



Preparing for a Potential College Student-Athlete Career

Last Revised on February 20, 2011 at 7:03pm

OVERVIEW

The purpose of this checklist is to guide you thru the college soccer recruitment process. This process can be overwhelming. The FSCI Phoenix Recruitment Coordinator can assist you in this process.

We strongly urge each player to take at least a 1 month break during the winter and summer offseason. It will make a big difference in your performance and motivation level going into your next travel soccer season. The worst thing that you can do as a player is play soccer year round without a break. It's the quickest way to burnout physically and mentally and lose the motivation to continue playing.

SOPHOMORE YEAR

It has been our experience that this is the year that schools start to pay attention to players.

___ Focus on your grades. If you do not keep up with your grades now, you will dig yourself in a hole and it may be difficult to get out.

___ Set specific goals. Focus on developing your skills. What are you doing "extra" that will set you apart from anyone else in terms of your training?

SUMMER BETWEEN SOPHOMORE AND JUNIOR YEAR:

___ Attend at least 1 college camp over the summer. Write to the coach expressing your interest in possibly playing at that school. It's the best thing you can do for yourself because the coaching staff of the school is a captive audience.

___ Make it a point to completely get away from soccer for at least 1 month in the summer. Playing soccer year round without a decent break is the quickest way to burnout physically and mentally. If you take the break, you will start your fall travel season more energized.

JUNIOR YEAR

NCAA schools can start approaching players on September 1 of their junior year. Players that perform well may start to receive mailings, emails, or phone calls from schools. Some of these contacts are “feelers”. Others are genuine interest. In any event, make sure to follow up with any school that contacts you and maintain an active dialog with the school.

___ Compile a list of school and community service activities. Colleges look for the “well-rounded” student in addition to grades and SATs. If you are lacking in these activities, find a way to increase your involvement in school and community service activities.

___ Create a specific list of soccer goals you want to accomplish between now and graduation. Ask for a player evaluation from a FSCI Phoenix coach. Discuss this player evaluation against your soccer goals.

___ Focus on your grades and improve your GPA. If it comes down to you and the next player, the college coach will select the player with the better grades.

___ Visit your school’s guidance department throughout the school year in order to gather information on potential schools, potential majors, and potential non-athletic scholarships. Most scholarship money is non-athletic money.

___ Take some time to think about what might interest you in college. What areas of study interest you? Do you like math, science, engineering, or computers? Take at least 1 SAT during your second semester.

___ Make individual training your first priority. Challenge yourself to meet the goals you set for yourself. Scouts do not recruit players that might “develop.” You have to show up with the skills. Are you fundamentals decent? See an FSCI Phoenix coach about scheduling individual training opportunities.

___ Purchase the book entitled “The Sport Source: College Soccer Guide”. This book contains information on every college soccer program in the country. Specifically, it contains detailed academic requirements, scholarship information, what positions the coach is looking for, school history, coach’s credentials, etc.

___ Develop a list of ten schools that meet your academic and soccer requirements towards the end of your junior year.

___ Plan a campus visit at one of the schools on your list

___ Get the most updated copy of your transcript. Visit your school’s guidance department to receive your transcript.

___ Create a “package” to send college coaches. The “package” consists of a letter expressing your interest and your transcript. Send this letter via snail mail or email. We can provide you with a letter template. We encourage you to show the letter to the FSCI Phoenix Recruitment Coordinator before sending them off to a coach. First impressions are important.

___ Work with the FSCI Phoenix Recruitment Coordinator to keep your player profile current and accurate. Please update your coach and the FSCI Phoenix Recruitment Coordinator with any new SAT scores, revised GPAs, National Honor Society, etc,

___ Register with the NCAA Clearinghouse. Google search the word “ncaa clearinghouse” or visit www.NCAA.org

___ If any schools have contact you expressing interest, fill out any forms they provide and return promptly. Maintain a dialog with prospective schools by periodically informing them of your tournament schedule. Most of the time, schools will not respond to your emails or phone calls. This can be frustrating but they are listening. Be persistent. Remember, part of recruitment is selling yourself and persistence is the key.

SUMMER BETWEEN JUNIOR AND SENIOR YEAR:

___ If you are interested in a specific school, attend that school’s camp especially if they have shown interest in you. This is one of the best things that you can do for yourself. We recommend attending at least 1 or 2 college camps over the summer. This allows you to:

- Get a week of solid training under the coaching staff of that school. This gives you an opportunity to sell yourself to that coach
- Get a feel for the coaches, the campus, the program, and the school.

___ If your SAT score needs improvement, take an SAT prep course and schedule another SAT early in your senior year.

___ Start narrowing down the list of potential schools. Maintain an open line of communications with prospective schools. Again, they may not respond immediately but they are reading what you write them.

___ Make individual training your first priority. See an FSCI Phoenix coach about scheduling individual training opportunities over the summer.

___ Make it a point to completely get away from soccer for at least 1 month in the summer. Again, playing soccer year round without a decent break is the quickest way to burnout physically and mentally. If you take the break, you will start your fall travel season more energized.

SENIOR YEAR:

The fall travel soccer season is really your last opportunity to be recruited.

___ Do not develop a case of “senioritis”. Maintaining your grades is extremely important. Opportunities can disappear if you choose to stop focusing on your grades.

___ Do not take it personally if the school you want to attend shows no interest in you. Some schools may not have a need for a specific position such as a goalkeeper. This is why it’s important to keep an open mind and a list of multiple schools.

___ Visit the schools you are interested in playing. Make an “official” or “unofficial” visit. This is important. You may end up liking the school when you see it in person rather than in a brochure or website.

___ Talk to the coaching staff and players. Attend a training session to get a feel for the coach and watch the school play. It is important to find out more about the coach. Is the coach perceived as fair, knowledgeable, caring, and passionate? How does he treat his players? The coach will make or break the experience. Prospective college student-athletes should try to get honest answers on how the players feel about the coach and look for red flags.

___ If there are any schools that express interest in you, stay in touch with them. If any school develops a late sudden interest in you, then consider this possibility carefully. Believe it or not, this does happen.

___ Start sending out applications to schools.

___ Fill out the FAFSA no later than January of your senior year

___ Research and apply to any academic scholarships that may exist. Again, most scholarship money is in the form of academic money instead of athletic money.

___ Address any items on this checklist that were not addressed during your junior year.

___ Do not be afraid to ask for advice. Talk to your family. Talk to the FSCI Phoenix coaches. Arm yourself with information so that you can make a very well informed decision.