



COLLEGE RECRUITING PROCESS

RESEARCHING

Before a high school student athlete should ever get involved in contacting any colleges, he needs to map out an ideal plan that fits best academically first then athletically. Here are a few questions about the academic side of things.

-What do I want to study in college?

*Even if you're a freshman or sophomore and have no idea what you might be interested in, start looking and getting an idea of what majors are available and where each major can lead you in the future.

-How far away do you want to be from home?

*1-2 hours

*3-5 hours

*5+ hours

-Tuition range. What is your family comfortable with spending for college?

-Big school or small school atmosphere?

*Big classes or smaller classes? How do you learn the best?

*Big town or smaller town?

*What type of student population fits you best, big or small?

-What type of weather do you like to live in? Warmer, colder, or seasonal?

*You don't have to answer all these questions early on in your high school career but it certainly helps if you have a general idea. Interests will always seem to change as your presented with options.



COLLEGE RECRUITING PROCESS

ASSESSING THE PLAYER

Many recruits sometimes overlook self-awareness as you need to have an honest evaluation and opinion of who you are as a player. Players and parents sometimes have a false understanding about their level of play and how it fits with a particular level of college baseball. This assessment will come from many sources but you will need to find a coach you trust and that will give you honest feedback not just someone who will build your ego. It's needs to be someone who has an idea about college baseball and what the players are like at each level.

1. Ask for your:

- *Strengths
- *Weaknesses
- *Current level of college they think you might currently fit
- *Projection, where you could fit with a little bit of work and improvement
- *Any other useful information pertaining to your recruitment

2. Once you acquire this information, don't be satisfied, keep working to improve your skills and baseball IQ. If you don't like or disagree with the feedback, don't take it as a personal attack on you as a player. That coach is actually trying to be honest and doing you a really big favor. It's your job to find out how to improve to get to the level that you find desirable. Stay in contact with that coach, as they will let you know when you are making jumps and what you need to continue to improve upon. Players assessments are always fluid. Some go way up, some go way down.

3. Find out small intangibles that college coaches are looking for and make sure you are working to improve those.

- *Consistency
- *Coachable
- *Baseball IQ
- *Work ethic
- *Academics

Once you get good information about where you fit and what you need to improve upon, keep grinding and working towards your goals. You only get a short amount of time during high school to do this. Don't waste it.



ASSESSING COLLEGE PROGRAMS

You've started your research and are now ready to look at a variety of college baseball programs. Ideally, of you can look into all options in order to better understand what level might fit you best. Here's a few ideas:

1. Start with getting a general feel for programs on the DI, DII, DIII, NAIA, and JUCO levels by simply logging onto websites. Twitter will also help you gather some details.
2. It would be great to attend a game at each level but understand it's certainly hard to do logistically. Pick out a few levels and make sure you get to those games. Let the coaches know at least a few days out that you will be attending, as most of the time they will be able to get you on a pass list. Here are a few things to pay attention to:

- *Get there for batting practice, usually starts about 2 hours prior to game time.
- *What is the speed of the game?
- *How fast are most of the pitchers throwing, how hard are the hitters hitting, defense?
- *How do the players act during the day? Do they have energy or go thru the motions?
- *Watch the coaches and how they interact with the players.
- *How does the park play, is the grass tall, fast/slow, turf, big park, short/long fences, etc.?
- *Amount of fans? How's the atmosphere during the games? How many students attend?

3. Attend a college practice if at all possible. This will give you a better idea of how the coaches coach and how the players go about their business while trying to get better. You will be able to find out what tools and drills they use to help develop their players. This is more of an informal setting and most college's welcome players and families as it's easier to make contact and visit.

Know what it takes from an athletic standpoint to play college baseball at many levels. It will surprise most players and parents at how good DIII teams are let alone the DI teams that you see playing in Omaha every year at the College World Series.



CONTACTING COLLEGE COACHES

Once you have identified the level of college baseball, schools that fit academically, schools that fit your distance from home, tuition range, atmosphere, etc. and you have your coaches' endorsements on those school's, it's time to start reaching out.

*It's best to start with an introductory email. Try to keep the email to the key points below and eliminate the fluff. Coaches have very little time to read emails so keep it short and to the point. Emails should always come from the PLAYER and not the PARENT. Coaches want to establish a relationship with the player who they will be coaching in the future.

-Address the email to the head coach and also CC the assistant coaches, the assistants will be one's reading and following up.

- a. Introduce yourself
 - Where your from, what high school you attend, travel team, etc.
- b. Why are you interested in this school and baseball program
 - Academic fit, baseball fit, like the style of coaching, etc.
- c. Include a link to any video
 - keep the video 1-2 tops, no highlight video needed, raw footage is best
- d. Your contact information as well as high school coach and travel coaches
- e. Academic information
 - GPA, ACT/SAT scores, honors accomplishments
- f. Finish with asking about upcoming camps and showcases they might be hosting
- e. Include HS and summer schedule if available

The head coach at the U. of Tennessee, Tony Vitello, attended our annual recruiting night a couple years ago and below is his advise on how to contact a college coach. 5 minutes of really good stuff.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zXGaEqJsfcS>

At this point, you can also ask your high school, summer coach, or even coaches that you've played against to reach out on your behalf as well. The amount of people contacting the college coaches doesn't need to be overwhelming but use the ones you trust and know that will give college coaches and honest assessment of your skills and who you are as a person off the field.



NCAA/NAIA/JUCO RECRUITING RULES

NCAA DIVISION I

The NCAA baseball recruiting rules for Division 1 schools are the most regulated and strict of the college division levels. Specific forms of communication from coaches are allowed depending on your year in high school.

*Prior to Sept. 1st of your junior year, DI coaches are not allowed to directly contact players or their family members. Players can reach out to DI coaches all they want but the coaches are not allowed to return messages, texts, or emails. The only thing they can communicate with you about is camp. They are allowed to return a call or email about camp but no conversations regarding recruiting can occur. College coaches will ask your high school coach or club coach to have you call them.

September 1 of Junior Year

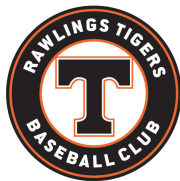
- This is when college coaches can begin sending all forms of communications to student-athletes, ranging from emails and texts to direct messages on social media and phone calls
- Student-athletes and their parents can begin taking official visits. Per NCAA rules, athletes can take no more than five official visits to D1 schools. Only one official visit is allowed per school.
- Athletes can coordinate unofficial visits with a school's athletic department to meet and have recruiting conversations with the coach, coaching staff, and players while on campus.

Recruiting Calendar

Basically from March 1st thru the middle of November is the evaluation/contact period for DI coaches to get out and recruit which means watching games, practices, make in home visits, make school visits, etc. The main "Dead Period" runs thru the winter, mid November after the NLI signing week until March 1st, which coaches can make phone calls and send emails but no on or off campus recruiting is allowed. There are also a couple smaller time frames where the coaches cannot go out as well.

Scholarships

Each program can spend their money however they see fit in regards to percentages but they have to abide by these guidelines. DI programs have 11.7 athletic scholarships they can use on a maximum of 27 players and each player has to receive a minimum of 25%.



Roster Limits

Teams don't need to be down to the roster limit until the first game in the spring semester. A number of programs will be over that limit in the fall and will need to cut/reduce during the year. They do have to be under the 11.7 scholarship limit at the beginning of the fall semester.

NCAA DIVISION II

The DII guidelines are very similar to DI but are not as strict. The DII coaches are able to start the communication process a little sooner.

- Starting on June 15th prior to the potential student-athlete's junior year in high school, a Division II coach can email, call or schedule an off-campus visit with the PSA and their parents.

Visits

- There is no limit on the amount of times and NCAA Division II program can host a player on an unofficial visit (unpaid). The only time a player can't visit a school is during a "Dead Period"
- NCAA Division II programs can begin hosting players on official (paid) visits starting 1st day of classes the PSA's senior year of high school.
- There is no limit on the total amount of official (paid) visits that can take place for either the program or the player.

Recruiting Calendar

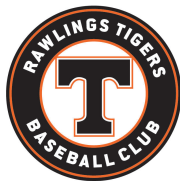
- NCAA Division II coaches can recruit at all times except during two 48 hour dead periods

Scholarships

- NCAA Division II schools have a maximum of 9 total full-scholarships that they will break down into multiple scholarship packages for multiple PSA's
- Most programs at the Division II level aren't fully funded even with 9 full scholarships

Academic Scholarships

- In order to receive academic aid from a NCAA Division II program you must meet 1 of the 3 following requirements
 - Upper 20% of high school class
 - 3.5 high school GPA or higher
 - 100 sum ACT score or SAT equivalent



NCAA DIVISION III

In comparison to Division I and Division II schools, Division III schools have the most relaxed NCAA baseball recruiting rules.

- Student-athletes can get recruiting materials at any time.
- College coaches are allowed to make unlimited calls to student-athletes.
- College coaches may start off-campus communications after an athlete's sophomore year.
- Unofficial visits are not limited. Athletes and their parents can make as many as they want.
- After Jan. 1 of junior year: Athletes can begin taking official visits.

NAIA

The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics basically has no rules. There's no limits or regulations on contact, communication, or campus visits. Players are actually allowed to tryout during a visit to a NAIA school. NCAA schools are prohibited from hosting tryouts.

JUNIOR COLLEGE

JUCO's have no baseball recruiting calendar and coaches are allowed to communicate with players at any time. The only restriction on communication is if a player has signed a junior college letter of intent.

- No institution shall permit an athlete to be solicited to attend by the promise of a gift or other inducement other than an athletic grant-in-aid.
- An institution may pay for one visit to its campus by direct route, for a stay not to exceed two days and two nights. The paid visit must be limited to the campus and local community where the college is located. A student-athlete must have completed their high school junior year to receive an official recruiting visit by a member college.
- A college representative may purchase meals for a potential athlete while recruiting on campus.



CAMPS / SHOWCASES / GAMES

Now that you have contacted your specific schools and coaches that you are interested in, it's time to find ways to show them what you got. The best ways to get in front of them are college camps, showcases, and games. Here's some benefits for each:

COLLEGE CAMPS

As you start contacting schools, colleges will be inviting you to attend their camps on campus. Coaches want recruits to come take a look at their place so they get a real good feel for their program and what it has to offer. Most of the time, the entire coaching staff will be there as you show off your skills. The coaches are able to coach and work with you like they do in one of their normal practices so it's really good for them to learn how you take instruction, how much you want to win, and how well you work with others. There's more but this is a great way to show off your intangibles that they may not get to see in a normal game.

SHOWCASES

These are normally run by independent companies such as Perfect Game, Prep Baseball Report, etc. and are mainly to show off your skills and to give you an evaluation. Also, most of these companies will create an online profiles with your numbers and video that the coaches can access. Getting some measurable numbers on things such as velocity, speed, hitting, fielding are good to pass along to college coaches. You don't need to attend a large number of these but a few are worth getting your measurable numbers on their sites.

GAMES

Coaches will formulate a solid evaluation of your skills in the camps and showcases but are going to want to see you in a regular game. They're going to want to see if your skills translate and how you respond to baseball pressure. Make it easy for them to find time to come watch you play by keeping the coaches updated with game times and locations. Nothing wrong with sending them updates every couple of weeks or weekly if you're pitching.



WHERE DO YOU FIT

- Start by looking into your dream schools/programs and work from there. Shoot for the stars and then let the process take over.

-One of the ways you will get a good feel for what level of college baseball best suits you is by the interest of the colleges contacting you. If your getting calls from one particular level, you're probably a good fit for those schools. Doesn't mean you won't fit at a higher or even a lower level, just means that those coaches like you and would be a good fit for them.

-Another good way is to simply ask the coaches at those schools if you would be a good fit. Be persistent and ask a number of schools what they think as this will help you with where you need to be looking. Most college coaches are going to be very honest and steer you in the right direction. At the end of the day, make sure the school fits your academic, social, as well as baseball needs. You want to be in a position knowing that you're going to enjoy your college experience.

-Every player takes a different route to finding a school and the timeline is different for every player. The way to go about it is similar but some take longer than others to reach their goal. Do not compare yourself to other players, "Why is he committed to school A and I'm not? I throw harder and have better stats, etc.", BIG MISTAKE! College coaches are also very different in how they view players so your opinion on whether or not you think your better than the player next to you doesn't matter. What matters is the opinion of the college coach and if he thinks you would be a fit for that program.