

# Play sports in college

Interested in playing sports in college, but not sure where to start? We've got you covered.

## Get started early

▶ Start the process your freshman year of high school and schedule a meeting with your school counselor and discuss the proper sequence of classes you will need to participate in NCAA Division I or Division II athletics.

▶ Review the NCAA Eligibility Center information with your counselor and become familiar with its standards. Student-athletes interested in either of these two divisions will need to register with the NCAA Eligibility Center during your junior year of high school.

▶ Meet with your counselor about your current college resume to determine any potential weaknesses. Admissions departments are looking for rigor in your course work and well-rounded individuals! If you go about the process the right way, you significantly improve your chances of getting admitted to your number one choice.

▶ Be sure to visit several campuses. Before you visit, do some research online. Look at the athletic department variables such



as the coach, the program and current team members.

▶ Review program history and assess the retention rates of freshman athletes through their senior year.

▶ Check the number of athletes participating in each competition and how the program fared with their win/loss record. Checking the hometowns and high schools of the current roster will give you an idea of recruiting trends.

## When you're on campus ask these questions:

- Ask to see where the team practices, locker rooms, weight room, training room and where competitions take place.
- Figure out the academic success of the athletes involved in the program? The team GPA is usually a good indicator.

• How much traveling does the

team do and how flexible are the professors with getting work in advance or make up work/tests?

## Find the right college

If you are truly looking to find the right college fit, academics are the first priority. Never choose a school only based on a coach or playing a sport. The best litmus test would include your desire to still attend that college if the coach left or if you were injured and not able to participate in your respective sport again. The ultimate goal is to get your degree. Playing a college sport is a wonderful bonus but shouldn't be the main reason you selected that institution.

*Excerpted from "Recruit Doctor" by Chris Bianchi, president of Red Penguin Athletics.*