GOLF RECRUITING 101

The 10 Steps of the College Recruiting Process

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**Introduction**

As you look towards starting the college recruiting process there are several steps that I feel are very important for you to follow. This process can be confusing and stressful at times, so these 10 steps will help ensure you more efficiently and effectively navigate this process.

1. Know the NCAA Rules
2. Set Goals
3. Practice with a Purpose
4. Get an Evaluation
5. Build Your Resume
6. Create a Recruiting Video
7. Contact 75+ Schools
8. Take Visits
9. Ask the Right Questions
10. Find the Right Fit
1. Know the NCAA Rules

- Knowing the NCAA rules and regulations will not only help you navigate the process better but it will also show a coach that you are serious and prepared.
- Keep in mind, a student athlete can always make phone calls and send emails to coaches.
- A student-athlete can tour the campus at any point but aren’t allowed to meet with coaches or athletic staff until the designated time.
- Coaches can make verbal offers at any point but NLI’s are not signed until designated periods of a recruit’s senior year.
- Click here to go to the NCAA Eligibility Center and register by junior year.

Two Important Dates to Know:

September 1st of Junior Year:

DI coaches may send recruiting emails, make phone calls, send texts and use any other electronic communication to contact a prospective student athlete (June 15th after sophomore year for DII coaches).

Also (new policy put into effect April 2018) recruits may begin to take official visits on Sept 1 of junior year (max of 5 official visits allowed). However, prior to Sept 1 of junior year, recruits are not allowed to meet with coaches or athletic staff when on campus.

July 1 after Junior Year:

Coaches may make off campus contact with recruits and their parents but they are limited to 3 total contacts during senior year. (June 15th after sophomore year for DII coaches)
2. Set Goals

Goal setting is an important part of the college recruiting process both for your game as well as the recruiting process. The most important thing to remember is that a goal is useless unless you set a specific plan of action to achieve it. Goals will help you better manage your time and stay on track.

Set Realistic and Specific Goals:

There is nothing wrong with having big dreams, but you need to give yourself smaller goals that are realistic, obtainable and measurable. State exactly what you want to accomplish, don’t just generalize.

Set Process Goals:

Set goals that you can accomplish in the present. When you put so much emphasis on results, you forget to focus on what it takes to get there. Set your goals based on what you need to be doing NOW. The outcome will take care of itself if you commit to fully working towards it each day.

Set Goals for all Areas:

Don’t just set goals for your golf game, set goals for personal life, academics, college recruiting, fitness and nutrition. Set goals that help push you out of your comfort zone.

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3. Practice with a Purpose

Learning to practice with a purpose is a skill most junior golfers don’t learn until they reach college. It is difficult to have the accountability, structure and motivation to truly practice with a purpose as a young golfer.

For those players who can learn to achieve this at an earlier age, they will quickly see improvements in their game and be more prepared for college golf.

“Always have quality practices. Don’t just beat balls. Staying on the range all day does you no good if nothing is accomplished.”
– Division 2 Coach

• Have a plan of action every day you go to the golf course
• Perform goal oriented drills and track your progress
• Always leave with a sense of accomplishment
• Reflect on tournament rounds and practice your weaker areas
• Make practice tough!
• Always have a purpose when you head to course
4. Get an Evaluation

Getting a qualified, unbiased 3rd party evaluation will help you develop a better game plan so that you can achieve your goal of playing college golf.

Many families do not understand the realities of what it takes to play at the college level so they have no direction when they begin the process. They may end up wasting a lot of time, money and resources focused on the wrong schools, camps, tournaments and travel.

It’s ok to dream big, but when it comes to the recruiting process and what it takes to play at the college level many times a family doesn’t understand the timelines, demands and commitment that comes with it all.

An evaluation will give a family a realistic assessment of the player’s overall game, resume, academics, goals and expectations in regards to the college recruiting process and the timelines associated with each division level.

The recruiting process can be a stressful, time consuming process so make sure you get started off on the right foot with an unbiased, 3rd party evaluation.

What can parents do to help their junior golfer better prepare for college golf?

Talk honestly with their kids. Help them be realistic. Get help from others that have been through the process.

- DI Golf Coach

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5. Build a Resume

Building a quality resume is one of the most important steps in the college recruiting process. While your game will speak for itself out on the course, your resume will be the first insight a coach has into you as an all-around person.

Having an online or document/pdf version that contains all of the necessary information is extremely important to starting this process off on the right foot. The information must be accessible and easy to navigate. You don’t want a coach to have to go out of their way to find the information they need to know about you. Their time is very limited and valuable.

"The resume needs to be nice and neat. I want to see ALL the scores on the resume and not just the good ones. I would also like to see yardages played." – DI Coach

What to Include:

Grad year  Swing video
Picture  Awards
Tournament results  Contact Info
Academics  References
Stats  Extracurricular Activities
6. Recruiting Video

Many times a coach may not be able to get out and watch you play before he or she can decide if you are a potential recruit for their program. Sending a recruiting video along with your resume will provide them with an idea of your game to hopefully entice them to come out and watch you play.

When filming a recruiting video, make sure you take the shots from directly in front of the player and directly down the line. Do your best to hold the camera as still as possible. New features on some devices allow you to do swings in slow motion so including those would be a great addition.

Try to minimize any unnecessary time and keep the video under 3-4 minutes so that a coach will watch the whole video. You can do a short introduction at the beginning to say your name, graduation year and city/state.

You may turn some coaches off with music, graphics or excess “amusement”, so to be safe keep the video simple and clean. Have the video available online at YouTube or another source.

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7. Contact 75+ Schools

The better ranked players can be more selective in the schools they contact, but the majority of players need to contact as many coaches as possible. Many of the schools that a recruit contacts aren’t within their athletic and academic range so many coaches won’t even reply or won’t consider them to be a prospective recruit.

Having several coaches interested in you is a confidence booster to know that you are wanted and being recruited. You never know what is going to happen with your game, your goals and your future plans so if you only contact schools that are at your level and above, you will miss out on opportunities that may be the best fit.

You can always narrow down your list once you know that you have several coaches who are interested in you.

“Almost 75% of emails I receive are from recruits who I can’t even recruit”.
- Division 1 Coach

“Kids don’t do enough research on more than one or 2 schools and then they end up unhappy”
- Division 1 Coach
8. Take Visits

All steps of the recruiting process are necessary in order to successfully find the right college fit, however taking college visits is when the process really begins to take shape. Due to an updated NCAA policy that went into effect in April 2018, college coaches and athletic staff are no longer allowed to meet with prospective student-athletes when they are on campus until Sept 1 of their junior year. At that point, however, official visits are now allowed to take place.

While the days of freshmen and sophomores taking unofficial visits to meet with college coaches are over, the importance is now placed on communication prior to that time and the impression a recruit makes on those official visits during junior year.

Tips for Meeting the Coach:

- Leave your cell phone in the car.
- Look the coach in the eye and shake their hand.
- Sit up straight in the chair. Don’t slouch and slump.
- Be enthusiastic.
- Ask questions!!
- Speak for yourself, don’t look at your parents for answers.
- Be gracious. Coaches are very busy so thank them for taking time out of their schedule to meet with you.
- Send a handwritten thank you note following the visit.
9. Ask the Right Questions

In order to begin to determine if a golf program and university is the right fit you must ask the right questions. You need to find out as much information about the coach’s philosophy, how the program is run, what the university offers and if you are compatible with all of these.

Make sure you keep track of the answers and compare what you feel is important from each school. You are interviewing the coach, just as they are interviewing you.

Examples:

- What is a typical week of practice and workouts?
- What are the admissions requirements?
- Where do I fit on your recruiting list?
- What are common majors for golfers?
- How do you handle qualifying for tournaments?
10. Find the Right Fit

The ultimate goal through the college recruiting process is to find the right fit with both the school and the golf program. Even if you take lots of visits, do the research and ask all the right questions, it can still be a tough decision.

Sometimes you may end up having to go off that gut feeling that you get about a particular school, other times it may be an obvious right fit and for some they may not feel they have found the right fit but are determined to make it the best 4 years of their life.

But no matter what, you must do as much homework as possible so that you can make the best decision based on the options that are available. The decision you make will be a life-changing decision so don’t take it lightly.

Am I compatible with the coach and team?

Does the coach's expectations match my goals?

Will I get playing time?
Are you ready to get started???

The college recruiting process can be a stressful and time consuming experience for many families. But if you follow the right steps and take the initiative to be proactive it can be much easier to tackle.

Use the process as a learning tool to develop better communication skills. Don't be afraid to pick up the phone and call coaches.

Stay organized and don't procrastinate. The process can pass you by if you fall behind.

Keep a positive attitude but also stay realistic.

Stay humble and grateful for the opportunity to play college golf.

Look for more information in your inbox about the recruiting process and the programs we offer to assist you throughout your journey.

Brandi Jackson