

Collegiate Lacrosse Recruiting Guide

2016

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Important Questions to Begin With

Q: How important is the sport to you?

- Consider what investments you are willing to make in High School
 - Developing your lacrosse skills outside of practice
 - Traveling to Camps and Showcase events in the offseason
 - Unofficial visits to colleges
- Consider what kind of time commitment and effort are you willing to invest in collegiate lacrosse?
 - Weightlifting & Cardio training
 - Film study
 - Team Meetings & Team Events
 - Lacrosse Practice and games

*Each Program is different but generally speaking premiere DI programs will have the biggest time commitment during season and in the offseason, top DII programs will be only slightly less. Do your research and ask the college coaches for answers)
- Consider how will the sport impact your goals for college? More time dedicated to lacrosse means less time to dedicate to clubs/organizations, travel abroad opportunities, and other student life experiences.

Q: What are your grades now? What's a realistic GPA at graduation? What are realistic SAT/ACT scores?

- Consider how hard do you work in school?
 - Consider what did you get on your SAT/ACT's?
 - Consider what kind of classes are you taking?
- *The higher GPA and SAT/ACT scores, the more attractive you are to the coaches and schools. They want balanced student athletes. The less they need to deal with admissions offices the better.

Q: Ask yourself....

- Are my parents and I ready to drive the recruiting process?
 - Your coach is not responsible to market you to college coaches. YOU are responsible!
- What are my goals for my college lacrosse experience?
- What are my goals for my college education?
- What are my goals for life after college?

*After answering all of these questions, see if they tie together to form an achievable plan

Be prepared to be asked by coaches....

- What are your grades like?
- What other schools are you interested in?
- When do you want to make a decision on which college you will attend?
- What are you looking for in a college?
- Can you play any other positions?
- What questions do you have for me?

*Inside the Recruiting Numbers (*2014 data)*

Collegiate lacrosse programs & players:

	DI	DII	DIII	MCLA	NCLL	NJCAA	Totals
Programs	67	56	216	210	126	32	707
Players	3,015	2,520	9,720	9,450	5,670	1,440	31,815

- Total boys High School lax players: 170,632
- Percentage of High School boys that play lax in college: 18.6%
- Odds of playing for a DI program: 1.8%

Remember that most elite recruits still come from the northeast states of Maryland, Virginia, New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. Thus if you live in a state where lacrosse is still developing you need to factor in this bias. Therefore in Utah your chances of playing DI are even less than 1%.

Scholarships:

- Division I program have 12.6 scholarships per team (not all DI programs are fully funded)
- Division II programs have 10.8 scholarships per team (not all DII programs are fully funded)
- Division III programs have 0 scholarships per team for men (only merit based)
- Fully Funded programs in 2014: 35
- Total lacrosse scholarships available: 441
- Collegiate lax players receiving some scholarship over part of their four years: 1,470
- Odds of any high school male lax player landing a D1 scholarship: 0.86%

To sum-up, be educated and have realistic expectations to drive your decisions

Measuring Your Athletic Marketability

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4
Description	Top Division I programs	Lower Division I programs	Top Div II & III programs	Lower Div II & III programs
Club Experience	Multiple Year Tournament All Star & MVP Honors	All Star Honors at multiple events	All Star nominations and all tournament recognition	Multiple year participant
High School Experience	2 or 3 year varsity starter. All American and/or nominee. All State multiple years.	All State. Multiple years all region, area, county. 2 year varsity starter.	Multiple year starter and/or contributor	Multiple year Varsity member & 1 year starter
Attack Notes	Approx Size: 6'1", 200 Lbs. Able to take over a game at any point. Handling of ball with pressure from the opponents best defender. High IQ and quarterback of offense. Threat to score or distribute. Tough player with great change of direction and vision.	Approx Size: 6'0", 195 Lbs. Shows flashes of taking over games. A consistent threat to score and put up points. Handles the ball often. Might not be the flashy player but always getting the job done. Does all the little things well and competes.	Approx Size: 5'10", 185 Lbs. A consistent ability to find teammates for scoring chances and steady offense. Moves the ball well and can make a solid impact in goals and assist. Good athlete who has the ability to create offense.	Approx Size: 5'9", 175 Lbs. Steady contributor on offense. Good athlete and quick. Uses their advantages very well. Finds a way to be a steady threat.
Defense Notes	Approx Size: 6'2", 215 Lbs. Can take over a game or the player they're covering. Great on-ball skills and the commander of the defenders around them. Handles the ball often and a threat in the clearing game. Always covering the top offensive player for the other team.	Approx Size: 6'1", 205 Lbs. Steady influence on the player they are covering. Steady mix of GB's and 1v1 defense. Shows flashes of being the top defensive player on the field. Can cover the top tier offensive threats. Great athletic ability.	Approx Size: 6'0", 190 Lbs. Solid athlete who is a steady contributor. Handles the ball often and fins roles they succeed in. Can cover solid offensive threats and performs well.	Approx Size: 5'10", 180 Lbs. Steady contributor in team concepts. Good athlete and help defense. Uses their advantages very well, and really helps out with communication.
Midfield Notes	Approx Size: 6'2", 210 Lbs. The ability to take over a game at any point. Handling the ball with pressure and confidence. A high IQ and a threat to score and distribute. Tough player on offense, defense, and transition. Performs well in the biggest stages.	Approx Size: 6'1", 200 Lbs. Great athlete who moves the ball and is a steady contributor on the score sheet. Shows the ability to demand extra attention on the offensive end. Solid on defense & specialty positions - FO / DM	Approx Size: 6'0", 190 Lbs. Good athlete who knows their role. Finds a way to steady be a factor and difference maker. Solid dodger and feeder. Shows flashes of the ability to be the go-to player.	Approx Size: 5'10", 180 Lbs. Strong contributor on offense and truly finds their niche. A threat in transition and finds teammates to incorporate / create scoring chances.
Goalie Notes	Can take over the game at any moment. Every goal comes with difficulties. Makes all the "must" saves and many that should not even have a chance on. Great at communication and the leader of the defense. Can lead the break out and accurate in the clearing game.	Shows flashes of greatness and very stubborn in net. Communicates and leads the defense in front of them. Strong with handling the ball in clearing game. Leads those around them.	Solid in net with fundamentals. Communicates well with the defense and can keep a team in the game. Strong in the clearing game and handles the ball with confidence.	Gets to all the steady saves. Strong communicator in the net and handles the ball often in the clearing game.

General Recruiting Timeline

Freshman Year:

- Create a list of 100 prospective schools consider both athletics and academics
- Create a film/highlights tape
- Send introduction letters to coaches
- Go on at least a couple unofficial visits to colleges
- Build relationships by making phone calls, send letters and emails
- Join a local Lacrosse club team

Rules/Tips to Remember:

Coaches are watching your development throughout high school at camps, in school and on the field
Standouts are proactive, it's never too early for YOU to write a letter or make a call to coaches
DI and DII coaches can't personally contact you until junior year, but YOU can contact them
DIII and NAIA coaches can contact you at any time.

Sophomore Year:

- Add to your film/highlights tape – keeping film clips from previous year
- Get an evaluation of your skills tape
- Continue to research prospective schools
- Continue to build relationships by making calls, sending letters, emails with the RIGHT coaches
- Fill out questionnaires
- Make unofficial visits

Junior Year

- Add to your film/highlights tape – keeping film clips from previous years
- Follow-up with coaches you've contacted in a TIMELY manner
- Invite coaches to your games- let them know about your season schedule
- Ask coaches where you stand on their recruits list
- Fill out questionnaires
- Respond to EVERY coach
- Make unofficial visits to schools
- Narrow down your prospective schools list

Rules/Tips to Remember:

September 1st of your junior year is the first day DI and DII coaches can send you letters and emails
DI and top DII programs will make offers during junior year
If you haven't heard from DI coaches, start reaching out to DII, DIII or NAIA programs

Senior Year:

- Make official visits: What does your gut tell you while walking around campus? Is the school too big, too small, or just right? Does the school offer academic programs that I am interested in?
- Follow-up with coaches and respond in a TIMELY manner
- Apply to the schools- applications & Apply for Financial aid – fafsa.ed.gov starting Jan. 1st
- Sign and Commit to a school and program (Early signing- second week of Nov, regular-April)
- Find out the summer workout schedule

School Comparison Checklist

Category	School
Academic	
Does the school have a good reputation academically?	
Does the school offer my preferred major?	
Are my grades and test scores good enough to gain admission?	
Does the school fit with my academic ability?	
Does the athletic department provide an academic support program for student athletes?	
Is the coach made aware of the student-athletes' academic standing on a regular basis?	
Does the athletic department pay for any tutoring I may need?	
Does the athletic department have a study hall program for student athletes?	
Can I be a successful student AND athlete in my preferred major?	
Does the school give student-athletes' first choice for classes?	
Does the coaching staff assist the student-athletes with forming class schedules?	
Lacrosse	
Has the school offered me an official visit?	
Has the school offered me a scholarship?	
Will the school take away my scholarship if I get hurt and cannot play?	
Will the school take away my scholarship if I don't play well?	
How much will it cost me to go to school on top of the scholarship?	
Do I want to play for the current coaching staff?	
Does the current roster leave room for my position?	
Does my style of play fit with the schools style of play?	
Am I good enough to play there?	
Does the school have a good reputation in lacrosse?	
How does the team travel by, bus or plane?	
Do players need to fundraise for preseason trips?	
Does the school have the facilities that will help me get better?	
Does this program insist I apply Early Decision?	
Does this coach cut recruited players?	
Does this school provide laundry service for practice and/or game gear?	
Does this program allow walk-ons?	
Social	
Would I get along with players currently on the team?	
Are sporting events like football and basketball games a big part of campus life?	
If lacrosse wasn't in the picture, would I want to go to this school?	
Are there clubs formed that interest me?	
Does the lacrosse team live together?	
Do my parents feel this is the best school for me?	
Do I feel the size of the school is the best fit for me?	
Geographic	
Is the school situated in a climate I like?	
Am I comfortable with the distance from home this school is located?	
Is this campus safe? Does this school have a low crime rate?	
Is there a good relationship between the town people and the school?	
Can I afford to travel home during vacation?	

Become A College-Ready Lacrosse Player

1) Have a GREAT Stick! - I'm not talking about owning an expensive stick, or making sure it's taped up correctly. I'm talking about having world class stick skills. No matter the position, any serious player or coach will tell you how important stick skills are.

2) Be an Athlete - Not everyone can run a 4.4 40. But everyone can improve their athleticism. Lacrosse players need to run, need to come to practice in shape, and develop their skills primarily, because that is part of athleticism. The focus isn't on getting huge in the gym, or becoming the fastest player on the field. The focus is on being athletic on the field. So make sure a lot of the running you do includes having a stick in your hands.

3) Pay Attention - Your coaches are here to help you become better players. Do they know everything? No. Does that matter? Not at all. Listen to them, and take away positive things you can learn from. This is a skill college coaches need you to possess, so there is no better time than to work on it in high school.

4) Work on Your Game on Your Own - Showing up to practice is simply not enough. If the coaches are going to be able to teach the finer points of the game, the players need to show up in shape and with sharp stick skills. A low lacrosse IQ can be improved, but only if a player can catch and pass and run at a high level. If you want to truly learn the game, you need pre-existing skills. And this **MUST** be done on a player's own time.

5) Be a Good Teammate - Lacrosse is a team game. And if a player wants to improve, and play in college, they need good teammates. Part of having good teammates is being a good member of the team. This means leading by example, playing on your own time, and dragging reluctant friends to hit the wall with you. It's keeping in mind that you are all fighting on the same side, but knowing that going hard in practice helps everyone improve. College coaches look for kids who will make their team stronger, not divided.

6) Be a Good Student - If you want to go to college, you need to have good grades in school. But it's more than that. Going to college is an opportunity, and a great one at that. Don't take it for granted. Be stimulated by SOMETHING in school, and pursue it with vigor in college. Otherwise, you're just wasting everyone's time. Don't take the college experience for granted. Soak it in.

7) Be a Good Person - Most coaches out there aren't looking for "ok guys". They want good people on their team who are awesome at lacrosse. Will teams take some not-so-awesome guys? Yes. But it's certainly not helping ANYONE in the long run.

8) Help Win as a Team - This is a broad topic, and it ranges from playing hard and honest in practice, to playing team lacrosse in games. It covers attitude, respect, and camaraderie. It means picking your teammates up when the fall, and not blaming each other when things go wrong. It's knowing that you are only as strong as your weakest link, so instead of trying to break the link, you make it stronger. It's about helping your teammates improve their play, and knowing they will do the same for you.

9) Understand the Game - This mean watching games on TV, using YouTube, asking other players questions, reading books and magazines and then going out and trying it. It's about listening to your coach explain things like subbing through x, or the concept of high and away. It's about knowing when to throw a face dodge, and when to just shoot the ball.

10) Have Fun! - It does NOT mean that you can do whatever you want, goof around, not listen to the coaches, etc. It means doing things the right way, and ENJOYING IT. This is a chance to go out and get better at something you realize you absolutely LOVE doing. And to do it with 40 other guys who want the same thing.

To sum up...You're going to get bruised up and battered. Sometimes you'll win, and sometimes you'll lose. You'll get tired and possibly even yelled at a little, and maybe hit so hard you land on your back. But that's being a lacrosse player, and it's being alive! Enjoy it ALL.

Common Q & A

Q: How important is Video in Lacrosse Recruiting?

A: Initial evaluations by college coaches are made via video because of the limited resources and budget coaches have at their disposal to travel. Thus an athlete must comply with Video Guidelines when putting together highlights. To ensure college coach see all that is needed to clear the first round of evaluations, there should be clips showing player fundamentals, athletic ability, & teamwork. (Coach may ask for full game film – so be prepared)

Guidelines:

- Film should be from a high perspective when possible (several feet from ground)
- Do not zoom in and out. The wider the angle the better.
- Imagine the field separated into thirds (offensive, middle, defensive). When the ball is in the offensive or defensive third of the field, film the entire 18-yard box.
- Use film against best competition. Two or three games is sufficient.
- Offensive players: Shooting (strong and weak hand, stationary and on the run), Passing (adjacent and up-field), Ground balls (under pressure and full speed).
- Defensive Players: 1v1 defense against different handed players and different locations of the field, Ground balls (under pressure and full speed). Passing (adjacent and up-field).
- Goalies: Shots: Show someone shooting on you. Vary the shots and highlight your ability to cover shots on the ground, at the crossbar and in the corners. Clearing: Show yourself clearing the ball from the goal and from outside the goal in the crease

Q: How to get discovered in lacrosse?

A: Be proactive. Be proactive. Be proactive.get it?

- Get a realistic evaluation of your skills and athleticism. See what colleges this best matches.
- Send coaches athletic and academic data & video clips.
- If the coach can't attend any of your games, then you attend camps and showcase events where the college coaches will be in attendance. While there seek out the coach, introduce yourself, and state your interest.

Q: Is scouting assistance for you?

A: They can help with the following but at a cost:

- Do you need help creating a recruiting action plan?
- Do you understand the recruiting timeline?
- Do you have properly edited video? And when a coach has viewed your video?
- Do you know which coaches are recruiting my position and year?

Q: Why do you need to start early in lacrosse recruiting?

A: Competition: Approximately 330+ Div I, II, III programs and a limited amount of positions to be filled.

A: Research: Understand the NCAA rules for recruiting, and understand the HS course requirements

Q: What is the role of a HS Coach in lacrosse recruiting?

A: It is not the job of the head coach to drive recruiting for the player. The player & their parents must drive this process.

- If a player is interested in being recruited, they should communicate this to the High School coach (and Comp team coach if applicable) to ensure they are prepared to supply recommendations should a college coach ask.

Publications for Thought

1.

Dom Starsia has developed a reputation. He gets cold calls from coaches and players across the country suggesting their linebacker or point guard might make a great lacrosse player. Starsia, who played football and lacrosse at Brown, is an advocate of multi-sport participation, in an era where media hype is driving parents in the direction of sport specialization. "As the game spreads and there's more press coverage and more popularity and more opportunities to profit, you're seeing a greater emphasis on the belief that, 'The earlier the better, the more the better,' of anything, of any sport, of any academic endeavor," Ginsburg said. "But there's not really any definitive evidence that indicates specializing is going to lead to better performance." Which is why Starsia has gone after players like Chris LaPierre, a former Shawnee (N.J.) High football star who had played lacrosse in the summers for fun, and now is one of the nation's most dynamic players. The Cavaliers' short-stick defensive midfielder was named a second-team All-American in 2012. "There is nothing you can be doing in lacrosse on your own in the fall that would be better for you than going to football or soccer practice every day," Starsia said. "You can go bang a ball against a wall all you want, but how do you become a better team player? By playing other team sports." Becoming coachable, paying attention to detail, understanding the importance of preparation, working toward a goal, understanding your role and evaluating your performance from playing other sports are "such a huge advantage," Danowski said. "Playing club lacrosse once a week, I don't know if that it's the same." "You have one time to leave a legacy at your school. You have one time to take advantage of putting on a football helmet or playing soccer," Danowski continued. "When you look back at your school yearbook 40 years from now, would someone say, 'Yeah, that guy was a lacrosse head?' Playing other sports helps develop a wealth of confidence that doesn't come from playing in a meaningless club game in November." Ginsburg said sport specialization can lead to burnout, overuse injury and fragmentation of friendships. Conversely, participating in multiple sports also helps children develop muscularly, in what four-time U.S. women's national team player Danielle Gallagher, the founder and president of the Long Island Liberty lacrosse club, called "a cross-training theory." Fried added sport specialization leads to a general lack of "being a kid... Creativity starts to fade away."

2.

EDUCATED CONSUMERS MAKE THE BEST PARENTS by Steve Stenersen, president and CEO of US Lacrosse

One of the consequences of the tremendous growth of lacrosse has been an influx of entrepreneurs, from within and outside of the sport, who are attempting to profit from the sport's expanding participation base. Their offerings -- camps, tournaments and private clubs -- are focused on the growing pool of wide-eyed lacrosse consumers (parents) motivated primarily by the well-intentioned goal of providing their children with the best opportunity to reach their lacrosse potential. The driver of this economic model is, of course, the highly competitive quest for an athletic scholarship -- or even just an admission advantage to a college otherwise unattainable. This concept is relatively new to lacrosse, and it has rapidly and significantly changed the sport's culture. Nowhere is this seismic cultural change more evident than in the college recruiting process, where growing numbers of private clubs and for-profit recruiting tournaments have created a confusing maze of opportunities, some of which provide questionable value in exchange for significant financial investment. Even more concerning is that many tournaments and private club programs have developed symbiotic relationships that sometimes include questionable ethical practices. Club teams need tournaments to provide value for their paying customers -- young players and their parents -- and tournaments need participating teams to make money. Of course, the expense of playing on a club team and the additional cost of tournament play are passed on to the parents. And what many don't know is that some coaches -- who are assumed to have a player's best interest as their primary focus -- accept financial incentives to bring teams to particular tournaments or recommend players to a specific club team or camp. So what's a parent to do? The answer is fairly simple -- exercise appropriate due diligence when

investigating lacrosse opportunities for your child. The cumulative cost of for-profit clubs and recruiting tournaments can easily exceed \$10,000 per child over just a few years. Most families considering that type of investment for, say, a home remodeling project, would spend considerable time researching and interviewing construction firms and comparing multiple bids before making a decision. Sadly, the decision to make a significant investment in a child's athletic activities now requires the same due diligence. Parents should talk to the director of any privately-run program they are considering and ask respectful but pointed questions about cost, philosophy, coaching credentials and experience, and deliverables. Ask what tangible benefits your child will receive from playing in particular tournaments or for a particular club team, and how those benefits differ from other opportunities. Attend a practice or game of a club program you are considering. If you see or hear something that doesn't quite fit with your values...that should tell you something about whether it's right for your child. Peer pressure should never be a motivator for a decision. Parents also need to learn how to cut through the hype. Some of these opportunities promote greater exposure and better coaching but offer no real proof of either. And, any program that perpetuates the thought that youth and high school players need to play lacrosse year-round in order to maximize their skill development should be avoided at all cost. No reputable source would recommend sport specialization or year-round play at those levels. College coaches consistently advocate that aspiring lacrosse players play multiple sports. It can be challenging to determine the appropriate level of engagement in your child's lacrosse experience, and there are certainly many examples -- some of which you have likely witnessed -- of inappropriate parent behavior and engagement. But the decision to commit thousands of dollars, and entrust a child's welfare, to a private lacrosse enterprise requires lacrosse parents to be good consumers.

3.

Ruthie Lavelle, mother of five and president of the Maryland Youth Lacrosse Association, a volunteer-based recreational league of about 40,000 boys and girls ages 5 to 14, said parents have lost perspective in their decision-making because of recruiting, the process for which has been hastened remarkably in recent years. "What are parents chasing? They're chasing disappointment," Lavelle said. "They think there's a pot of gold, but they're chasing dissatisfaction. They're crazed about it." Parents vigorously pursue and make great sacrifices — in time, finances and energy — in a competitive quest, hoping to capture an athletic scholarship. The return on investment is not what you think. "The current culture is suggesting, 'If you just get the right coach, and play in the right program, and play enough hours, you can be great. And you have to pay for it,'" Ginsburg said. "But the reality is — if you do the math — there are going to be many disappointed people." In 2012, there were 61 men's Division I programs, and 92 women's programs. For men, the NCAA maximum number of allowable scholarships is 12.6 over four years. For women, it's 12. Estimates suggest roughly half of these programs are fully funded; some schools have fewer than the allotted total, while Ivy League and service academies do not offer athletic scholarships. These scholarships most often are divided among players. Denver Outlaws coach Jim Stagnitta, the former Rutgers men's coach and current owner of MVP Lax Camps, joked: "I can think of a handful guys who got full rides, and most of them are named Powell." Said Virginia men's coach Dom Starsia: "If you take our Tewaaron Award winners — Matt Ward, Chris Rotelli and Steele Stanwick — and added them all together, it might equal a little more than one full scholarship." Said Georgetown women's coach Ricky Fried: "There's a misconception of the full ride. They're just not out there." Any high school athlete has a 6-percent chance of playing college varsity sports in any division and 3.7-percent chance in Division I, according to a recent Wall Street Journal article. "What happens when an athlete has put all his eggs in one basket? It creates a risk of imbalance," Ginsburg said.