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THE RECRUITING PROCESS & LONESTAR SC COLLEGE PLACEMENT PROGRAM

Lonestar SC has compiled this packet for you to help during this very important time of your soccer career. This can be a very exciting time in your life. It can also be very stressful at times, so we encourage you to be very organized and prepared in your thoughts and actions. Remember to be responsible and honest with all communication to college coaches. Also, feel free to contact us at anytime you have a question or concern.

It is very important to know that no one course on this path is correct for everyone. Each school and coach may handle the process differently for their prospective student-athletes. But there are many things you need to know about the process before you begin.

It is also our hope that you will check with the school and their umbrella organization to make sure of their policies, scholarship availability, rules and programs. There are differences between those umbrella organizations rules. For example, the NCAA Division I and II, NCAA Division III and NAIA have different rules for what coaches may do during the recruitment process. So do your homework and remember to ask questions.

Schools and coaches also look for good students. One of the most important things to remember is to work hard and keep your grades up. You should be a student first and an athlete second.

Our Lonestar SC staff has a vast network of college coach contacts and will help you select colleges that are a good fit for you on a soccer level. They will speak to college coaches on your behalf, though the direction and onus is on you to request this and make sure your Lonestar SC coach knows exactly where you are in the process. Lonestar coaches will be 100% honest with college coaches regarding your strengths, weaknesses and potential.

There are two key areas:

1. Choosing The Right School

- Academic Match
- Do I have a profile much like the general applicant pool? Is the school too challenging? Is it challenging enough?
- Academic programs offered
- Faculty:Student Ratio
- Academic support systems in place
- Who does the teaching? Professors, Graduate students, etc..
- Size, geographic location, religious affiliation, etc.
- Extracurricular opportunities - Social Organizations, Clubs, Student Government, Honor Council, Student Union activities, recreational activities
- Student satisfaction with the overall experience
- Cost /Financial Aid

2. Choosing the Right Soccer Program

- Have a realistic idea of your ability. Match your ability level to the appropriate college level.
- What type of players do they recruit? Club level, Regional team level, ECNL/USSFDA/PL Level, National team level, etc. How does your soccer profile compare to the current college roster?
- How many players are they looking to bring in for the recruiting class?
- What type of system do they run? Do they adapt the system to their players? Do they use the same system each year regardless of players? This may not play to your style and strengths.
- Ask about the coaches style, philosophy and plans for the future.
- Ask about time commitments during traditional and non-traditional season.
- Walk-on opportunities



RECRUITING AND SELLING YOURSELF

- A. Send an initial letter (email is generally the method used in 2011) during the summer of your junior year (boys) or summer of your sophomore year (girls). This can be done a little earlier if your team is in a special showcase or championship tournament. This is an introduction of yourself to the coach and should include:
- Resume with academic and athletic information
 - Other personal information (height, weight, date of birth, hobbies, and other personal interest)
 - References including complete names, addresses, work, home and mobile phone information
 - Include only recent school information 9 – 12 grades
 - Try to personalize letter in ways to make it stand out (within reason)
 - Make sure all information is correct, especially the school, coaches name, address etc... of the coach you are sending the information
 - Keep it to less than one page (the letter)
 - Do not mention scholarships at this time
- B. Continue to send updated information as the year and season progress.
- Send high school and club schedules
 - Send tournament schedules for high school, club and id2 or national team events
 - Always update college coach with any rewards received
- C. Do not send videos unless requested by college coach.
- D. Look to attend camps of any colleges you may apply, though balance the cost of these camps with the seriousness of your interest in the program.
- E. Try to visit campuses and arrange a meeting with staff. This should be done in the spring of your junior year (boys) or Spring of your Sophomore year/Fall of your Junior year (girls) and continue throughout your Junior and Senior years until you commit. Try to watch a soccer game or training.
- F. Begin to determine interest from schools. Depending on the talent of a player and level of a college program, this could happen from spring of the junior year thru the senior year (boys) or Spring of your Sophomore year thru the senior year (girls). This will help with the application process and ideas of scholarship levels. Always be honest with all college coaches about your interest in their program. If the interest is not there, then let the college know in a responsible way. They will respect your honesty. It is a business, they have their list and you have yours.



GENERAL RULES

- A. Understand that in some cases the assistant coach will do a lot of the initial recruiting. Do not be disappointed if he is the primary contact in regards to calls, emails, and meetings.
- B. Respond promptly to any correspondence or telephone calls.
- C. Be as complete and through as possible.
- D. Have a basic understanding of NCAA and/or NAIA rules which dictates what a college coach can and cannot do in this process
- E. Be aware of application deadlines, scholarship and award deadlines
- F. Review NCAA Clearinghouse eligibility requirements. The summer before your junior year & register with the NCAA Clearinghouse.
- G. Select junior year courses to fulfill these requirements.
- H. Play at the highest level possible. Keep a record of athletic achievements.
- I. As of September 1, of your Junior Year NCAA coaches can return correspondence and write letters, but cannot call until on or after July 1 before your senior year.
- J. Stay in touch with your high school counselor, they are a great resource
- K. Understand this process is complex, involves many entities and things change so monitor it closely
- L. Colleges – You need to pursue them, do not wait for them to pursue you.
- M. DO THE WORK YOURSELF. DO NOT RELY ON OTHERS!



FOUR YEAR CALENDAR & PREPARING FOR THE PROCESS – CHECK LIST ✓

Freshman Year

- _____ Attend High School orientation
- _____ Set four year Academic Plan with your high school counselor
- _____ Start a college folder to review with your Lonestar coach periodically
- _____ Start an academic goal list with your family
- _____ Set soccer achievements for yourself
- _____ Wish List of colleges you would attend
- _____ Be part of school activities (student government, clubs etc...)
- _____ Get experience as a Lonestar team attending Showcase events – 1 or 2

Sophomore Year

- _____ Set Academic Plan for school year with counselor (Review and Revise)
- _____ Review grades and goals with parents
- _____ Start listing 20+ schools you are interested in
- _____ Add to your Lonestar file a contact lists (Include school, coaches name, email, phone etc...)
- _____ Attend College Night High School functions & LSC College Night
- _____ Sign up for PSAT
- _____ Lonestar teams attending Showcase events – 2 or 3
- _____ Meet with Director of Coaching, your coach and parents – Review plan
- _____ Start gathering information to write your personal cover letter and resume
- _____ Your Lonestar folder should be filling up
- _____ Continue to visit college campuses
- _____ FOUCS ON GRADES

Junior Year

- _____ Academic Plan for school year with counselor (Review and Revise)
- _____ Have your Lonestar folder ready to use at all times
- _____ Visit college nights, college fairs & LSC College Night
- _____ Verify SAT registration deadlines. Take SAT and ACT www.collegeboard.com
- _____ Get letters of recommendation
- _____ Complete cover letter and resume with your Lonestar coach
- _____ Visit colleges to find climate and size you prefer
- _____ Attend financial Aid workshop/ Obtain financial form (FAFSA) www.fafsa.ed.gov
- _____ Start NCAA Clearinghouse application www.clearinghouse.net
- _____ Take AP classes or Honor classes if possible
- _____ Have your Top 10 preferred college list
- _____ Review college applications for admittance with your counselor
- _____ Lonestar teams attending Showcase events – 3 or 4
- _____ Really focus on grades – DEMAND EXCELLENCE
- _____ Beware of Scholarship Scams

Senior Year

- _____ Apply to the College/University (s) of Choice (September, October, November..)
- _____ Finalize application essay topics & recommendation letters
- _____ Lonestar teams attending Showcase events – 2 to 4
- _____ Review application essay with parents and teachers for proofing
- _____ Get Financial Aid forms (January 1)
- _____ Meet all application/scholarship/housing deadlines
- _____ Parents and student meet with school counselor to finalize transcripts
- _____ If necessary re-take SAT/ACT (Last date in December)
- _____ Send mid-year and final transcripts to clearing house
- _____ Meet with Lonestar staff for assistance as needed
- _____ Follow-up on all letters written o college coaches
- _____ Have a strong soccer season to wrap up recruitment and/or prepare for college



NCAA/NAIA/NJCAA/NCCAA – BASIC INFO

NCAA Guidelines

Students that plan to compete in athletics at the college level must meet certain eligibility requirements set forth by the NCAA. Students who have not met the NCAA eligibility requirements will not be allowed to participate in college athletics. We have including the following link to assist you in this process.

For information go to: <https://web1.ncaa.org/eligibilitycenter/common/>

NCAA Initial-eligibility Clearinghouse

Students who plan to compete in athletics at the **Division I** or **Division II** college level must complete the NCAA Clearinghouse form in order to be eligible. Division III does not use the eligibility Center. There is a \$30 registration fee. To pay online you will need to use a credit card. Do this at the beginning of your Junior Year.

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. For sports other than football and basketball, Division I schools must play 100 percent of the minimum number of contests against Division I opponents -- anything over the minimum number of games has to be 50 percent Division I. Division I schools must meet minimum financial aid awards for their athletics program, and there are maximum financial aid awards for each sport that a Division I school cannot exceed.

For a list of member schools/sports link: <http://web1.ncaa.org/memberLinks/links.jsp?div=1>

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 contest and participant minimums for each sport, as well as scheduling criteria. For sports other than football and basketball there are no scheduling requirements. There are not attendance requirements for football, or arena game requirements for basketball. 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 8 institution's budget like other academic departments on campus. Traditional rivalries with regional institutions dominate schedules of many Division II athletics programs. For a list of member schools/sports link:

<http://web1.ncaa.org/memberLinks/links.jsp?div=2>

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. There are minimum contest and participant minimums for each sport. 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.

For a list of member schools/sports link: <http://web1.ncaa.org/memberLinks/links.jsp?div=3>



NAIA

The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) has different eligibility requirements for student-athletes. To be eligible to participate in intercollegiate athletics as an incoming freshman, two of the following three requirements must be met:

1. Have a 2.0 (C) or higher cumulative final grade point average in high school.
2. Have a composite score of 18 or higher on the ACT Assessment or an 860 total score or higher on the SAT I on a single test administered on a national test date.
3. Have a top-half final class rank in his or her high school graduating class.

Student-athletes must also have on file at the college an official ACT Assessment or SAT I score report from the appropriate national testing center. Results reported on the student's high school transcript are not acceptable. Students must request that their test scores be forwarded to the college's admission office. If you have additional questions about NAIA eligibility, contact them at: NAIA, 23500 W. 105 Street, P.O. Box 1325, Olathe, Kansas 66051-1325 or by phone at 413-971-0044 or on-line at: <http://www.naia.org>.

For a list of member schools: <http://naia.cstv.com/member-services/about/members.htm>

NJCAA

The National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) is the governing body of intercollegiate athletics for two-year colleges. As such, its programs are designed to meet the unique needs of a diverse group of student-athletes who come from both traditional and non-traditional backgrounds and whose purpose in selecting a junior college may be as varied as their experiences before attending college. For information on schools and eligibility requirements go to: <http://www.njcaa.org/> For a list of member schools by gender and sport:

<http://www.njcaa.org/members-sport.cfm> 9

What is the NCCAA?

The National Christian College Athletic Association was incorporated to provide a Christian- based organization that functions uniquely as a national and international agency for the promotion of outreach and ministry, and for the maintenance, enhancement, and promotion of intercollegiate athletic competition with a Christian perspective. For information on schools and eligibility requirements go to: <http://www.thenccaa.org>. For a list of member schools by region: http://www.thenccaa.org/member_schools.html

WHY SHOULD I REPLY TO ALL COLLEGE COACH CONTACTS?

- The more coaches you communicate with, the more familiar you will become with the types of questions college coaches ask. This practice will prepare you for email exchanges and conversation with coaches at your favorite colleges/universities.
- By investigating many different types of colleges, you will have a better idea of your likes and dislikes in a college/university.
- College coaches change jobs! You might ignore a coach because you are not interested their program, only to have them get hired at one of your top choices.
- College coaches are friends with one another, and they do not appreciate it when a student-athlete ignores a contact. You never want to give anyone something bad to say about you!
- It is just common courtesy. If a coach takes the time to send you some information, you owe them a response.



SAMPLE LETTERS/EMAILS

Sample Letter/Email 1

Date
Coach's Name
University Name
Address
City, State, Zip
Dear Coach _____,

My name is Helen Smith and I am currently a senior at McNeil HS in Austin, Texas.

I play for the Lonestars 94G Red STH Premier League team. I have played at the premier level since U-14. My team has won the South Texas State Championship twice. In 2010, we advanced to the quarter finals at the Regional Tournament. I have cc'd my Lonestar SC Coach, xxxxxxxx, please feel free to reach out to them if you have any questions about me.

I am also the starting forward on my high school team and have led them in goals scored for the past three years. My team won the state championship in 2009 and was the runner-up in 2010. We are currently ranked third in the state. I was named honorable mention all-state in 2011, second team in 2009 and 2010.

I have spent time doing research on what colleges would be a good match for me academically and athletically. I am interested in majoring in psychology with a minor in English. I am very interested in your College and your program and would appreciate receiving information from you.

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Sincerely,
Helen Smith
(Include address and all contact info)



Sample Letter/Email 2

Date

Coach's Name

University Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear Coach _____,

May I take a moment of your time to introduce myself? My name is Helen Smith and I am currently a senior at Bowie HS in Austin, Texas. During the last few weeks, I have spent time with my counselor doing research on which colleges would be a good match for me both academically and athletically. I am very interested in your college and would appreciate receiving information about your school, and the soccer program.

I play for the Lonestars 94G Red STH Premier League team. I have played at the premier level since U-14. My team has won the South Texas State Championship twice. In 2010, we advanced to the quarter finals at the Regional Tournament. I have cc'd my Lonestar SC Coach, xxxxxxxx, please feel free to reach out to them if you have any questions about me.

I am also the starting forward on my high school team and have led them in goals scored for the past three years. My team won the state championship in 2009 and was the runner-up in 2010. We are currently ranked third in the state. I was named honorable mention all-state in 2011, second team in 2009 and 2010.

Academically, I am a strong student with an A average and have no trouble balancing school and athletics.

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to hearing back from you.

Sincerely,

Helen Smith

(Include address and all contact info)

