

## Myths and realities of college athletics and recruiting.

**Myth: If you are good enough, coaches will find you.**

**Reality:** Recruiting is now a global process and despite your skills or success in high school, it is extremely easy to be overlooked by college coaches who have thousands of athletes to scout and hundreds of potential venues to scout them at. College coaches don't read your local town paper and they probably don't attend your games and only the top 1% of high school athletes are truly discovered.

**Myth: Division 1 programs have big recruiting budgets.**

**Reality:** Some of the larger schools with top notch football and basketball programs do have large recruiting budgets but most do not. There are very few college coaches that have the ability to fly around the country to recruit players and have an endless coaching staff that they can send out to scout, especially when their team doesn't generate any money for their school, which is just about every D1 team that doesn't play football, basketball, or hockey.

**Myth: Division 3 Schools are weaker athletically.**

**Reality:** In some cases yes, but in many cases no. Many Division 3 programs have very talented athletic programs, this is often because these players are there to get an education first and play athletics second. But they are still talented and dedicated athletes who wanted to continue their athletic career in college, but wanted to do it on their own terms. If you think you can just stroll onto a D3 program you are in for a surprise. Go check out the golf teams at Methodist College (D3) or the swimming teams at Kenyon College (D3). In the last 25 years they have about 40 NCAA championships under their belt and they recruit top players from all over the country, many of whom could play some form of division 1 athletics had they chosen that route.

**Myth: All colleges offer athletic scholarships.**

**Reality:** Only Division 1 & 2 colleges can offer athletic scholarships (plus Junior Colleges and NAIA schools). Division 3 Programs can only offer financial aid and academic grant money for top students. While D1 and D2 colleges can offer athletic scholarships, after football and basketball there are many programs that may only have 1 or 2 scholarships for their entire team and they will divide that money up to several players. See next myth.

**Myth: Most athletes get a full scholarship or no scholarship.**

**Reality:** Full scholarships are very rare and most coaches divide scholarship money up between several players. The only guaranteed full scholarships are for D1 basketball and D1 football. Each program is fully funded and offers the maximum amount of scholarships allowed by the NCAA, 13 for men's hoops, 85 for football, and 15 for women's hoops. Every other sport and team divides money up to many players and no other team or program is guaranteed to be fully funded.

**Myth: Division 1 programs do not offer walk-on tryouts.**

**Reality:** While walking onto the Kentucky basketball team will be pretty difficult, many coaches rely on walk-ons each year and will usually conduct tryouts to give as many players a chance as possible. It is better to find out what walk-on opportunities exist before you show up at tryouts. It certainly is not easy, but it is not impossible either. I did it and many others do to!

**Myth: I shouldn't go to a Division 3 School if I need scholarship money.**

**Reality:** Many D3 schools offer attractive financial aid programs and you should not overlook any school, even if they do not offer athletic scholarships. We have met parents that are basically sending their kids to school for free because their son's and daughters had strong academic backgrounds and coupled that with athletics to make themselves an attractive student and recruit for a certain school. What would you rather have, \$3,000 in scholarship money at a D1 school or \$20,000 in academic money at a D3 school, while still getting the chance to play athletics at the college level?

**Myth: College coaches will help me get into their school if I am on the bubble academically.**

**Reality:** While being recruited by a college coach can be an advantage over applicants that are not athletes, you need to be very close academically to what the school seeks out in any student. Coaches can submit a list of names to the admissions department, but you need to be committed to the coach and express a strong interest in attending that institution. At the end of the day admissions make admission decisions, not coaches, and many students that thought they were a shoe-in for admissions will get rejected.

**Myth: All Division 1 & 2 programs have scholarships available.**

**Reality:** While the NCAA mandates how many scholarships a school can offer for a particular sport, it is up to the school whether or not they want to and can offer the number of scholarships allotted to them. Example: Division 1 baseball programs are allowed to offer 11.7 scholarships to their entire team, but many division 1 baseball schools may offer only 3 or 4 scholarships and that will be true for other sports as well.

**Myth: College coaches only recruit top players.**

**Reality:** College coaches recruit anyone they think can play at their program and recruit anyone who shows an interest in their program. Just because you are not the star of your team does not mean you cannot play in college. There are many players that do not start because there are other talented players at their position(s), but many of those players have the skills to play in college as well.

**Myth: High school coaches are qualified to determine if I am college athletic material.**

**Reality:** While many coaches are, some are not and many never played their sport in college. The bottom line, there are many factors that determine if you can play in college and your high school coach may have no idea what your potential may be.

**Myth: College coaches can contact me anytime they want.**

**Reality:** There are strict rules as to when a coach can send you literature and how often they can contact you at the NCAA level and the rules are less stringent at the Junior College and NAIA level. The good news is that you can contact college coaches at any time so long as you make the phone call.

**Myth: Playing college athletics will not be much different than high school, aside of the skill level.**

**Reality:** Playing college athletics is an unbelievable commitment in time and in dedication and will be nowhere close to your high school experience. In college you will play or practice for 3 seasons, in the fall, winter and in the spring, and be required to do lifting and running programs as well. You may also be practicing at 6AM or Midnight or twice a day depending what facilities are available at your school.