



MIDDLESEX GUIDE FOR THE COLLEGE-BOUND ATHLETE



A Publication from the MX College Counseling Office and the MX Athletic Office

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From the Dean of College Counseling and Student Enrichment

Since its founding, Middlesex School has valued athletics as a core element of our School's identity and educational mission, and our graduates have taken their athletic experiences on our campus and parlayed them into successful collegiate careers. We have recent graduates who are competing at the highest levels of Division I athletics, as well as performing beautifully as Academic All-Americans at the Division III level. We have approximately 15 to 20 students in each graduating class heading off to compete on the college level. The College Office has guided student-athletes through the recruiting process in all 27 of the sports offered at the School, along with fencing and equestrian sports. We are committed to assisting our students with crafting an individualized and sports-specific college process that will help them pursue their athletic goals. We know that the athletic recruiting process can be a complicated, intense, and potentially exhilarating experience, and it requires honest self-reflection, constant communication, thorough research, precise organization, and a willingness to be patient. *While there are no guarantees that any given student-athlete will be recruited, the process itself can help clarify goals, create unexpected opportunities, and prepare students for the next step, whether or not college athletics will play a deciding role in the process.*

We approach the athletic recruiting process as a team that includes the student, parents, college counselor, advisor, and Middlesex coach. Our three college counselors were collegiate athletes and varsity coaches, and we bring to our work over sixty years of experience in college admissions from both sides the desk. In addition, almost all of our coaches were college athletes and some were college coaches before their time at Middlesex.

Depending on the sport, the recruiting process can begin in freshman year or not start until the end of the fall season in senior year; however, the College Office is excited to engage and help our student-athletes where they are in the process. Please be in touch with the College Office as soon as any questions arise about the athletic recruiting process.



Matthew J. DeGreeff
Dean of College Counseling and Student Enrichment

When To Begin

The appropriate time to begin the recruiting process is completely dependent on you, your sport, and the level at which you hope to play. While the NCAA dictates the timing and the amount of college coach contact with student-athletes, coaches unofficially start watching players and nurturing relationships early in a students' athletic career.

Division I and Division II communication tends to begin earlier than Division III communication. While the specific timing depends largely on the specific sport and division, a good general guideline is for a top Division I prospect to meet with the College Office and their current coach during freshman or sophomore year, and for a Division III prospect to meet with the College Office and their current coach during sophomore or junior year.

More casually, families can begin researching colleges, filling out online recruiting forms, and visiting campuses at any point during high school. If you are on a family vacation near a school/program of interest, consider scheduling a visit to that campus if it works with your plans.

Level of Play, Level of Commitment (Division I, Division II, Division III)

The level of athleticism, skill, as well as mental and physical demands of a collegiate athlete at any college program almost always exceeds those required of a Middlesex varsity athlete. You need to ask yourself if you really want to play sports in college, and if you truly understand the level of commitment required. A collegiate athletic program, whether on the Division I or III level, will make tremendous demands on your time, energy, and academic commitments. You should consider questions such as, "Are you willing to spend 18 to 24 hours a week involved in one activity?" Conditioning, weight training, captains' workouts, and pre-season sessions are year round activities; coaches and teammates require you to make a total commitment to the program.

You need to ask yourself if you are merely using your athletic ability as a "lever" in the admissions process, because if you are unwilling to commit to the college team once you arrive on campus, your decision may have an impact on the future relationships between college coaches and Middlesex coaches and athletes. Likewise, it is also important to assess the personality, style and philosophy of the coaches who contact you. In reality, you will spend more time with your college coach than any other adult at the school, so carefully research not only the opportunities for yourself in the program, but the people who make up the organization.

While your life's dream may have always been to play Division I sports, the commitment that it requires might not align with your desired college experience. If you want a more balanced college experience that allows you to have an academic and social life separate from your athletic life, Division III athletics, while still a huge commitment, might be a better fit. Asking these questions early and often, and discussing the differences between Division I and Division III through the process with your parents, college counselor, and current coach is imperative to ultimately landing at a college and athletic program that fits you and aligns with your goals and happiness. Additionally, there are differences among leagues and teams within Division 1 and Division 3, and it is important to research schools and programs and identify the differences.

Assessing Your Ability

Take the time to be honest with yourself about your abilities and potential. Talk to people who know you as a player and whom you trust. Your Middlesex coaches, outside coaches, and college counselors can help you determine your “market value” as a potential collegiate athlete. Are you a varsity starter, All-ISL performer or All-American? Have you attended select summer camps, played on elite club teams, or competed in all-star tournaments? Have you reached your athletic potential? If you are a multi-sport athlete, in which sport will you be recruited? If you want to pursue two sports in college, at what level do you want to be recruited? For you, what is the difference between aspirations, perception, and reality? A frank and candid assessment of your abilities will offer you direction as you research appropriate athletic programs to pursue.

“College coaches don't recruit kids who can make their teams; they recruit kids who, in their opinion, can make them win.” Lew Stival, former director of college counseling at Blair Academy

Exposure

Our athletes are fortunate to play in the ISL, which has many recruited athletes across a number of sports. Your Middlesex coaches are good resources for you. Sit down with them, discuss your goals, and the ideas you both have with regard to the type of program you'd like to play for, and school you'd like to attend. They can help guide you and offer advice about showcases, camps, and clubs that provide good exposure.

In addition, depending on the sport, club teams, showcases, and college camps are all good possibilities to consider in helping you gain exposure. Making a highlight video from games and/or practices using online programs like HUDL can be a great introduction, and can help a college coach identify you as a possible recruit. You should reach out to coaches by email as well, and share with them your academic and athletic profile. For examples, please see the sample email and resume in the College Handbook (available in our office if you are not yet a junior).

Communication with College Coaches

You need to take the initiative to contact college coaches directly. Let them know of your interest in applying to their school and your intention to participate in their program. Since coaches at the Division III level do not have the recruiting budgets of their Division I counterparts, it is on your shoulders to cultivate a relationship with the coach. The following steps will help you get organized:

- Craft a list of schools with your college counselor and current coaches (Middlesex and club).
- Develop a boilerplate letter of introduction and an athletic resume.
- Create a spreadsheet of coach contact information, level of play (Div. I, II, or III), league, school size, location of school
- Return questionnaires from the coaches.
- Gather and edit a game tape (college coaches typically want a tape of a whole game, not a highlight film).
- Attend appropriate camps and tournaments.

- Send college coaches game and camp schedules.
- Email and call the coaches.
- Return emails, phone calls and letters to coaches and reach out to update them on your season and post-season accolades
- Visit campuses and meet with the coaches and players.
- Become your own best advocate by staying in touch.
- Review any of your social media profiles and posts to make sure anything that a coach sees online is appropriate and represents you well.
- Create an email address that you will use solely for the college process.

Coaches are not only measuring your athletic ability but your willingness to commit to their program. By showing your interest through regular and positive communication, a coach may be more willing to save a valuable spot on his list with the admissions office.

Indications that a college coach may be interested in recruiting you include that he/she:

- Responds immediately to your letter, resume, or questionnaire.
- Requests game tape, transcript, and testing information.
- Calls you on or soon after July 1st the summer before your senior year (the first time the coach can call you).
- Attends games, camps, and tournaments in which you are playing.
- Watches one of your practices.
- Communicates regularly with your Middlesex or club coach.
- Regularly calls you and/or emails you.
- Asks to do a home visit with your parents.
- Invites you to campus to watch practice or game (unofficial visit).
- Invites you to campus for an official recruiting visit.

Important note: Coaches may conduct many of the actions above for a large group of student-athletes, depending on the sport. It is important to understand that a coach has limited “spots” to support student-athletes, and despite their early attention, they may not continue recruiting an athlete as the admissions date gets closer.

The Importance of Academics

Your academic performance is equally if not more important than your athletic performance in your athletic recruiting process. Although athletics may serve as a tipping factor, academic performance is paramount to gaining admission at highly selective colleges and universities. Coaches can recruit and can offer athletic support, but ultimately, it is up to the admissions offices to decide whether or not a student-athlete will be admitted to a particular college. The stronger the student, community member, and citizen you are, the easier it is for a coach to recruit you. However hard you work on your particular sport, match that level of commitment and work ethic to the classroom. The three athletic conferences that Middlesex graduates most often compete in – the Ivy League, the Patriot League and NESCAC – rank student-athletes according to their academics. The Ivy Academic Index, the Patriot League Academic Index, and the NESCAC banding system (A, B, and C bands) ensure schools are adhering to high academic standards and their recruits can compete both athletically and academically. For a more detailed explanation of how the indexes and banding system works, please see your college counselor.

Colleges will ask for your transcript and school profile at various times during the recruiting process. Please contact your college counselor if a coach requests this and we will send you PDFs of both documents for you to send to coaches.

Standardized Testing

Another important element of a student-athlete's chances of being recruited is standardized testing. Strong standardized testing in conjunction with consistently strong academic performance can make a powerful difference in Ivy League, Patriot League, and NESCAC recruiting.

While there might be an urge to take an SAT or ACT early to attract a coach, it is wise to wait as long as possible to test to maximize your likelihood of testing well. Testing too early and too often can lead to testing fatigue, possibly impacting your ability to test well. The best advice is to use general Middlesex testing guidelines (a junior winter/spring testing plan) unless a Division I college coach explicitly asks you to test early. In most cases, coaches can wait until at least junior fall, particularly with Division III programs.

It can be helpful and even advisable for a junior student-athlete to take an SAT or ACT early in the fall or late in the summer (possibly an August SAT or a September ACT) but, as with many details, please consult your college counselor first to determine the best testing strategy.

Official and Unofficial Visits

Official college visits are paid for by the college and technically only occur in the recruiting of Division I and Division II student-athletes. By NCAA rule, official visits can only take place after school has begun for an athlete in his or her senior year of high school, with a maximum of five official visits to Division I schools. There is no limit for Division II official visits.

Unofficial college visits are those made by prospective student-athletes and their parents and are paid for by the family. These visits are unlimited and can occur at any time. Students are allowed to receive complimentary tickets to college athletic events, but may not receive any other financial compensation. While a student-athlete is on a college campus, there are no restrictions on coach contact.

Basic School Recruiting Visit Guidelines

	<u>Division I</u>	<u>Division III</u>
Visits per year	5 official	unlimited
Meet with coach?	yes	yes
Attend practices?	yes	yes
Attend classes?	yes	yes
Meet players?	yes	yes
Overnight stays?	Usually (48 hrs. max)	sometimes
Expenses paid by	college	student

When you are invited to campus by a coach, make sure you do the following

- Attend classes, particularly in a field you might want to study in college.

- Set up an interview with a member of the admissions office (the coach should make the arrangements for you).
- Eat at least one meal in the student dining hall.
- Visit the library and other areas where students study.
- Attend a practice or team workout.
- Spend the night in a regular student dorm, not a dorm only housing athletes.
- Hang out with the team to get a feel for their personalities and priorities.
- Ask the coach and players how many classes do they miss for away games, will I miss classes or labs for practice, how many student-athletes graduate on time, do members of the team regularly attend summer school?
- Ask the coach about the team dynamics, team culture, and his/her coaching philosophy
- Avoid parties and establishments where drinking is occurring.

The coach, the team, and the admissions office will be carefully assessing your strengths and weaknesses as a person during your visit. Your personal qualities are being scrutinized, and your actions, words, and behavior will be discussed. Make a positive, meaningful, and enthusiastic impression.

The Parent Role

It can be tempting as a parent to take over the process to help your child, particularly when it begins earlier in a child's high school career. Ultimately, this process is far more effective, both in terms of outcomes, and in terms of your child's sense of self and ownership, for them to lead this process. While your child will need your support and guidance, we encourage parents, both in the big picture conversations and in dealing with the multitude of details, to please let your child lead the process. Also, another important point is that college coaches expect the student-athletes they are recruiting to lead this process and to be the primary contacts with whom they are communicating.

So, what can you do as a parent?

- Understand that athletic recruiting can start the college process long before we feel some teenagers are equipped to manage it. This can initiate pressure that a high school student may not be ready to handle. We encourage you to be patient and measured with your conversations and requests of your child.
- Give your child support and guidance, but don't manage the process for them. Teach your child to self-advocate and guide him/her, as they initiate contact and follow through with each coach and school. Let them be the main communicator in the process during phone calls, email exchanges, and meetings.
- Work with your child's college counselor and current coaches to help develop a recruiting and college application plan. If possible and when applicable, connect your child's Middlesex coach with your child's club coach so they can work together to advocate for your child.
- Instill confidence, resilience, discipline, effort, and a strong work ethic in your child. College coaches are evaluating character as well as athletic talent and want to be sure that their athletes are coachable and team-oriented.
- Stress the value of academics and remind your child of the need to research the fit of a college beyond their athletic considerations.
- Have honest and meaningful conversations about what your family can spend on the recruiting process and your child's education.

The Commitment Process

Only after a tremendous amount of positive interaction with a college coach, a “green light” from a pre-read of your academic credentials from the college’s admissions office (typically on or around July 1st prior to your senior year), and a show of your own interest and potential commitment to that college, will you possibly receive an offer of support. If a verbal offer comes before any of these conditions have been met, you might consider the validity of the offer. Typically, a coach will ask that you verbally accept that offer within a given timeline. Some coaches will be more flexible, others will not.

Some Division I coaches will unofficially make offers of support to recruits as early as middle school or in the first few years of high school. College admission offices do not recognize these offers of support, and students and parents should be wary of early offers without a lot of communication with the College Office, your current coach, and the college coach.

As soon as a verbal offer is on the table from a college coach, communicate with your current coaches and your college counselor so that they can help you navigate your next steps. Unless you have already discussed your response to an offer, feel confident in not responding immediately. Let the coach know that you are excited, grateful, and that you need to take the time to thoughtfully consider the offer, and to talk with your parents and college counselor.

NCAA Eligibility

In order to practice, play, and receive an athletic scholarship at the Division I or Division II level, a student must have their academic and amateur status cleared, and they must be declared eligible by the NCAA Eligibility Center. Please note: this does not apply to Division III applicants.

- All Middlesex students with an interest in Division I and II, but especially those interested in making official visits (expenses paid by the colleges) in the fall of their senior year, should register with the NCAA Eligibility Center as early as possible. Visit www.eligibilitycenter.org and click on “New Account” in the upper-right corner of the page, and create an account.
- The fee to register with the NCAA is \$70, but if a student is eligible for a fee waiver for the SAT or ACT, he or she will also qualify to have the NCAA Eligibility Center registration fee waived.
- After the registration is complete, the student can visit the “My Planner” page to view and update account information, verify that test scores and transcripts have been received, check his or her status, and view any open tasks.
- SAT and ACT score should be sent directly from the testing agency. The code for the NCAA Eligibility Center is 9999.
- Middlesex will upload your transcript into the NCAA website at the end of your junior year, and we will upload your final transcript after you graduate.

The College Coach's "Funnel"

The college coach's approach to fielding a team looks very much like funnel as she narrows her recruiting list down to a group of candidates she can support and yield.

- 1,000** prospective student-athletes are competitive to play the sport collegiately
- 300** prospective student-athletes receive the questionnaire from the coach
- 100** seem academically qualified and return the questionnaire promptly
- 50** seem to be a good fit athletically and can compete at this level
- 25** decide to apply for admission to the college after visiting
- 18** are identified as best athletes/players for the team
- 12** make it onto the coach's list for admissions
- 9** student/athletes are accepted
- 6** deposit and enroll

The coach adds **6** new players to her team

Looking at the larger funnel of athletes to professional sports, there are a few million high school athletes, more than 500,000 NCAA student-athletes, and fewer than two percent of them will go pro in their sports. The probability of competing beyond high school is daunting. In the data below, the first number represents the number of high school athletes in three sports, followed by the percentage who play at the college level, then the percentage that are drafted to professional sports teams, and finally a summary of the percentage who move from high school to professional sports:

MEN'S FOOTBALL:

High School Student-Athletes: 1,006,013
NCAA Student Athletes: 73,712
NCAA Student Athletes Drafted: 254
Percent High School to NCAA: 7.3%
Percent NCAA to Professional: 1.6%

MEN'S BASKETBALL:

High School Student-Athletes: 540,769
NCAA Student Athletes: 18,816
NCAA Student Athletes Drafted: 52
Percent High School to NCAA: 3.5%
Percent NCAA to Professional: 1.2%

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL:

High School Student-Athletes: 399,067
NCAA Student Athletes: 16,509
NCAA Student Athletes Drafted: 36
Percent High School to NCAA: 4.1%
Percent NCAA to Professional: 0.8%

Athletic Recruiting Calendar

Freshman Year

- Focus on success in the classroom
- Explore ways to become engaged in the community
- Establish yourself as a school citizen and future leader
- Work with advisor to build organizational skills and master boarding school life
- Develop “Growth & Values-Based Goals” for athletics
- Work with advisor to select appropriate courses for sophomore year and plan potential courses for junior and senior years
- Fulfill your three-sport requirement
- Speak with MX coach about summer athletic opportunities.

Sophomore Year

- Work to the best of your ability in all of your classes
- Demonstrate commitment in extracurricular activities that you find fulfilling and enjoyable
- Meet with your advisor, college counselor, and MX coach to discuss course selection and how to begin the recruiting process
- Learn and understand the difference between NCAA Divisions I, II, and III
- Build a preliminary ‘long list’ of potential colleges to research, investigate, and visit
- Where appropriate, compile a highlight video to send to college coaches with the support of your MX coach
- Create a Google email account that will be used only for the athletic recruiting process and also gives you the ability to create shareable Google Docs and Sheets with your MX coach and your parents
- Develop an athletic resume with the guidance of your MX coach and college counselor
- Research and make travel plans for summer ID camps and tournament/travel teams
- Communicate with college coaches about your summer plans
- Build a summer training plan that advances you towards your growth-based goals, while prioritizing periods of rest and regeneration

Junior Year

- Work to the best of your ability in your classes
- Look to broaden your footprint in the school community; demonstrate sustained engagement in areas of interest and personal growth
- Complete your MX Leadership Survey in the spring and consider leadership opportunities that suit your personality and character traits
- Meet with your college counselor to build and define your college list, create your testing calendar, select recommendation writers, and begin your application and essays
- Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center if you intend to be a Division I or II athlete
- Meet regularly with your MX coach to review your progress toward growth and values-based goals – discuss colleges and programs of interest
- Engage the recruiting process independently – create and track points of contact with college coaches in your Google Sheet; write emails and letters of introduction; fill out and return college questionnaires; and follow up regularly with updates, schedules, and academic information
- Update your athletic resume and add to your video highlights as appropriate

- Obtain a PDF of your MX transcript from your college counselor for coaches.
- Send your SAT or ACT scores to the NCAA.
- Plan to visit as many college campuses as possible during breaks and summer

Senior Year

- Before you return to school in the fall, have a draft of your Common Application and essays done; maintain points of contact with your 'short list' of schools; plan opportunities for 'official' campus visits
- Decide where you will be applying early action or early decision by October 1st
- Work to the best of your ability in your classes because first quarter and first semester grades matter in the early application process
- Demonstrate leadership in all areas of your life at the School
- Continue to communicate regularly with your advisor, college counselor, and MX coach, as you stay in touch with the college coaches about their interest in you
- Meet the deadlines for the financial aid process, noting when the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the CSS Profile are due
- Send your testing from the ACT or SAT to the colleges well before the application deadline
- Submit your applications on time

Miscellany

Potential Pitfalls

Watch out for coaches' tactics. Remember that your interests and a coach's interests do not always overlap to your advantage. A coach's goal is to build the best team possible. Typically, a coach is allowed to present to the admissions committee a list of his or her desired candidates from among the applicant pool. There is no guarantee that an admissions committee will admit all candidates on a coach's list nor follow his order of preference; academic and personal factors have to be taken into consideration. For this reason, coaches often create their recruiting lists by striking a balance between an applicant's athletic ability and academic credentials, while factoring in a student's enthusiasm (or lack of interest) in attending that college.

College coaches' promises should almost always be taken with a heavy dose of skepticism. Coaches who guarantee you admission are probably overstepping their bounds. A coach's friendly and constant optimistic banter is what one admissions officer labeled "blowing sunshine." It is to a coach's benefit to keep the most athletes interested the longest. Always remember, *the admissions committee makes admissions decisions, not the coaches*. A coach may lead you to believe that you will make his or her list, but there are no guarantees. You could be bumped from a list at the last minute if the coach finds a better athlete or an equivalent or even a somewhat less talented athlete with stronger academic credentials who is more likely to make it through the admissions process. We have seen cases where a student is courted regularly, with weekly phone calls of good will, only to be bumped from the coach's list in the final hours of the admission process.

It is not unusual for a coach to ask you to state which college is your first choice. After all, in choosing which athletes to support in the admission process, a coach does not want to waste energy or a high position on his or her list on a candidate who is not likely to enroll. We do not want you to lie to coaches. Nor do we want your honesty to put you at a disadvantage in the admissions process. If coaches start asking you to commit, it is of critical importance that you discuss this with your college counselor and Middlesex coach before responding.

Indeed, it is important that you keep us posted throughout the process about all communications with college coaches. Our work as your advocate is strengthened if we know which college coaches seem most interested in you. If coaches make unfounded promises to you or ask you to commit when you are not ready to do so, we can often intervene to your advantage by contacting admissions officers. Also remember that your counselors have coached before, and/or worked with similar cases, and know how to discuss concerns with college coaches.

Examples of Questions for Student-Athletes to Ask College Coaches

Regarding the Sports Program

- How often do freshmen play?
- What role do you see me playing on this team?
- How strong of a player would I be on your team?
- What are skills I need to work on as an athlete?
- How long is the coach's contract at the school?
- Do you redshirt freshmen?
- Do you redshirt injured players?

- How many other recruits are on your list this year?
- How many other players do you have on the team at my position?
- Would you want me to play my position or would you have me switch my position?
- How many players are in your program?
- How many returning starters do you have?
- Could you describe the off-season training program and commitments?
- Do all of the members of the team travel to away games?
- How many students are on scholarship? How many students are not on scholarship?
- What is your in-season practice and conditioning schedule?
- How much support does this program receive from the college/university's athletic program?
- What is the time commitment for travel in-season?
- Can students "walk-on?"
- What kind of budgetary support does the program receive from the athletic department? How much would I be responsible for?
- What is a typical day for one of the players in-season and out-of-season?
- What are your goals for the program?
- What is your coaching philosophy?
- What is the team culture and how is team chemistry fostered?

Regarding Campus Life

- Do athletes have separate housing or specialized housing?
- If athletes come to campus early for pre-season training, where do they live?
- Do athletes have special dining hours? Are dining hours extended if athletes have late practices or games?
- Do athletes have to live on campus?
- Is it possible to study abroad as a student athlete? If so, when? For a semester? Over the summer? For a shorter period of time?
- How easily can I involve myself in other extracurricular activities?
- Can I play another sport?

Regarding Academics

- How do I pick my classes? Who helps me to pick classes?
- How often do students take summer classes to make up time from the academic year?
- Are there any majors that are easier or harder to choose as a student-athlete?
- Where do I go to get help if I have difficulty academically?
- Do professors understand if I have to miss class for a game or tournament?
- Does the coach keep tabs on the team members' academic performance?
- Does the team or the athletic department offering tutoring or study tables?
- Do players in my sports program tend to graduate in four years?
- How often will I miss class because of my sports commitment?
- What is the coach's perspective on academics?
- How successful are the other student-athletes in this program?

Regarding Financial Aid

- How many scholarships does your program offer?
- If I am offered a scholarship, will the scholarship amount stay constant and/or be renewed?

- What costs does a scholarship to your college cover?
- Can I work while on campus?
- If an athlete gets hurt, what happens to his scholarship money?
- Is there any financial assistance for summer school?
- If the college doesn't provide merit/athletic scholarships, how does the financial aid office award financial aid? Would my family qualify for aid?
- Can my family get an early read on our financial aid package?
- Are need-based financial aid packages renewed each year?

Regarding the Admissions Process

- Will the coach support me in the admissions process?
- Has the admissions office seen my application materials and given any sort of feedback?
- Are there things I can do to strengthen my application?
- How many other students is the coach supporting?
- Where do I fall on the coach's list?
- How often does the admissions office listen to the coach's suggestions?
- Will the coach support me in the admissions office if I have not made a firm commitment?

Recommended Outside Resources

BOOKS:

Positive Coaching In a Nutshell, by **Jim Thompson**
(published by the Positive Coaching Alliance)

Understanding Athletic Recruiting, by **Jeffrey Durso-Finley & Lewis Stival**
Available by request at jdfinley@lawrenceville.org

VIDEOS:

What A College Lacrosse Coach Looks For In Recruits: Athleticism
devzone.positivecoach.org/resource/video/what-college-lacrosse-coach-looks-recruits-athleticism

What A College Lacrosse Coach Looks For In Recruits
devzone.positivecoach.org/resource/video/what-college-coach-looks-recruits

Recruitment: What Athletes Should Look For In A College Sports Program
devzone.positivecoach.org/resource/video/recruitment-what-athletes-should-look-college-sports-program

ARTICLES:

Coaches Take Aim at Heartache and Hardship of Early Recruiting, *Mirin Fader, ESPN.com, May 2016*
espn.com/espnw/sports/article/15509558/the-impact-early-recruiting-players-coaches

A Call for Sanity in College Athletics Recruiting, *Bob Scalise, Harvard Athletic Director, October 2015*
gocrimson.com/General/Core_Values/20151007

Multi-sport Athletes are “Desirable” to College Coaches, *Brian Logue, US Lacrosse Magazine, September 2017*
<https://www.uslaxmagazine.com/high-school/girls/multi-sport-athletes-are-desirable-to-college-coaches>

Tips on How to Email a College Coach

One of the first points of contact with college coaches is typically an introductory email so you can communicate your interest in the program, set up opportunities for the college coach to evaluate you, and to share your academic and athletic information. It is important to realize that college coaches are getting hundreds, if not thousands, of emails from prospective student-athletes so you need to send clear, concise, and informative emails that catches the coaches' attention. Below are some helpful tips on how to create appropriate email communications, and we strongly recommend that you share drafts with your Middlesex coach and college counselor.

- Create an eye-catching **subject line** for the email which includes your graduation year, your position in the sport, and information that is specific about you. Consider what is important to the coach, keep the line short, and use relevant statistics.

Samples:

- 2021 Point Guard, 6'4" 200 LBS, 20 ppg
 - 2022 Long Stick Middie, All-ISL, 34 ACT
 - 2023 Goalie, MX Varsity and Mass Elite Black Team
-
- Present the important information for the coach in a concise way. Include the following:
 - General information with your name, graduation year, high school, and club name
 - Academic information such as GPA, test scores, and courses for the upcoming year.
 - Include relevant athletic statistics that are sports specific (your high school coach can help you identify what the coaches need to know).
 - Offer your contact information such as address, email, and cell phone.
 - If appropriate for your sport, include a highlight video clip or link to your game film, and we recommend you create this with your Middlesex coach.
 - Share information about your Middlesex schedule, and depending on your sport, include your club team schedule or what tournaments, showcases, or events you will be competing at outside of Middlesex.
 - Give the coaches your Middlesex jersey number and your club team jersey number.
 - Ask the coaches what camps, tournaments, and events they will be attending so you can figure out a way to compete in front of them.
 - Inquire about opportunities to come to campus to meet the coach, watch a practice or game (in season), and take a campus tour.

The most important thing about your first email to a college coach is that you have your Middlesex coach and college counselor review it, and that you edit it carefully before you send it.

Finally, we recommend that you create a Google spreadsheet with the names of the colleges, coaches, and contact information, and then create columns to keep track of your communications and contact points with the coaches. It can be a shareable document that you give your Middlesex coach and college counselor access to.

Tips on Calling College Coaches

Like anything in life, you want to have a plan when you call a college coach. It is essential to prepare, practice, research, and manage the experience as much as you can. The best way to control your nerves and sound confident on the phone is to follow these suggestions.

- **Practice** the phone call with a friend, coach, advisor, or college counselor. It is important to role play the conversation and rehearse your responses to important questions. Refer the questions on pages 13 through 15.
- **Research** the college, the athletic program, and the coach before you call. Have handy key facts and specific information so you can ask good questions and impress the coach with your knowledge. Have your laptop open with relevant tabs so you can pull the information from school's website on the college, the team, and the season. Coaches will appreciate your knowledge of the program and the college. You can also have your script in front of you so you can remember your questions and key talking points.
- **Find** a quiet place so you are not distracted and can have a serious conversation. It is best to be alone in a room without noise or prying ears so you can concentrate.
- **Call** the coaches when you will have the best chance of reaching them. During the summer or off season, you are most likely to catch them during office hours (9 am to 5 pm). During the season, the best time to call a coach is between 6 pm and 9 pm.
- **Develop** a general script for the conversation. Start with an introduction of the reason you are calling, explain why you are interested in the program, ask questions to learn more about the program, and then inquire with the coach about next steps. Also, make sure you thank the coach for his or her time and note how you will follow up.

Most importantly, college coaches want to speak to the recruits on the phone, *not their parents!*

Tips on Leaving a Voicemail for a College Coach

It is very common to find yourself leaving messages for college coaches on their voicemail. Before you call the coaches, write out exactly what you want to say if you do end up in their voicemail. A prepared and precise message is helpful to the coach, and it makes you sound more mature and focused as a potential recruit. Practice your script and make sure you feel confident leaving the message. Here is some key information to have in your voicemail.

- Your name
- Your high school and location
- Your position
- Your graduate year (for example, Class of 2021)
- The reason you are calling (for example, following up on an email, trying to schedule a visit, etc.)
- How you will be following up in terms of an email or phone call
- The best number to contact you at
- The best day and time to reach you
- Finish with a "thank you for your time"

Finally, make sure that you have activated the voicemail box on your cell phone and update your voicemail message, so it is current and appropriate.

Tips on how to use Twitter in the recruiting process:

Twitter has become a preferred platform for college coaches and recruited athletes to communicate, share important information, and stay current with each other. It is an effective tool for athletes to update college coaches on new content, tournament schedules, and accomplishments. Twitter is used in all sports, but it is most commonly used in football, baseball, and basketball.

Who can follow whom?

College coaches are permitted to follow recruits on Twitter, and student-athletes can follow college coaches. It is considered a point of contact by the NCAA which regulates Twitter usage. College coaches not only use Twitter to communicate with and gather information on recruits, but they are also evaluating the character, personalities, and social common sense of the recruits.

Does it mean something if a college coach follows you on Twitter?

If college coaches follow you on Twitter, it may signal that they are interested in you as a potential recruit and want to follow your progress. It can also mean they are trying to boost their following, promote their summer camps, or share their content.

What do you need to put into a Twitter profile to help your recruiting process?

- A photo of you in your Middlesex uniform and a clear shot of your face
- Use your real name and a Twitter handle that is easily searchable
- List your high school, class year, club team, and position(s)
- List your height and weight if it is relevant to your sport
- List stats important to your sport such as velocity, erg time, wingspan, 40-yard dash, and/or rankings
- List your home town and state
- Link to your recruiting profile page if you have one
- Pin a tweet to your profile that includes your stats and highlight video
- List academic information, but check with your Middlesex college counselor before you post it

**Please note that some of this information is personal information so you need to be careful what you put on any social media platform. It is important to speak with your parents, college counselor and coaches about what data you share on Twitter for your own safety.*

Things to be cautious about when using Twitter:

- College coaches are trying to get a better understanding of your personality and character so they will be viewing your content through this lens.
- They may check your friends' posts and profiles, so be careful about how you engage with friends and their social media behavior. You may want to use your Twitter account for the recruiting process only.
- Avoid inappropriate posts, captions, comments or likes.

What should I post on Twitter?

- Schedules for your school and club teams
- Links to recaps from your games, tourns, camps, showcases or combines
- Visits to college campuses (official or unofficial), and you should tag the coach, school and team to thank them for their time.
- Accomplishments or recognition for your play
- New highlight, skills, or game film
- Official commitments

How should I use the DM functionality in Twitter?

- College coaches will DM you once the contact period begins. Feel free to respond to them through Twitter.
- You can set your Twitter account to receive DMs from people you aren't following so college coaches can DM you.
- You can also send messages to coaches you want to connect with via DM, and you can tag a coach or hashtag the team to get their attention.

Besides following college coaches and their programs, it is also helpful to follow the Twitter accounts dedicated to your sport that offer advice and insights on the recruiting process.