**College Recruiting solved in 3 minutes:**

Becoming a college athlete is not the vastly complex, totally confusing, incredibly intimidating, exorbitantly expensive process a lot of people would have you believe it is.  College recruiting is not brain surgery.  In fact, most of it is just about being logical.  Don’t let anyone convince you it’s something it is not.

This article should take about 3 minutes to read.  After you have finished, you will understand what needs to happen to have a successful recruiting journey.  You won’t have all the answers and there will be a little work to do, but it should be apparent to you how to find a college roster spot.

**Understand the college recruiting funnel**

College coaches are always looking for talent. They reach out to many, contact some and sign a handful. This is called the recruiting funnel. It applies to all intercollegiate sports, but as an example, here are the numbers for the Division I College Football Recruiting Funnel:

* College football programs reach out to and evaluate thousands of athletes
* They contact a few hundred top athletes
* Offer less than 100 official visits
* Sign 25

The numbers for other sports are different, but the concept is the same and the opening at the end of each recruiting funnel is pretty small.  A complete understanding of the recruiting funnel gives you some perspective on how recruiting really works.

This concept should make it obvious why you have to pursue colleges that make sense for your abilities.  Your recruiting process is a finite amount of time and the door closes as each game and each practice passes.  Don’t waste any time pursuing colleges that don’t match your academic and athletic abilities or you’ll never make it through the funnel.

**You have to know the rules**

In addition to being realistic about your abilities, you need to learn the rules. Knowing the rules puts you ahead of the competition and helps you understand where you stand with coaches, what to expect and when to expect it.  Take the time to educate yourself on the NCAA and NAIA regulations.  Being familiar with terms like official visit, unofficial visit, contact period, quiet period and evaluation period will prove to be beneficial throughout your recruiting process.

You also need to know the rules related to eligibility from both an athletic and academic standpoint.  Finally, research the facts related to signing a National Letter of Intent.  All of these topics can be found on the NCAA and NAIA websites.

**Understand that you are what you are**

Paying for a professional video or hiring a recruiting service to contact coaches on your behalf isn’t going to make you a 5 star recruit.  Recruiting services aren’t miracle workers.  They can’t make you run faster, jump higher or throw harder.  Also, there is no combination of words you can write in an email that will land a scholarship if you aren’t a qualified candidate.  Coaches will have to see you play before scholarship discussions even start.  Certainly you want to maximize your level of competition and your scholarship money, but **be open to colleges at every level**.

High school athletes need to understand that participating in intercollegiate sports at any level is an incredible accomplishment. If you are a standout high school athlete and colleges are interested in you, embrace it. If you want to play at the highest level, you are the only one that has the ability to change your athletic standing.  Hard work pays off.

Finally, realize that the primary reason to go to college is to get an education. The experience of college athletics and the life lessons learned will help you pursue a career in medicine, engineering, law, education and many other fields.  Focus on what really matters, and what really matters is earning that college diploma.

**This is your college career, no one else’s**

Does the following describe you?

* Junior or Senior high school athlete with talent that projects to playing in college
* Good student and good teammate
* Haven’t tried to connect with any college coaches
* Not currently being recruited

If the above describes you, then the chances of a college coach magically finding you are like the chances of finding a needle in a haystack. There are thousands of other athletes out there competing for scholarships. For that reason, you have to be persistent and can’t be afraid to contact college coaches on your own.

Persistence is critical.  You will not land a scholarship with one email.  The first email or contact with a coach is merely an introduction and hopefully starts a dialogue.  Even if you don’t hear back, send the coach a follow up email.  Then, ask your high school or summer coach to be involved.  They can vouch for your character and can give college coaches an honest evaluation of your abilities.  If all else fails, pick up the phone and call the coaches at the programs you are most interested in.

The final and perhaps most important fact you need to accept is that you can’t rely on someone else to find your college scholarship.  The recruiting process is your responsibility. Take ownership of it. Being proactive shows initiative and separates you from the crowd.  You can’t afford to sit back and wait to be discovered…It may not happen. In summary, be realistic, learn the rules, take ownership of your recruiting journey and don’t take no for an answer.