



A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO GETTING NOTICED BY COLLEGE COACHES

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Being scouted by college coaches is a dream of many athletes. Rightfully so, considering only 4% of senior high school athletes are fortunate enough to play at the collegiate level. So why is it that so many parents invest so much time and money into their child's athletic career, and are they doing so intelligently?

The benefits that children acquire from playing sports cannot be overlooked. Athletes learn good work ethic, time-management skills, improved hand-eye coordination, and they learn to work as part of a team. All of these attributes are great traits to have. In addition, there is always that possibility of obtaining a scholarship to help make the financial stresses of college more bearable.

I do understand why so much is invested in sports. However, I think it is important that athletes and parents understand that there is so much more than athletic ability when it comes to getting noticed. In addition, athletes need to be aware that where they choose to go to college will affect more than just their athletic career.

I've talked to several individuals who played a sport at the college level. Although most can say great things about it, myself included, I have also heard horror stories about how it turned the sport they use to love, into a job they now hate. So my question is; why are their differences of opinions when it comes to college sports experiences?

I believe the answer to that question stems from how athletes are going about getting noticed at the high school level. Not only are there athletes getting caught up in program prestige and scholarship money, but there are athletes that just don't understand the whole recruiting process and are going unnoticed because of it.

When it comes to getting college coaches to notice you, a lot of it is due to your athletic ability. However, after speaking with Steve Brdarski, Head Women's Soccer coach at St. Bonaventure, I really started to understand the importance of not only being proactive in the process, but also showcasing all of the other benefits that you can offer a program.



First off, I think it is crucial for all athletes to sit down and really think about what they want to get out of their college, instead of what their college can get out of them. Not only will this make being proactive easier because you will know exactly which colleges offer what you are looking for, but it will also decrease the chances of you picking a college that you end up regretting or wanting to transfer from down the line.

I know at the age of 18, not many kids know exactly what they want to do with their life. However, choosing a college based solely on its sports program isn't going to help them figure it out. High school students should be shadowing and researching different career choices so they can discover what drives them. When athletes and parents get too caught up choosing a program based on prestige and scholarship amount, they end up at a school that isn't always the right fit for them.

Once the athlete figures out what they are looking for, you can focus on optimizing your chances of getting noticed by a school that offers just that.

Below, I mention 4 key points that may seem like common sense, but will help bring you closer to your dream of getting noticed by a college coach. These tips will also help attract the type of coach that actually cares about you as an individual and not just your athletic ability. This will also set an athlete up for success that occurs after college and sports end.

1. WORK YOUR DAMN TAIL OFF

This should go without saying! However, if an athlete really wants to play in college, genetics and regular scheduled practices can only take you so far. It's important to put the time in outside of regular practices and games to improve the technical side of your game. In addition, getting stronger, faster, and more conditioned will be huge when it comes to being the last one standing during a brutal game. When I was in college, there was a player on the team that was able to read the field way better than I could, but every time she was on the field she got knocked off the ball. I can't speak for other sports, but in women's soccer, there are a lot of tough girls and if you can't hold your own, you are going to be riding the bench.

2. BE A GENUINELY GOOD PERSON

Again, this may sound cliché and you may wonder how this has anything to do with getting noticed, but you will be surprised by how much it does. Coach Brdarski made a point to mention that when coaches show up on the sideline of sporting events to check out athletes, they aren't just concerned about who scored and had the assists. They are watching the athletes they are interested in before, during, and after the game. They want to see how you prepare mentally before a game, your sportsmanship and interaction with opponents on the field, and how you react to a win or



a loss. All of these interactions can say a lot about your character and it also tells a coach if you are going to fit in with the culture of the team.

3. BUILD YOUR RESUME EARLY

A sports resume doesn't just showcase your award winning teams and individual stats. A resume also includes your GPA and other extracurriculars you're involved with. Not only can bad grades make you ineligible for games, but it can also turn a coach off if they are comparing you with someone with similar athletic ability with better grades. They are not going to choose the athlete that may struggle to keep their grades up and risk being ineligible for a game. Also on a resume, you discuss activities other than sports that you are involved with including community service and being a leader of a club. This shows that you are diverse and can handle other commitments which will show a coach that you will be able to handle the extra stresses of playing at the collegiate level.

4. PROMOTE YOURSELF

There are a ton of high school athletes that are working just as hard as you are in order to get noticed. When I was talking with my coach from Wright State, he stated the importance of the athlete letting a coach know that he/she is interested in the school. He stated that it is important that the athlete themselves email the coach, not the athletes mom or dad. It not only shows maturity, but it brings the athlete into the coach's field of vision, which in reality is sometimes all you need. It is very easy to get lost in the sea of talented athletes out there. One thing to understand is how NCAA rules work. You are able to contact a coach as early as freshmen year if you know it is a school you are interested in, however a coach cannot call or email you back until July 1st after your junior year of high school. So what does this mean? It means that you should introduce yourself, give information on an upcoming tournament you will be at, and follow up somewhat regularly.

So now that you have the basics behind what college coaches are looking for, you can get out there and start working on these things. This was a general outline that can be applied to any sport; however, males and females and different sports all do things slightly different so it is important to know what all is involved with your individual sport. If you have any questions about specific, feel free to ask.

