

The Parent's Guide to Athletic Scholarships



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(If you find this e-book helpful, feel free to pass it along to other parents who would benefit).



Hi, I'm Jon Fugler. My wife, Noonie, and I live in Colorado. However, I grew up playing sports in Upstate New York. Baseball, football, basketball, soccer and even a little hockey on our back yard makeshift ice rink.

I was a left-handed pitcher and threw as hard as Sandy Koufax. So I thought.

Back in those days, college recruiting was a whole lot different than it is today. It wasn't as structured and there weren't so many recruiting rules. I just ended up sending my newspaper articles to a coach and latched on to that program. I enjoyed my college baseball experience—loved it—but really mishandled my recruiting effort.

Now jump ahead a few decades with me to the days when my sons were the age I was when I was trying to land a scholarship. Which I didn't, by the way, but competed all four years at the D-1 level.

I remember sitting in the bleachers one night with about 200 other parents and high school students in the late 1990s. We were all there to hear a man speak about the world of athletic scholarships. My twin boys were high school juniors at the time, and excelling in baseball. I knew very little about baseball scholarships, except what I read in the paper from time to time. What I did know was that we couldn't afford college for both boys at once. We needed help.

This speaker was good. Very good. By the time he was done, I was one of the first in line to buy his book.

That was the start of my education in the athletic scholarship and recruiting world. As it turned out, we ended up signing on with a service and a consultant, **and** paid them a lot of money (we got a “twin discount”).

I felt it was a good and necessary investment then, and even to this day I still believe it was. But I would have decided differently if I’d had more choices. It was a lot to spend, and we really couldn’t afford it. But I was unsure of myself, and I knew I couldn’t afford not to get athletic scholarships.



Our twin sons today.

As it turned out, both boys did end up getting fully paid educations. I now know **we could have done it far less** expensively (what an understatement!) if I’d known then what I know now.

Although we had a good consultant, a service, and help from a college coach, **we did most of the work ourselves**. And that’s where the greatest learning came in. You know how it is: you learn more when you do something than when you just read about it. And we did plenty (times two!).

Shortly after this was over and the boys were on their way, I had **other parents and friends asking me for help** with their kids or their friends’ kids. **I simply told them what we had done and sent them samples** of everything I had used in the recruiting process.

By 2002, I had branched out with a friend of mine to formally start Recruit-Me. Since then, we’ve been able to help thousands of student-athletes in their quest for an athletic scholarship.

So, I know what you’re going through. I’ve been there. I know what you’re thinking, feeling, fearing, and asking. The process I went through with my sons is something I’ll never forget.

What I’ll address in this e-book is how you, as a parent, can drive the recruiting and scholarship process, how you can work in tandem with your son or daughter and what steps you can take right away to get this ball moving down the field.

What's Really True about Recruiting?

I want to start with the mindset of recruiting. Right thinking leads to right action, so we have to start here. I am so thankful that someone laid this out for me that night in the bleachers. The truths I want to share with you hold true today.

To do that, I want to lay out some of the myths of recruiting. I want to name them and knock them down. They're stumbling blocks for kids and parents. We need to start with the truth, so let's dig in.



Myth #1: If my child is good enough, the college coaches will find him or her.

Truth: A very small percentage of high school student-athletes receive scholarships because the coach “happened to find him or her.” Only the top-line elite athletes—the top 100 or so nationally—receive enough national media recognition that they are automatically recruited without having to make an effort.

The other 99%+ have to make themselves known by the programs where they have an interest. It is an accepted practice.



Myth #2: If my son or daughter is talented, the college coaches can get them into the school despite poor grades.

Truth: Poor grades shut off a coach's interest more quickly than anything else. Schools have minimum academic requirements and coaches usually can't get around those minimums. It's true that they can submit a list of prospective students who are "borderline" to the Admissions office, but you need to be

very close to qualifying. All things being equal, a coach would rather pursue the student-athlete with comparable abilities but with higher grades and SAT's. It's a better investment of their time.

Myth #3: I can wait until my son or daughter's senior year to look for athletic scholarships.

Truth: The school selection process can take a year or more, so it would be ideal (but not often realistic) to start in the freshman or sophomore year. Start gathering information about schools and programs. Make initial contact, and begin sending stats after competing at the Varsity or club level. You should definitely start the process no later than the junior year. Now, if your son or daughter is in their senior year, there's still time.

I'm remembering Chris. He and his family began following my process in the summer before his senior year. Now, that seems kind of late but his mom emailed us with this report: "I couldn't be more pleased with the whole process. One of Chris' offers is for \$72k guaranteed over four years; that's \$18k a year." We don't recommend starting late, but we've walked some kids through the process in their senior year. Whatever year your student-athlete is in, the process I teach still applies.

Myth #4: My kid's high school coach - or guidance counselor - will get us a scholarship.

Truth: Few high school coaches or counselors have either the time or the knowledge to take charge of your family's recruiting. They might have a few contacts at colleges where they can promote their exceptional athletes, but you'll need more than just a few colleges looking at you if you want your son or daughter to have the best chance of receiving a scholarship. You need to be talking to several dozen coaches.



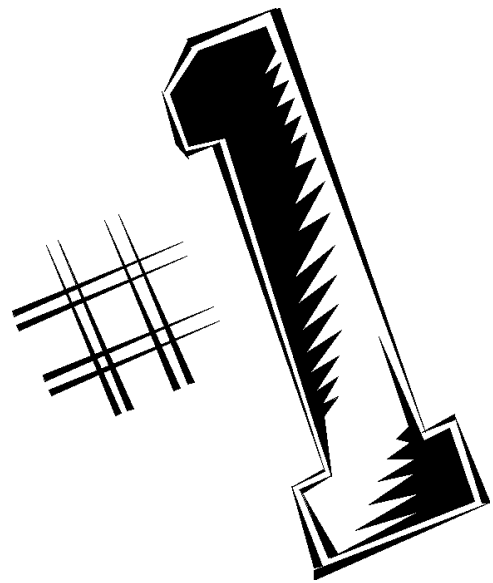
Myth #5: My son or daughter has to be the best player on their team to get any athletic financial aid.

Truth: I have good news for you. I know from experience this is not true. And I have seen it over and over again with other athletes. Even if they're not a superstar already being recruited, an accomplished, talented athlete has a great chance of being recruited. We lived in a small town a long way from the closest major city—a three-hour drive. Our kids were not the best on their team and they weren't just going to be "found." We had to be very active in getting the attention of college coaches. And it worked. But it took a lot of effort.

Here's the biggest lesson I learned in my sons' recruiting process, and it's a lesson I pass on to parents and athletes: This is not a sprint. It's a marathon. It's important to have that perspective, so you don't lose hope and you pace yourself. Don't get consumed by this. The student-athlete should enjoy playing their sport. Getting consumed by the recruiting process can rob that joy and it can also cause some frustration in your relationship.

The #1 Secret

I want to put you at ease and help relieve you of the fear, confusion and out of control feeling you may have about recruiting. You're no different than other parents who are going through the recruiting process. To get started, we're going to look at the one most important *action* and *#1 secret* of recruiting.



TAKE THE INITIATIVE.

Let me illustrate with this story.

There's a family from Fort Lauderdale that I'd been in contact with and they wrote to me. They thanked me for what they called "some of the best information we ever found on how to get your son or daughter a sports scholarship".

Here's the kicker. They went on to say that **it's definitely essential for players and parents to realize that colleges don't know that most qualified players even exist.** This family told me that nothing was happening on their son's recruiting front and they were intimidated on how to start the process. The fear of the unknown can really hold people back.

But when I worked with them on a step-by-step plan it gave them great results. Once they took the first steps, they said the wheels started turning, they said the effort paid off and their son got a scholarship at his first choice school in Florida. That's a powerful story and **it makes it clear that the athlete and the parent have to take action.** So what's the number one secret to getting recruited?

Here's why this is the #1 secret—

- Athletes think they're just going to be found. They wait and nothing happens. Just like the family from Florida found out.
- Most scholarships are awarded to athletes that make the first contact
- It is common practice these days for athletes to market themselves.
- Coaches don't have the time or budget to see as many athletes as they'd like.
- If you're not marketing your son or daughter, they'll never be discovered, because other athletes are marketing themselves.

Taking the initiative is a nice thought, but **what does that really mean?**

Let's explore to steps...

#1: RESEARCH SCHOOLS

You need to have a target. Which schools are you interested in for your son or daughter? Which ones are they interested in? Begin making a list. Spend time online together and do a thorough study of possible schools. Look at the athletic program, academics, college life, location, etc.

#2: WRITE AN INTRODUCTORY LETTER OR EMAIL

Personal touch is important. Yes, as a parent, you're directing the show, but your son or daughter's involvement is critical. All communication needs to come from them. You need to stay in the background in the whole process. With our boys, I helped them craft letters, but the words were theirs.

Of course, back then everything was done by snail mail. These days, email is the way to go (although I still recommend mailing letters, too).



See the sample introductory letter at the end of this document.

#3: SEND THE INTRO PACKET

Once you have the introductory letter or email crafted, send them out to your list. You'll do this along with a one-page profile that gives coaches the vital information and top-line statistics.

In essence, you want to present your son or daughter in the best light and communicate the most important personal and athletic information you want the coach to know. It's an interest-getting packet and starts the relationship. If the coach feels that your son or daughter is a prospect, he or she will write back and begin the conversation.

These three steps will get results for you. I know it's not rocket science, but parents often ask me, *"Where do we start?"* Well, this is where you start.

Let me illustrate the power of a good introductory packet.

There's a student-athlete from New York that I helped with his introductory package. As a result, his dad was just so excited about the results that he emailed me within a week. He said within five days, two coaches from Division 1 schools had already contacted his son's high school coach to check up on him. **This family did a good introductory packet.** It was powerful.

Another parent said: "We received numerous responses from our introductory packet campaign, which led to questionnaires and invitations to various camps. By sifting through the information, we selected camps most beneficial to our college expectations from an academic and sports perspective. **My son, a baseball player, ended up signing at the school with the coach he was most comfortable fit his style of play.**"

So What's Next?

Once the intro packets are sent, give it about two or three weeks and you'll start hearing back from college coaches.

When the coaches respond, the conversation begins. The recruiting relationship is underway. This is an exciting time. Your son or daughter is being recruited! The work you've done to prepare is paying off. Yes, it's just the beginning, but you've got momentum.

I remember when my sons started receiving letters and phone calls. It was really motivating, for us as parents and for them as athletes. We had a lot of conversations going with coaches, and it opened up a new world for our boys. And it resulted in fully-paid educations at the school of their choice.

Hard work? Yes. But it paid off.

And it has paid off for so many families I've worked with.

For example, "I just wanted to give you an update on our progress. I sent out letters and player profiles to 28 schools two weeks ago. We have since received questionnaires from 5 schools, had film requested from 3 of the schools and have had email contact with the coach of one of the schools. Four of the questionnaires came from schools from the top 10 on my son's

list. The two film requests came from the #1 and #3 on the list and the email came from #3 on the list. I would say, so far so good.”

As a parent, you are the leader in this process. That’s why I want to encourage you with these stories, so you will keep at it, even at times when your son or daughter loses interest. Your enthusiasm and encouragement is contagious.

Parent-athlete teamwork is critical for success. I want to send you now to the Recruit-Me website where I have a [dedicated page](#) spelling out how this teamwork comes together.

Click below to dig in:

<http://www.recruit-me.com/parentsguide>

SAMPLE COVER LETTER/INTRO EMAIL

Date

Dear Coach Reynolds,

I am entering my Junior year at Crossroads High School in Memphis, Tennessee, and I am interested in playing forward for Indiana University in two years.

Last year, I was a starter for our Varsity team, and averaged 21.4 points and 7.5 rebounds per game per game. In addition, I was named second team All-League, helping lead our team to second place in League and the third round in the State playoffs. I have maintained a 3.0 GPA in my first two years.

Basketball has been my favorite sport since fifth grade and I love competing year-round. I am looking forward to this season more than any other, because we have a shot at reaching the State Final Four. I am excited about that!

I have just come off a good summer season, having played in 24 games over two months, with some traveling to some tournaments around the state. I averaged 19.8 points per game, and started most of the games.

I believe I can compete at Indiana University. I have been following your team for a few years and I know I can contribute. I have played in many pressure situations and before a lot of large crowds. I have gotten good coaching in-season and on our summer team, and I am continuing to improve.

I look forward to hearing back from you.

Sincerely,

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