

Understanding the New NCAA Recruiting Rules, And How to Have Success with The Process

By Chris Rotelli

The recruiting process can be confusing and difficult for players and parents to navigate, especially for players living in the West. Below is information which I hope will help you understand the recruiting process, and help you have success with it.

It's been about 8 months since the NCAA Men's and Women college coaches passed legislation to eliminate early recruiting, and I wanted to take a moment to update you on the effects that it has had, and also share some tips for how to best approach it.

First, here are the new rules.

- NCAA D1 coaches cannot have contact with players regarding recruiting until Sept. 1st of their junior year.
- This essentially eliminates early commitments until Sept 1 of your Junior year.
- NCAA D1 coaches may have personal contact with players at educational events and camp settings.
- NCAA D1 coaches may send questionnaires to players to fill out, and players can send highlights and updates to college coaches.
- Unofficial visits are not allowed for players until Sept. 1st of their junior year.

So what does all this mean? Here is the general recruiting timeline for D1, D3, and MCLA.

NCAA Division 1:

- **Freshman Year and Summer-** Top D1 schools will watch players, and begin top prospect lists.
- **Sophomore Fall/Winter-** All D1 schools will watch players and make lists of their top prospect lists.
- **Sophomore Summer-** All D1 Schools will evaluate prospects on their watch lists, and make final decisions on who they would like to call 9/1. They will communicate a lot with HS and club coaches prior to 9/1.
- **Junior Fall/Winter-** Players will receive calls from coaches, and invitations to visit schools and prospect camps. The earliest commitments will happen in the Fall, and the bulk of commitments will happen throughout Junior Year.
- **Junior Spring/ Summer-** Coaches will continue to recruit players and fill their classes, watching closely to see how they develop during the Spring Season and how they look the Summer after Junior year. Some coaches will also recruit players who have committed elsewhere.
- **Senior Fall/Winter -** The last commitments will happen for D1.

NCAA Division 3:

- **Sophomore Summer**- Some D3 schools will evaluate, and send invitations to Prospect camps. For the most part, the evaluations start for D3 Junior Year.
- **Junior Fall/Winter**- Players evaluated at tournaments and camps, and coaches make their lists of top prospects; speaking to club and HS coaches, as well as directly to players.
- **Junior Spring**- Coaches are asking for grades and test scores to determine if a player will be recruit able to their school. For D3, grades are just as important as playing ability, so even though recruiting won't start until Junior year, your grades Freshman and Sophomore year matter just as much.
- **Junior Summer**- Junior Summer is where the bulk of the recruiting happens in D3. Players will begin to receive offers.
- **Senior Fall/Winter** - Players will be recruited and commit throughout their Senior Fall/Winter.

MCLA:

- **Junior Summer**- Coaches evaluate players and begin to recruit.
- **Senior Fall/Winter**- MCLA coaches communicate with recruits and make their final list, and send a list of players to admissions. Some schools have more pull than others in admissions, but for the most part, players in MCLA will need to get into schools on their own.

A lot of parents ask me why they should travel to attend a prospect camp or play in a tournament if they are outside of the recruiting window. I asked Utah Head Coach Brian Holman that same question, and his answer is listed below.

"It's all about competing. We look for competitive desire and fire. You can compete out West, but let's be honest, the best teams are back East, and playing them will make you better. The strive should be about "how do you get better", not "how do you get recruited". Playing East will make you better, but the desire to go back East should be to get better, not to get recruited. I think that is a fundamental problem with a lot of young players right now. They are too focused on doing something to get recruited, and not focused enough on developing and getting better. If you travel to play the best with the intent of getting better, then you will find that you get recruited if you are good enough. The players we are looking for want to play the best, and for players in the West, that will require some travel."

I think Coach Holman hits the nail on the head with his assessment.

In order to help players navigate this process, I put together 6 Tips for how to have success with the recruiting process which are listed below. I hope they help guide you in the right direction.

1- Focus on What You Can Control...Continue to Improve

There are only a few things that you can control in the recruiting process. These include your own skill level, fitness, and preparation. Focus on getting better everyday and you will give yourself the best opportunity to be recruited.

2- Your Grades Matter

The college programs who are good at lacrosse are also some of the highest achieving academic institutions in the country! In order to be recruit able you have to be a great student as well as a great lacrosse player. Nothing will move you up, down or OFF a recruiting board faster than your grades.

3- Go Where the Coaches are

If you want to be recruited you need to be seen by the coaches of the school you want to attend. Make sure you are attending showcases and prospect days that make sense for your target schools.

4- Play Other Sports

College coaches want players who play more than one sport in high school. Playing another sport will make you a better athlete and a better teammate! It also demonstrates to college coaches that you have more room for development in college.

5- Play the Best Competition

Players need to be playing as much as they can against the best players from their area and around the country. Players who seek out the best competition will be the ones who find the most success.

6- Play Because You Love it

Lacrosse is the most fun game in the world. Players who can maintain a love for the game will not only be more successful but will find more enjoyment in the process.

At the end of the day, the players who work the hardest and want it the most, are the ones who play college lacrosse. If you want to play lacrosse in college you can do it. There are lots of different levels to play at, and I believe everyone who wants to, can play lacrosse in college. Keep enjoying the game, and the hard work you put into it. If you play for the love of the game you will find success wherever you end up.

About The Author:

Chris Rotelli is the Founder of ADVNC Lacrosse, and one of the most accomplished lacrosse players of all time. He was a 3X NCAA All American, 2X First Team All American, USILA Midfielder of the Year, 4X MLL All Star, 3X All ACC, ACC Player of the Year, and a 3X High School All American.

In 2003 he lead University of Virginia to an NCAA Championship, and was honored as the ACC Male Athlete of the Year, and with the Tewaaron Award, given to the nation's most outstanding lacrosse player.

Chris is the former Captain of the San Francisco Dragons, and has lived in Northern California since 2006. He is currently the Head Coach at Sacred Heart Prep in Atherton, CA, and lives in Woodside with his wife Lucy and their son Will.