
Parent-Player Guide to Lacrosse Recruiting



**MINNESOTA
LACROSSE**

About this guide

In response to the growth of lacrosse in Minnesota, a group of youth and high school coaches put this guide together to help parents and players take part in the recruiting process.

The information in this guide is designed to offer very basic guidance on recruiting and the process of choosing a program and level of competition that best suits you and your son.

Due to constant changes in recruiting rules, college admission requirements and individual team needs, the information in this guide is subject to change and revision. It is not intended to be an authoritative guide.

For specific information about a college or NCAA rules, please contact the organizations directly.

Thanks to many college and prep coaches for developing much of this content, especially Mike King, Coach at Choate Rosemary Hall.



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College Lacrosse: the numbers

There are hundreds of college lacrosse opportunities available for players of nearly every ability. The key in finding the right fit is to know where the opportunities are and what program differences exist in competition, player experience, time and financial commitment before you make your choice. In this section, we outline the makeup of college lacrosse teams across the United States.

- Men's College Lacrosse in the United States

Level	# of Teams	Level of Competition	Scholarships Offered
NCAA Division 1	61	Elite	12.7
NCAA Division 2	38	Elite	10.8
NCAA Division 3	165	Very High	No*
MCLA <i>Men's Collegiate Lacrosse Association</i>	213	Very High - High	No
NCLL <i>National Collegiate Lacrosse League</i>	120	Varies	No

* Financial aid packages are often awarded based on need



A note for Parents

Your role in the process: As a parent, you play the single most important role in this process: the support and encouragement of your son to attend college *and* play lacrosse. The key to keeping the search for the right place is to maintain a cool head and recognize some basic facts about the sport and the recruiting process:

- There are more outstanding athletes playing the sport than there are spots on NCAA teams.
- You can't make a college recruit your son no matter how hard you try.
- The college experience is the goal here, not simply making a team.
- Scholarships are few in number (12.7 per NCAA D1 team) and typically cover 1/8-1/4 of the cost of tuition.
- A significant portion of high school graduates (some coaches estimate the number at 50%) are not academically qualified to be admitted to schools that they could play for.
- Most lacrosse players go on to enjoy their college experience and play on school teams without receiving a scholarship or financial support.



A note for Parents (continued)

Where you can help: The most difficult part of the process is finding the right fit in terms of academics, campus life and playing level. Your high school or summer team coach can help with the playing level, but you can be of great value to your son in learning about the various colleges and their strengths and weaknesses.

Procrastination kills good lacrosse players: The recruiting process requires three elements for success: athletic ability demonstrated at high levels against good competition, academic standing in the classroom and on standardized tests, and communication with the coaches at the schools your son is interested in. If your son does not reach out early and often to the coaches at schools he is interested in, his chances of being recruited are very close to zero.

Be sure to review the timeline in this document.

Grades Matter: Far too often players are unprepared academically and will fall short of college requirements. As parents, we can make the process better by insisting on a high level of academic progress throughout the high school years.



A note for Players

Where should/could I play?: This is one of the toughest questions to answer for a college bound player. Talk with your coach about the level of competition that suits your ability and interests. Many athletes don't realize that at the higher levels, playing a sport is similar to a full time job while you are in college, involving daily workouts and training even in the off-season. For some, that commitment is too much to handle while attending classes and completing coursework. Below is a guide of where you should be competitively to play at the various levels. It is an estimate only, and each situation is different.

Level	You should be	Honors	Other Recognition
NCAA Division 1	One of the top 5-10 players in MN	All American, All State, All Section, All Conference	All Star Teams at Recruiting Tournaments, adidas, Under Armour & other national teams
NCAA Division 2	One of the top 25 players in MN	All American, All State, All Section, All Conference	Same as Division 1
NCAA Division 3	One of the top 30 players in MN	All American, All State, All Section, All Conference	Same as Division 1, Elite Teams
MCLA <i>Men's Collegiate Lacrosse Association</i>	One of the top 100 players in MN (team level varies)	All State, All Section, All Conference	Same as Division 1, Elite Teams
NCLL <i>National Collegiate Lacrosse League</i>	Varies	Varies	



A note for Players *(continued)*

What should I focus on?: If you want to play lacrosse in college, focus on finding the right school that you can be happy at even if your playing career was cut short. College is a time to find out what subjects, careers and interests appeal to you. Lacrosse is only one part of that.

Colleges and universities vary in size, location, academic expectations, social life and many other aspects. Start thinking about the schools that you may be interested in and explore them on the web.

Don't neglect your studies; grades matter!

Make sure that you begin the process early and take time to send emails to coaches indicating your interests.

Be sure to review the timeline in this document.



A note for Players (continued)

Things to keep in mind:

The ‘broken leg law’: Make sure you are focusing on colleges that are a good fit for you.

- Do they have the right academic programs, location, size, appropriate academic rigor?
- Do not pick a school just because of lacrosse... what if you break your leg in the first tryout and can no longer play?

Lacrosse is a piece of the puzzle, but only a piece.

- **Make sure *YOU* handle all the contact** with the coaches, not your parents. Coaches are not recruiting your parents, they are recruiting you. Coaches want to communicate with the young man who wants to be a part of his program and attend his college or university.
- **Your coach’s role:** The bulk of the communication is handled by you. This takes organization and a lot of time. If your coach calls a college coach about you, the first question he will ask him is “why didn’t the player get in touch himself?” His role is to help you get organized and help ensure you are getting all the information coaches want out to them.
- Keep in mind, not your coach nor your second uncle on your mother’s side can make a college coach recruit you. Ultimately, they have to see something in you that leads them to believe you are a good fit for their school and lacrosse program.



Recruiting Timeline – Sophomore Year

	Task	Notes
Fall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit down with your family and generate a list of 10 to 20 schools you are interested in applying to. This is a shotgun approach at this stage. Safety schools through dream schools. • Take time to review each school that you are interested in, including its roster and the current recruiting class that has committed to attend 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk openly with your parents about their ability to help with college expenses and the costs of summer teams and camps. • In your later conversations with coaches, you can ask about their plans to fill slots at your position to get a better sense of where you may fit in.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go over that list with your coaches so they can make some suggestions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk openly with your coach about your prospects for playing at the various levels.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a letter or an email to each coach expressing your interest in playing at his school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Things you should include in your letter... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current GPA - PSAT/SAT/ACT scores - Position - Height, weight - Relevant lacrosse statistics - Role on team (projected starter, captain, etc.) - Finish with a specific request, such as which camps/tournaments they will have a representative attending this coming summer - Your contact information - Your coach’s contact information



Recruiting Timeline – Sophomore Year

	Task	Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify any recruiting camps that you are able to attend; register early for those camps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask your coach for a recommendation where needed.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk with your guidance counselor about a schedule for taking the standardized tests (ACT, PSAT, SAT) that your list of schools require. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some students take these tests starting in their sophomore year, others wait until the fall of their junior year.
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow up with another letter/email to college coaches prior to your season with your game schedule and which camps/tournaments you will be attending this summer. 	
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You need to send out videotape (from the current season) and make appointments to visit specific schools this summer, and request a meeting with the coach while you are on Campus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See the instruction in the Resources Section on making a video.
June - August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prior to each summer camp/tournament, notify coaches you will be there and ask them to evaluate your play. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow up afterward with a phone call to each coach to discuss their evaluation of your play. They can always respond to a call or email from you (although there are rules governing when they can call you on their own).



Recruiting Timeline – Junior Year

	Task	Notes
Fall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register with the NCAA Clearinghouse as a “Prospective Student Athlete” • Email fall/winter schedule of events you are attending • Update and consolidate your spreadsheet of colleges: Solid Top 10 • Sign up for 2-3 summer camps • Send packet of information to each school • Take SATs (at least once) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit the NCAA website to register (See Resources Section)
Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take SATs • Attend 2-3 college lax games if possible • Email all top 10 college coaches 	
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow up with another letter/email to college coaches prior to your season with your game schedule and which camps/tournaments you will be attending this summer. 	
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update your videotape (from the current season) and send it to your top 10 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See the instruction in the Resources Section
June - August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email Top 10 coaches to congratulate them on their season and attach your summer camp and schedule • Go to 2-3 camps, at least 2 of your top 10 choices • Get highlight/video made-if you have not already • Visit schools and arrange to meet coaches 	

JULY 1: Marks the 1st date college coaches can make contact with a rising senior. Oftentimes, if you are on the top of a coaches list, you will get a call to set up an official visit. Do not FREAK out if no coaches call you THAT night. Securing an official visit for the fall officially begins here but the process goes into September.



Recruiting Timeline – Senior Year

	Task	Notes
Fall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is your time to multi-task. Make sure you return all inquiries from coaches, schedule official and unofficial visits to campuses to find which schools are best for you. • Pick your #1 school and apply early decision • Take SATs (at least once) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By the start of the school year, your list should ideally be less than 5 schools
Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play great lacrosse in your senior season! • Keep going to class and stay out of trouble! 	
Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play lacrosse and enjoy your accomplishments! 	

Make sure to be honest with coaches (do not lie or mislead, honesty is always best). Keep an open phone line and communicate with college coaches at least once every week or two-without being annoying (a simple update email is fine).



Recruiting Timeline – Senior Year

So what does this all mean? The college application process is a lot of work, and, realistically, sometimes unfair. We would like to think that it is only merit based, but we all have anecdotes where we just can't figure out why a school took one applicant over another. Your qualifications have to jive with the college (and coach's) needs that year.

We sometimes hear, "Coach, we love that defenseman of yours, but we took five poles last year and aren't going to be supporting any in this year's recruiting class."

How much "pull" a coach has left, or is willing to use, is also part of the equation. Some coaches are great at keeping up with email, some take a week or two to get back to you. They are dealing with a large volume of inquiries, and not all colleges have a staff big enough to have a dedicated 'recruiting coordinator'. A lengthy period of silence from them may mean nothing at all, just that they are behind in their correspondence.

Most of all, don't panic, it'll all work out in the end.



What coaches look for?: GAMERs

- **G** – What are his grades? His SAT and ACT scores? Does he take challenging (honors and AP) courses?
- **A** – Attitude. What is his work ethic? Is he coachable? He is a good team player? Will he work hard at both ends of the field? Is he a competitor? How does he perform under pressure? Does he have an athlete's attitude? Is he disciplined? Unselfish?
- **M** – Does he play multiple sports? If he doesn't, he probably is NOT a real competitor. Most college coaches say they shy away from the single-sport athlete.
- **E** – Excellent skills under pressure. Right hand, left hand, shooting, GBs, defense skills. Has he got them and can he perform under pressure?
- **R** – Can he RUN? The college game is fast. Speed, more than anything, differentiates the high school game from the college game. Division III is fast. Division I is lightning fast.



Source: Jim Wilson, (former Loomis Chaffee prep coach and Connecticut lacrosse legend)

Resources - Websites

- www.ncllax.com National Collegiate Lacrosse League
- www.ncaa.org National Collegiate Athletic Association
- www.mcla.com Men's Collegiate Lacrosse Association
- www.insidelacrosse.com Recruiting Forum (top right button) has lots of information about camps and the process
- www.lacrosserecruits.com Fee based recruiting site with a free electronic guide to recruiting
- www.eligibilitycenter.org NCAA Clearinghouse information



Resources - Making a Video

Game DVDs: These are an important part of the process. Some things to consider when making a video...

- Place player contact info on the opening screen.
- Quality footage, make sure it is clear who is being highlighted.
- 3 to 5 minutes max of highlights. This part serves to get their attention, but highlights don't actually tell a coach much... everyone looks good when they are finishing a shot or a check...
- 10 to 30 minutes of game footage, where the player to watch is clearly defined.
- These clips should be against worthy opponents, and show you in all facets of the game that apply to your position (offense, defense, GBs, face offs, left and right hand, riding, clearing et al).
- It is often good to have segments from different games.
- Some coaches will watch the whole tape, some only a segment.
- You don't necessarily need a professional to make highlight tape. Learn how to use iMovie or Nero.
- You don't need a blasting soundtrack with the theme song from *Rocky*, most coaches will turn off the volume when they view it anyway.

