



Soccer Development Strategies

College Soccer Assessment – Planning Tool

2015

Step 1	Determining if College Soccer Is Right For You?
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Do you possess a sincere *desire* to play collegiate soccer?

- Are you ready and willing to sacrifice to make soccer your #1 extra-curricular activity during a 5 – 6 year period?
- Do you feel you *need* to play soccer?
- Will you *need* soccer to get into the college of your choice?

Soccer = Advantage

- Will you *need* soccer to help pay for your education?

Soccer = Scholarship

- Do you possess the ABILITY to play college soccer?
- How do your abilities compare with, teammates and opponents who also aspire to play college soccer or those you know who have already gone onto the college game?
- Other avenues to test and evaluate your capabilities
 - ODP
 - Watch college games
 - Student of the Game

Step 2	Resources
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- Cincinnati United Cup DOC
- NCAA Official College Guide (internet download)

www.thesportsource.com

- Internet Research

Step 3	Understand the Guidelines
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Who can recruit you?

- Recruiting can only be done by members of the institution's athletic / soccer staff
- You become a *prospective student – athlete as soon start classes in the 9th grade*
- College coaches may "officially" CONTACT YOU by phone or in person as of July 1st *after completion of your Junior year*
- Any face to face "meeting" between a college coach, you and your parents that goes beyond "hello" is considered an official contact
- As of July 1st after completion of your junior year a college coach MAY call YOU ONCE PER WEEK. You may contact a coach AS OFTEN AS YOU WISH

In order to be considered academically eligible for NCAA Division I you must first

- Graduate from high school
- Successfully complete core curriculum of at least 13 academic courses
- Score meets *MINIMUM* on SAT or ACT

Additionally, if you *intend* to participate in NCAA Division I or II athletics as a freshman you must be registered and certified by the NCAA Clearinghouse;

www.ncaaclearinghouse.com

Register with the clearinghouse online!

With early recruiting in the women's game clearinghouse registration needs to happen in junior year of high school.

Step 4	Develop a <i>Positive</i> Track Record as a Student
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Commitment to turn GOOD grades into GREAT grades

SAT Preparation Course

Remain active with enrichment programs; community service

Step 5	Develop / Maintain a <i>positive</i> reputation as a PLAYER
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State, Regional ODP

“Showcase” Tournaments

College soccer camps

Responsibility, Reliability and Commitment in addition to talent will define HOW coaches view you! Impress your club staff

Step 6	Determine What Colleges You Are Interested In
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This is a process; your list will change and evolve as you more clearly recognize what combination of academics and soccer will work for you.

- Academics FIRST; Field of Study, the right demand that will be what you want educationally
- Size of the College / University
- Geographical Location; close to home, climate / weather, rural / city
- Public, private
- Soccer Program; style of play, program history, coaching, players currently in the program, direction of the program
- Ultimately what schools are interested in YOU?

Step 7	Introduce Yourself to Coaches From Colleges of Your Choice
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Introductory Letter or Email

- You have about 45 seconds of a coach’s undivided attention. The information that you are trying to communicate needs to jump off the page!
- Good contact information; address, phone numbers and email.
- Personalize the greeting and the entire communiqué
- Explain your interest in the school and the soccer program. Why are you interested in attending school and playing for the program
- Communication FOLLOW UP
- Additional ways college coaches get to know you;
 - Attend college summer camps
 - Club, ODP coaches speaking with them on your behalf
 - Unofficial campus visits

Step 8	Correspondence
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- Consistent and Regular; Update information about the following:
 - How you are doing
 - How the team is doing
 - Tournaments you will be playing in
 - Post tournament follow up; how the team did, how you played
 - ODP selection; state, regional events
 - Youth National Team selection
 - Newspaper clippings, internet links to stories

Step 9	Conduct Campus Visits
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- Appearance and Interaction With Coach
- Honesty in Dialogue
- You May Find the Need to Visit a Particular Campus Twice

Visit #1 should occur during end of sophomore, beginning of Junior year. This might be your "unofficial" visit:

- Campus tour, admissions review, meeting with coach

Visit #2 should occur in senior year and would be the "official" visit.

Unofficial Visit – Cost assumed by prospective student – athlete

Official Visit – Travel expenses, lodging, food assumed by institution

To qualify for an official visit the student – athlete must:

- *Have PSAT, SAT, ACT scores*
- *Academic transcript*
- *NCAA Clearinghouse form*

Each student – athlete is allowed ONE official visit per school and a TOTAL of FIVE OFFICIAL VISITS

You should be PREPARED to ask relevant questions;

- Understand the status of returning players
- Understand what other players may be coming in with your class; positions
- How does the coach see you "fitting in"; playing time, position?
- How much time does soccer require?

- What preparation is required for pre – season; what does pre – season involve
- What is the academic support like; counselors, required study halls?
- What are the program's goals over the next four years?
- What scholarship monies are available; athletic, academic?

Be prepared to talk openly about:

- What YOUR strengths and weaknesses are
- What other schools are on your list; where you are in the process of making a decision
- Where does this school rank on your list; why?
- Be prepared to have an open and honest conversation!

Other areas of importance;

- Learn as much as you can regarding the teams style of play; how do YOUR strengths / weaknesses contribute to how they play?
- Learn about the coach's behavior and management style during games: are they excitable, screaming. How do they behave under stress?
- Have you seen the team play: can you talk about your impression of the team during your visit?
- Do you believe that you can play with the players currently in the team?

Take advantage of your second visit (official). You will probably be staying with team members. Attend classes with someone; spend a typical day on campus to get a feel for the campus, the routine.

Step 10	Assess Options: Making a Decision
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Category	Good	Average	Below Average
School			
Admission, GPA Standard			
Admission ACT/SAT Standard			
Rank in Major			
Academic Support			
Soccer			
Competitiveness of Returning Team			
Coaching Staff			
Difficulty of Schedule			
Travel			
Playing Time			
Facilities			
Other			
Coach's Interest Level in Recruiting Me			
School Size			
Geographical Location			
Campus Atmosphere			
Climate			
Urban, Suburban			

Remember, 95% of the work that's required in the recruiting process is done by the prospective student – athlete. Starting the process early and being persistent is important.

In beginning the process you start from where you are right now!



"Talent alone cannot make you a success. Neither will being in the right place at the right time unless you are ready. The most important question is: Are You Ready?"