aid, meeting with coach and/or assistant, meet a professor in your area of interest, and talk with a current student (if possible).
- 2) If you have been contacted and recruited by a Div I or II school, he may offer an athletic scholarship during the summer or fall of your senior year. This will require you to give a verbal commitment. Verbal commitments have no real

- weight, but they secure your athletic scholarships in the mind of the coach and take away from his overall scholarship money.
- 3) If you haven't been offered anything, it doesn't mean your chances are lost; but you will have to take more initiative to make sure coaches see you on their radar. Don't wait for that call...**MAKE THE CALL!**
 - 4) Create and keep a calendar of all your schools' deadlines. This includes application deadlines, financial information deadlines (FAFSA), scholarship deadlines, and any other significant dates for the school (open houses, admission sponsored visit days, sport visit days, game days, etc.) **BE PUNCTUAL WITH DEADLINES!!!**

Fall of Senior year:

- 1) Keep to application deadlines and other important dates.
- 2) Develop a good relationship with your high school guidance counselor so that you can readily obtain transcripts, letters, etc.
- 3) Contact friends of the family, coaches, or teachers to write letters of recommendation to include with your application. Even if the application doesn't ask for that, include at least one. Don't have one written by your mom or dad...they're biased about you!
- 4) Update coaches on your high school schedule if they want another chance to see you perform.
- 5) Make campus visits during school days. Attend a class. If school is a top priority, make an overnight visit the night before a game. See how the team conducts itself before a game day and how they socialize. Don't ever matriculate at a school where the student-athletes drink alcohol before a game day. That means the program is unstable and there is no internal leadership!
- 6) Narrow your search down to 5 or fewer schools, if you have not already done so.

Winter of Senior year:

- 1) Stay in close contact with coaches who have expressed interest in you. Call them at least once every few weeks so you are sure to stay fresh in their mind.
- 2) If no coaches have expressed interest in you, and you still want to play at the collegiate level, call up coaches at schools you are interested in and see what you need to do to get a look. Provide them a spring club schedule.
- 3) **DON'T GIVE UP... YOU SOMETIMES HAVE TO WORK TO BE NOTICED!**

Spring of senior year:

- 1) If you have committed to a school, continue to play at a high level. Stay involved with a club team, PDL, or men's amateur league.
- 2) If you are still waiting for interest and a commitment, make personal visits to the school with highlight video in hand to give to the coach.
- 3) Keep your grades up in your last semester. Admissions departments look at senior year grades to determine what kind of focus a potential student has. Try to fight off "senioritis".