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Seeking a college scholarship can be a difficult, competitive and confusing process. Our team of former college athletes, coaches and scouts, together with our network of college coaches provide you with the guidance and tools you need to make your dreams a reality.

Choosing a college is the one of the most important decisions in your life. Whether you are a top ranked athlete, highly scouted or have little to no exposure at all, We are here to guide you through the process and help you find the college best-fit for you

### **TENNIS RECRUITING 101**

#### **Why play college tennis?**

1. Experience – Being able to represent your school by playing your sport and travelling with your team makes playing a college sport an experience like no other!
2. Be a better student – Being a student-athlete enhances skill in time management to balance the demands of being a student and college athlete, therefore studying time blocks are not taken for granted
3. Stay in shape - Playing a college sport entails abiding by strict fitness schedules and regimes, which will help you establish a healthy lifestyle that will continue after college.
4. Make connections - Through college sports, you meet many people, building lasting friendships and professional relationships that can be carried after college
5. Job Opportunities – In addition to time management, college tennis hones transferable skills in teamwork, leadership, independence, goal orientation, work ethic, and handling pressure. Such skills are desirable in the workplace and will give you competitive edge to get the job.

### When does the recruiting process start?

The time at which the recruiting process starts for an aspiring college athlete depends on the sport; however, a good rule of thumb is to start the process in your freshman year of high school.

### Tennis recruiting statistics

The following table numerically summarizes the availability of tennis scholarships across the United States.

| Division | Number of Teams | Average Team Size | Athletic Scholarships |
|----------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| NCAA I   | 265             | 10                | 4.5                   |
| NCAA II  | 170             | 10                | 4.5                   |
| NCAA III | 331             | 11                | -                     |
| NAIA     | 96              | 11                | 5                     |
| NJCAA    | 69              | 8                 | 9                     |
| Other    | 54              | 9                 | -                     |
| Total    | 985             | 10                |                       |

|  | Men         |
|--|-------------|
| Number of High School Tennis Players     | 191,004     |
| Number of College Tennis Players         | 10,060      |
| <b>Chances of Playing College Tennis</b> | <b>5.3%</b> |

As you can see from that last table, the chances of playing college tennis are small; therefore, we are here to maximize your chances and ensure your success.

### How do coaches discover me?

Coaches typically use trusted third party evaluators, like ImRecruitable, to connect with players based on their profiles and levels of play established in the evaluation. Depending on their interest in the player, coaches may travel to meet the prospect and watch them play in a USTA or ITF tournament. However, college tennis budgets at majority of the colleges are limited, and coaches will often attend a camp or showcase to scout and network with athletes.

### How are tennis recruits evaluated by coaches?

Tennis recruits are evaluated by coaches firstly based on the evaluation they get from a third party source like ImRecruitable. In addition, recruits should accurately identify their level of play through the Universal Tennis Rating system (UTR). The UTR system precisely determines individual players' ratings based on results.

## FIRST STEPS TO TAKE

The recruiting process is confusing and lengthy ordeal, so it is hard for the inexperienced to know what their first steps should be.

1. **Get exposure.** Along with playing tournaments and gaining match experience, you should gain exposure by being on a platform like ImRecruitable to not only evaluate yourself, but to be able to be present to college coaches who are looking for players. Posting your athletic and academic profiles on ImRecruitable will give coaches a solid idea of who you are, and how you could fit on their team.

### **HELPFUL GUIDELINES**

The following table is here to help you understand where you are and/or where you need to be:

|                   | <u>High D1</u>                            | <u>Low D1</u>                             | <u>D2</u>                          | <u>D3</u>                        |
|-------------------|---|---|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <u>Experience</u> | 4 years varsity                           | 4 years varsity                           | 3+ years varsity                   | 2 years varsity                  |
| <u>Awards</u>     | All county/conference<br>Region/State MVP | All county/conference<br>Region/State MVP | All county/Conference              | Team captain                     |
|                   | State champion                            | Top 5 finish in state                     | State qualifier<br>Regional finish | Conference or district<br>finish |

#### **Video Guidelines**

After a coach has seen a suitable evaluation from a third party like ImRecruitable, they will want to see a highlight video of your on-court skills. Knowing what to do can be difficult, so we have listed some guidelines to follow when filming your highlight video:

- Do not film through a fence or any other kind of impeding material.
- Do not follow the ball while filming, or move the camera around (a tripod is very helpful!)
- Do not zoom in and out on the player.
- Ball should always be seen.
- Player should always be in the picture, despite where they are on the court.
- Only the showcasing player should be in the film.
- Camera should be stationed at the back of the court, while player is on the same side, as well as shots of the player on the other side of the court.
- **Take rally and match footage. COACHES TODAY WANT TO SEE LESS EDITED FOOTAGE AND MORE REAL MATCH PLAY AGAINST A COMPETITIVE OPPONENT. WIN OR LOSE, A MATCH VIDEO IS KEY.**
- Have a short blurb at the beginning of the video introducing yourself.

If you want to add a skills section to your video, include the following:

- 10 forehands
- 10 backhands
- 8-10 forehand volleys
- 8-10 backhand volleys
- 5 overheads
- 10 serves on each side of the court (5 first serves, 5 second serves)
- 5-7 service returns on each side of the court.

## **TENNIS RECRUITING TIMELINE**

### **Freshman Year**

- Meet your academic counselor and come up with an academic game plan; be sure you are meeting the requirements of the NCAA and NAIA.
- Continue to attend academies and summer camps to build your tennis skill set.
- Quick Reminders:
  - Coaches pay attention to your development on the court and in the classroom
  - It's never too early for you to reach out and contact coaches
  - DIII and NAIA coaches can contact you at anytime
  - DI and DII coaches can only contact you in your Junior year, but you can contact them!

### **Sophomore Year**

- Start to research schools that interest you.
- Familiarize yourself with the schools athletics and academics.
- Fill out questionnaires on the athletic websites.
- Contact coaches of the schools that interest you.
- In the summer after your sophomore year, consider attending the tennis camps your schools of interest may offer.

### **Junior Year**

- Your junior year is the most important year in the recruiting process.
- Coaches will be looking at your statistics, and the admissions departments will be looking at your academic standing.
- Keep following up with coaches you have contacted, and be proactive in maintaining communication.
- Make unofficial visits to schools.
- Start to narrow down your school prospective list.
- Quick Reminders:
  - DI and DII coaches can personally e-mail you starting September 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - After July 1<sup>st</sup>, DI coaches can call you once a week and schedule off-campus visits

- On June 15<sup>th</sup>, DII coaches can call you and schedule off-campus visits.

### **Senior Year**

- Make your 5 official visits (you should have narrowed down your list to about 5-6 schools).
- By now you should have developed relationships with coaches.
- Keep following up with coaches.
- Complete all school applications.
- If American, apply for FAFSA.
- Sign and commit to a school!
- Quick Reminders:
  - Early signing period in November

## **ACADEMICS**

Having good grades and acceptable test scores are just as important as results and statistics in your sport. A coach is only able to recruit you if you are academically eligible to compete at their school, abiding by their school's requirements. Each school has their own GPA requirements. In addition, you must meet the academic requirements of the NCAA and NAIA to be eligible.

Do NOT believe the myth that a college coach can get you into their school if they want you bad enough! A coach will not want a student-athlete that cannot demonstrate their responsibilities athletically and academically. Remember, you are "student-athlete", so must perform as both.

**SATs.** In addition to GPA, schools have minimum SAT score requirements. The standardized exam tests your skills in reading, writing and math. Each school uses a different combination of test scores in those skills for admission. The best resource for SAT preparation, school requirements, and test taking information is "College Board" ([www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)). Ideally, students take their SATs in grade 11, that way they have sufficient time if taking the test again is needed.

## **TENNIS EXPOSURE CAMPS**

One of the big challenges a lot of student athletes face is getting exposure to college coaches. Regardless of your ranking, accomplishments and academic standing, our exposure events allow players and parents to learn the secrets on how to get recruited, make a lasting impression on college coaches and showcase your talent. College coaches want to evaluate players in competitive match situations and interact with them on a personal level. They will take every opportunity to come see players, and they do! ImRecruitable organizes college showcases and exposure camps to help facilitate the recruiting opportunity for players and college coaches.

Tennis exposure camps are designed to provide players with a unique opportunity to train like a college tennis player on court with top U.S. college coaches. The

coaches will put the players through high intensity drills, match play and teach them strategies they use to help players improve and prepare their tennis game for college. Coaches will also educate players about how to conduct a proper college search, how to get coaches to respond to you, how to maximize the college tennis experience and many other secrets to the college recruiting process.

1. TRAIN WITH COLLEGE COACHES: U.S. college coaches will be on-court instructing and training the players as they do with the top collegiate players in their programs. Players will experience real college practices and instruction through high intensity training and match play. In addition, you will receive tips and hints on how to maximize the recruiting process. We are the only camp hosting events in the U.S. and Internationally taught exclusively by U.S. College Coaches.
2. LEARNING AND STRATEGY SESSIONS: The players will receive instruction and training from college coaches representing various divisions and levels. On-court drills and competitive match-play sessions will allow players to sample several coaching styles in team and one-on-one settings. Coaches will evaluate technique and work on developing your game to play at the college level. Daily seminars with college coaches during lunch breaks will educate players on how to properly prepare for college, and how to successfully navigate the recruiting process.
3. PREPARE FOR COLLEGE
  - Train like a college tennis player
  - Movement training emphasizing footwork patterns and balance
  - College style doubles/strategy
  - On-court college style drills & match play with college coaches
  - Learn new strategies & improve match play through better shot selection & placement
  - Improve your speed, agility & footwork
  - Mental toughness training
  - Compete & achieve results against top competition
  - Learn how to successfully conduct a college search
  - Understand the different divisions & levels of college tennis
  - Network with top college coaches from across the U.S.
  - Student housing, meals & 24 hr. Adult supervision.

## **INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

Recruiting as mentioned is a lengthy process that can be very confusing and frustrating at times; however, it is made even more so lengthy and frustrating for international students. Several hurdles need to be jumped before an international student can fulfill their dreams of playing their sport in an American college, namely:

- Applying for a student visa
- Have their academic record translated into a comprehensive American format
- Take all required and necessary tests

College coaches look all over the world for the best players. Entering the recruiting process without the help of experience in the system will make it all very difficult. ImRecruitable works very closely with international students, having recruited numerous international athletes.

## FAQ

### **How important is my ranking?**

Your ranking is just one factor in the recruiting process. Playing tournaments and having a solid ranking will only benefit you; however, you must come up with how you are going to market yourself to college coaches (ex. Good highlight reel, good grades etc...).

### **What tournaments should I be playing?**

Tournament play and match experience is crucial in the transition between high school and college tennis. Being comfortable in match situation is one of the factors that coaches pay attention to.

USA: American high school players that are seeking a tennis scholarship should be playing USTA tournaments. High school tennis alone is not representative of what college tennis is, so tournaments should be played to supplement that. Gaining doubles experience is also a valuable tool in the recruiting process, as coaches look for strong doubles players. ITF tournaments are also great to have on your record.

### **How important is match experience?**

College coaches do not always take a look at your tennis skill objectively – they want to see that you produce wins as well. Maximizing your amount of tournament play and match experience will only benefit you in the recruiting process as well as when you make it to college, as you will be comfortable with match play. The Ontario Tennis Association provides suitable opportunities for aspiring college athletes to get the tournament play and match experience they need to be successful in the recruiting process, but it is up to you to sign up and play those tournaments.

### **What is the role of parents in recruiting?**

The role of parents in the recruiting process is important in yielding success for their athletes. Parents should provide support through the process, as well as assistance and mentorship in decision-making. Being involved optimally means a being involved, but not so much where the parents are fully influencing and/or making decisions. Parents should upkeep the importance of high academic standards, and good work ethic throughout the process. Parent's only want the best for their children, so it is in their best interest to be objective about the skills and

needs of their child, therefore they should seek a third-party evaluation of their child, which ImRecruitable will provide.

### **Is college tennis an individual sport?**

In college tennis, one dual (when one school plays against another) consists of 3 doubles matches, and 6 singles matches. Two out of three doubles matches need to be won to get the doubles point, and each singles match is worth one point. While technically players play individually, wins and losses add up for a team score.

### **What is an unofficial visit?**

An unofficial visit is a visit that you take to a college campus at your own expense. Unofficial visits can be taken at anytime and as many times as you would like. While on an unofficial, visit the athletic department is allowed to give you up to 3 tickets to a sporting event, but no other perks or gifts.

### **What is an official visit?**

An official visit is a visit that you make to a college, paid for by the team or athletic department. The school is able to pay for transportation, lodging, meals and reasonable entertainment for the recruit while they are on their visit. The visit may be up to 48 hours long. Official visits can only be taken in an athlete's senior year and each recruit can take five.

## **RESOURCES**

To learn more about the governing body of college tennis, the ITA, visit:

<http://www.itatennis.com/AboutITA/AbouttheITA.htm>

To learn more about the SATs and academic requirements of specific colleges, visit:

<https://www.collegeboard.org/>

The National Collegiate Athletic Association oversees the rules and regulations for 1,200 Division I, II and III athletic institutions. The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics oversees the rules and regulations among smaller institutions. To learn more, visit:

<http://www.ncaa.com/>

[www.naia.org](http://www.naia.org)

<http://www.njcaa.org/>

Articles on being a student athlete:

[http://espn.go.com/college-sports/story/\\_/id/6762550/inside-look-full-scholarship-athlete-versus-typical-student](http://espn.go.com/college-sports/story/_/id/6762550/inside-look-full-scholarship-athlete-versus-typical-student)