



Weston FC College Track Program

Welcome to the Weston F C College Track Program. This information packet is designed to assist you in the college recruiting process. Included is a step- by- step guide to contacting schools, sample letters to college coaches, a sample player profile, and facts regarding soccer scholarships and recruiting. Coach Judah Cook s the College Track Coordinator will be available to meet with you individually to provide assistance and feedback .

Name: _____

Team: _____

Graduation Year: _____

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The college recruiting process can be a very exciting but stressful time for you and your daughter. Many players and parents feel pressure to get seen and make decisions as early as possible. You may hear stories of players signing with a certain school as sophomores. This is one of many myths surrounding college soccer recruiting.

Players make verbal commitments during their junior and senior years and cannot sign with a school until February of their senior year. Below are some other facts to consider:

1. Less than 3% of youth soccer players receive a college soccer scholarship, and most only get a partial amount.
2. 82% of all collegiate programs are outside of NC AA Division I (DII, DIII, NAIA, NJCAA).
3. College coaches are not interested in your team's record, goals, points, or history. They only want to know if you can play for them, are a good student, and will enrich the college environment.
4. College coaches do not normally attend high school games. They focus on showcase tournaments designed to showcase large numbers of players separated by age and talent level.
5. 98% of all contact between coach and player is initiated by the player. Unless your daughter is in the US National Team Pool, she will need to contact the schools she is interested in.
6. There are several ways for your daughter to be seen by a specific coach:
 - a. College showcase tournaments
 - b. College ID camps, summer camps
 - c. League games
 - d. ODP/ID2/US National Training Centers
7. Good grades and test scores are far more important. There is much more academic and need-based scholarship money than athletic money.
8. NC AA Division I programs are not all the same. There are many DII, DIII, and NAIA programs that are better funded, have better teams, and provide a better experience for student-athletes.

This step-by-step process will show you how to search, choose, and contact schools of your choice. The majority of contact between college coaches and players is initiated by the student-athlete.

1. College Search - There are over 1400 schools that offer varsity women's soccer. They range from big Division I schools such as the University of Florida to smaller schools such as St. Thomas University in Miami Gardens, and everything in between. While it can seem overwhelming at first, here are a few tips to help you get started.
 - a. Academics: Are you Ivy League material? Do you have the grades/test scores for a top-notch school?
 - b. Geography: Do you want to go to school in Florida? Out West? Up North?
 - c. School Size: Do you prefer a large school with 30,000+ students or one with 3,000?
 - d. Areas of Study: What subject(s) are you interested in studying?
2. Where to Look: While there are services that charge you a fee to assist in your college search, everything you need is online. Below are some websites that can help you search for the right school and program.
 - a. [www.ncsasports.org/athletic-scholarships/women's soccer](http://www.ncsasports.org/athletic-scholarships/women's%20soccer). This site breaks down soccer programs by state and division. While it's part of a recruiting service, it's a great tool to use to begin your search and find out more about each school.
 - b. www.ncaa.org. Valuable information defining the differences between Divisions I, II, and III.
 - c. www.naia.org. A separate athletic organization with over 200 women's soccer programs.
3. Register: Before you can make an official visit to a DI, DII or NAIA school, you must register with the eligibility center of each organization. Most players make their official visit during their junior or senior years. You can always visit the campus unofficially and try to catch the coach in his/her office.
 - a. www.eligibilitycenter.org. NC AA clearing house for DI and DII.
 - b. www.playnaia.org. NAIA eligibility center.
4. Important Things to Remember: Nearly all contact is initiated by the player. Unless you are a national caliber player, you will not have coaches knocking down your door. College coaches will make a point to see you play,



but only if you let him/her know when and where you will be. Nearly all programs have a recruit questionnaire online; fill them out. Schools also host ID camps, attend them whenever you can and find out what other camps the coach will be at. The more contact you have with the coach, the better your chances are of being seen.

Develop a Soccer Resume

A soccer resume is a quick-reference guide for the college coaches. It includes your contact info, club coaches contact info, high school, GPA, and any awards/honors you have achieved in sports and academics. Always include this when first contacting schools. (See attached).

Contacting Coaches

90% of college recruiting occurs during college showcase tournaments. Beginning at U15, your team may enter into a few showcases. It is important to take an active role in the college recruiting process. The first step in doing that is to identify the colleges and universities that would make a good fit for you. Start with a list of 10 to 20 schools that make sense from an academic, financial and, of course, soccer perspective. Once you have done some research, preferably with the help of family members and your club/high school coaches, and have a good idea of the type of college that would be the right fit, it is time to contact a member of the coaching staff of those soccer programs.

When constructing a letter to a college coach, keep these five tips in mind:



1. Most every coach now relies on e-mail to both contact and receive contact from potential recruits. That is the preferred method of communication. To find out the e-mail addresses for the coaches you are looking to contact, simply go to the college's athletic website and look for a staff directory of names and e-mails. Include assistant coaches in the email, as they will most likely be the first ones to watch you play.

2. Be brief. Coaches at all levels receive dozens and dozens of e-mails/letters from high school-aged players. All you are trying to do is show you have interest, pass along all of your contact information, your soccer resume, and provide each coach with an upcoming schedule of your games so he/she can see you play.

3. NEVER have one of your parents write to a coach. You are the one the coach might be recruiting, so he/she wants to hear from you directly. (If the relationship develops and it appears that you might be attending that college, they'll be plenty of time for your parents to have contact with the coaching staff.)

4. Provide contact information for your club coach (es). Nothing is worse for a college coach than to have to track down your coach's e-mail or phone number. By having both an e-mail address and a phone number listed after his/her name, it allows for the college coach to quickly e-mail or call your coach to follow up. Copy your club coach in all of your emails. This will enable the college coach to provide feedback without violating recruiting rules.

5. Do not send a form letter that starts out with "Dear Coach" and does not mention anything specific about his/her program and school. The bulk of your e-mail will be kept the same for correspondence you send out to various coaching staffs; however a portion of it should be personalized.

Here is a sample e-mail to a college coach, using fictitious names and information.

Coach John Davidson,

My name is Eric Martin and I 'm a junior at West Valley High School in Lagrange, Indiana. I am interested in attending Southern University because of your fine business management program as well as your soccer program. My sister, Janice Martin, is currently a junior there, so I have visited the school several times and have been able to see your team play three different times.

Currently, I play for FC United Under- 16 team out of Macon, Illinois. My club coach's name is Jason Leonard. His e-mail is: jleonard@aol.com and he can be reached at: 555- 555- 5555. Our team will be playing in the Disney Showcase from December 27- 30 in Orlando, Florida, and will also be in Indiana on February 21- 22 for the Winter Invitational. I can provide you with our game schedule when that information comes available.

I have attached my soccer resume listing my GPA (3.2) and my other academic and athletic accomplishments. My home phone number is: 555- 777- 5555 and my cell number is: 777- 555- 5555. My email is: emartin@aol.com

Best of luck in your current season. Sincerely,

Eric Martin

Note: A follow up email is always important, especially after a tournament/game that the coach attended.



College Soccer Quick Facts

Recruiting Rules:

While college coaches must follow strict rules regarding contacting student-athletes, you can always contact the coach.

1. High School freshman and sophomores: Coaches can send you athletic or sports camp brochures, NCAA education information, and questionnaires.
2. After September 1 of your Junior Year: Coaches can send you information about their soccer program, answer your emails directly, and send emails to you about the program.
3. After July 1 after your Junior Year: Coaches can call you on the phone.
4. After your first day of class as a Senior: You can make up to 5 official visits to schools. You must first register with the NC AA and/or NAIA eligibility center. Coaches are allowed 3 off-campus visits/meetings with you.

Maximum Athletic Scholarships Available:

NCAADI	14
NCAADII	9.9
NCAADIII	0
NAIA	12
NJCAA (Junior Colleges)	18

This is for a fully - funded program; many schools have less, and it is for the entire team. Only about 25% is available each year. For example, Florida State University has 22 players on its roster and 14 scholarships. Therefore, many players receive partial or no athletic money. There may be only 2-4 scholarships to split between 6-8 incoming freshmen.

In 2012 there were:

371,393 female high school soccer players

35,400 female college soccer players

11,030 scholarships awarded

Only 9.6% of high school soccer players get to play at the collegiate level

Only 2.9% of high school soccer players receive an athletic scholarship

On average, there is scholarship money to cover only 31% of college soccer players. Very few players receive a full athletic scholarship, especially freshmen. Most are awarded a partial scholarship or nothing at all but have the opportunity to be awarded more over the next three years.

College coaches do not typically attend high school games.

Due to the limited recruiting budgets of most college sports programs, college soccer coaches have to maximize their opportunities to see potential players. These opportunities are:

1. College Showcase Tournaments (WAGS, CASL, Disney, Jefferson Cup, PDA Invitational, etc.) Coaches attend these tournaments with a list of players they want to see; that's why it is important that you initiate contact.
2. College ID camps: many schools now host ID camps and invite players or open them up to any interested player. This is a great way for the coach and student-athlete to get to know each other both on and off the field.
3. ODP. Players that make their state ODP team will be exposed to college coaches at region camp.
4. Local club games. College coaches are always looking for that gem that no one else knows about.

Whether your team is playing at home or near a school of your choice, it never hurts to let the coach know. If they have time, they will come see you play.



Speaking With College Coaches

Every conversation with a college coach will be unique. Since the recruiting process moves at different speeds for prospects and coaches, the current relationship should dictate the type of questions that are appropriate.

However, regardless of where you are at in the process, below is some advice that every recruit can take advantage of. Before we go into specific questions that potential recruits should ask college coaches, let's go over a few basics to keep in mind while preparing for the conversations.

- First and foremost, PREPARE! You should write down a list of 15 questions that you can ask a coach and keep it handy! While the conversation should flow naturally, it will only help a potentially nervous student-athlete to have a set of questions prepared ahead of time that they can always ask a coach.
- Never ask if you will receive a scholarship during an initial conversation unless a coach brings up the topic.
- Maximize the conversation by only asking questions that you can find answers to by talking to the coach directly. Do not waste this valuable opportunity by asking questions that can be answered through a brief visit to the college's website. Each conversation serves as a limited chance to develop a real relationship.
- Do not be afraid to ask coaches about themselves. Often times, recruits only ask questions that pertain to their life and neglect to find out anything personal about the coach. It's important for a recruit to get to know a coach (their interests, their family, etc.)

Academics

Simply put, academics are the most important part of the process. If the college coach does not share your academic goals then it might be time to look at other options. Here are some academic questions every recruit might want to ask:

- What are the admission requirements for an athlete?
- Will my specific major interfere with the athletic schedule?
- What are some of the most popular majors for athletes on your team?
- Does your team have a full-time academic advisor?
- Do your players graduate in four years?
- Can the application fee be waived for athletes?

Athletics / Recruiting

These two topics overlap in many cases, as an athletic evaluation will determine how heavily the coaching staff will be recruiting a prospect. Here are some must ask questions for recruits at any point in the process:

- Has your coaching staff evaluated me?
- Where do I fit on your recruiting board?
- Have you offered scholarships to others in my class? At my position?
- Have any other athletes in my class accepted the offers?
- How many players will you be recruiting at my position?
- Where will you be recruiting this season / spring / summer?
- What types of off-season activities are expected?
- What does the training program consist of at your school?
- What is your recruiting timeline?
- Is there a good time to come visit your school?



Scholarship

As we noted, it is rarely appropriate for a recruit to ask if they will receive a scholarship in an initial phone conversation, however there are a few questions that will help you gauge your scholarship possibilities at that school.

- How many scholarships do you have available for my class?
- Am I under consideration for a scholarship?
- What types of academic scholarships are available? What about other sorts of grants and aid?
- Do I have to apply before a scholarship is offered?
- What happens if I get injured?

College Life Questions

Even though athletics will obviously play a major role in the life of a collegiate student- athlete, every recruit should make sure they are going to be happy on campus even when they are not with the team. Make sure to ask about some of the following:

- Are the players on y our team close with each other?
- What is the housing situation like? Do teammates typically live together?
- Do student-athletes stay on campus during the summer?
- Is it possible to work part- time in addition to playing a sport and studying?
- What is a typical day in the life like for a member of your team during the season? What about during the off-season?

Important Final Questions

While there are many directions that a conversation might take with a college coach, one key goal should be to find out what comes next:

- What are the next steps in this process?
- When is the next time we can speak / meet?
- Is there anything I can provide you with that will help you further evaluate me?



Check List

1. School List (10 to 20)

SCHOOL NAME	COMMENTS

- 2. Soccer Resume
- 3. Copy of Email to Coaches
- 4. List of ID Camps You Are Attending
- 5. Copies of Correspondence from Coaches