



USRowing Recruiting Guidebook
(Updated December 2014)

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Getting Started	5
Definitions	6
Rules	9
Ivy League Differences	13
Timeline	14
Additional Information	19
USRowing Junior National Team Development and Selection Camps	21
Recruiting Documents and Resources	23
Contacts	24
Coaches Q&A	25

Introduction

Many high school rowers are interested in continuing their rowing careers in college. There are numerous factors to consider when choosing a college, and the rowing program is just one of those. In the process of researching collegiate rowing programs, high school students should be aware of the recruiting rules and initial academic eligibility requirements that apply to them. These rules and requirements are numerous and can be quite complicated.

This guidebook, which is a cooperative effort between USRowing and the Collegiate Rowing Coaches Association (CRCA), covers the basics of college recruiting for rowers. It is impossible to cover everything in these pages. If you are unsure of any rule or have additional questions, please consult your coach. If he or she does not know the answer, contact the National Collegiate Athletic Association, CRCA or USRowing to help find the correct guidance. We have listed contact information later in this guidebook.

There are several categories of collegiate rowing programs for men and women, and the recruiting and eligibility rules vary depending on the type of program. The NCAA sanctions women's rowing as a championships sport. Men's rowing is not a NCAA Championship sport, but there are varsity status men's programs with scholarship opportunities.

When the NCAA began tracking sports sponsorship at member schools in 1981-82, there were only 43 schools that offered women's rowing (28 in Division I). Today, there are approximately 145 NCAA varsity status women's rowing programs, which are sponsored by the athletics departments at NCAA member institutions. They are further divided into NCAA Division I, Division II and Division III programs. A listing of schools that sponsor women's rowing, separated by division, is available at www.ncaa.org. Schools in Division I and II are allowed to offer scholarships, while Division III schools are not. At the NCAA level, more than 7,000 women are currently rowing, with approximately 5,400 of them earning at least some scholarship dollars to do so.

Men's rowing (both open weight and lightweight) and lightweight women's rowing are not sponsored by the NCAA. There are varsity opportunities (including scholarship opportunities) available in all of these categories, but they are more limited than women's open weight rowing. The Intercollegiate Rowing Association runs the IRA National Championships, which is considered the national championship for varsity-level men's, lightweight men's and lightweight women's programs. The IRA currently has 45 affiliate members. According to the most recent NCAA participation study, there were 60 member schools offering men's varsity rowing (28 at Division I), with just under 2,400 participants.

Beyond varsity programs, many schools offer club rowing opportunities. Club programs are not sponsored by their school's athletic departments, do not offer scholarships and do most of their recruiting on campus. However, just because a program does not have varsity status doesn't mean it's not competitive or producing fast boats. There are many

highly competitive club programs across the country. The American Collegiate Rowing Association holds a national championship for club programs each year, several club programs produce nationally-ranked crews on a regular basis and six 2012 Olympians rowed at ACRA schools. ACRA has more than 160 member programs, which offer racing opportunities for open weight and lightweight men and women.

Much of the recruiting and initial eligibility information in this guidebook relates to NCAA rules. Because the NCAA does not sponsor men's rowing or lightweight women's rowing as a championship sport, NCAA rules have not been written specifically for these categories. However, most varsity programs follow the majority, if not all, of the NCAA rules for their recruits. IRA member schools follow NCAA guidelines, although NCAA initial eligibility certification is not required. Double-check with the university to which you are applying to make sure if initial eligibility certification is required by the school. A club team, whether it is for women or for men, does not have to follow NCAA rules because it is not a varsity intercollegiate team.

Once a student starts classes for the ninth grade, he or she is considered a prospective student-athlete (prospect) and NCAA rules regarding recruiting apply. Remember, the prospect's relatives or legal guardians are treated the same under NCAA recruiting rules as the prospect. If a college coach or prospect violates recruiting rules, the recruit could be ruled ineligible to compete for the college that was involved in the rules violation. While eligibility reinstatement is possible through an appeal process, it is best to follow all the rules from the outset. This guidebook addresses many of these rules in the pages to follow and provides links to additional information.

Getting Started

The first step of the recruiting process is to consider what you are looking for in a college. Rowing will not lead to a million-dollar contract, so choosing a college or university that will meet your academic requirements is a must.

Location, school size, average class size, academic programs offered, financial aid availability and tuition costs (among others) will play a role in determining the schools you want to investigate. General information can be found on each college's website, while *U.S. News and World Report* offers comprehensive college rankings with school summaries each year at <http://colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-colleges>.

On the water, you need to determine the type of program in which you want to participate. Are you looking for a top-ranked Division I or varsity program? Would a Division I, II or III experience fit you best? Is a varsity or club program more up your alley? Do you want to row lightweight? Are you a coxswain?

Remember, the NCAA only sanctions women's open weight rowing as a championship sport. While the number of varsity programs with scholarship opportunities for men and lightweight women is more limited, these opportunities still exist. Most of these schools follow the recruiting rules set by the NCAA for women's rowing.

Division I women's open weight programs and IRA Championship programs for men (open weight and lightweight) and lightweight women offer the highest level of competition.

There are several ways to find out who offers rowing at the collegiate level. Sparks Consulting (<http://rowingdb.sparkconsult.com>) and Rower's Edge (<http://www.roversedge.com>) offer comprehensive databases of rowing colleges.

The NCAA website, www.ncaa.org, has a listing of all NCAA institutions that offer varsity women's rowing at all three divisions. A listing of ACRA schools can be found at <http://www.americancollegiaterowing.com>. Row2k.com also has a good listing of schools with website links at <http://www.row2k.com/links/links.cfm?cat=1>.

Keep in mind that each school will have a limited number of scholarships or roster spots available each year, so make sure you start with a larger list of potential candidates before you start to narrow your choices down. Research the colleges you are interested in and determine whether or not you fit their recruiting profile. If you do, that's great. If you don't, figure out what you can do to improve your standing either academically or athletically and consider other schools that might be a better fit.

Definitions

As mentioned before, the NCAA only sanctions women's open weight rowing as a championship sport. Many of these definitions come from the NCAA guidebook, but varsity men's and varsity lightweight men's and women's programs follow most of the NCAA recruiting rules. Many of these definitions are reprinted or developed from the NCAA Eligibility Center's 2012-13 Guide for the College-Bound Student Athlete.

Academic Index. The Academic Index is a tool used by both Ivy League schools and other universities to compare the academic qualifications of athletes as a group to that of the student body as a whole. The index is based on a formula that includes standardized test scores, GPA and, sometimes, class rank. There are generally minimum requirements on the A.I. scale for admission at each university, and most teams have an average A.I. that they must hit for all recruits in a given year. Ask the coach at the schools you are interested in if they use an A.I. scale and their specific policy.

Amateurism Eligibility Requirements. Anyone who wants to participate in NCAA Division I or II athletics must be certified as an amateur student-athlete by the NCAA Eligibility Center. In Division III, the college or university completes the certification. When registering with the NCAA Eligibility Center, an athlete will be asked questions about his or her athletics participation. The information will be reviewed and a determination will be made as to whether the athlete's amateur status should be certified or if a penalty should be assessed before certification. If a penalty is assessed, there is an opportunity to appeal the decision.

Information that may be reviewed includes contracts with a professional team; salary for participating in athletics; prize money; competing with professionals; tryouts, practice or competition with a professional team; benefits from an agent or prospective agent; agreement to be represented by an agent; delayed initial full-time collegiate enrollment to participate in organized sports competition; and any financial assistance based on athletics skills or participation.

Contact. A contact occurs any time a coach has any face-to-face contact with you or your parents off the college's campus and says more than hello. A contact also occurs if a coach has any contact with you or your parents at your high school or any location where you are competing or practicing.

Contact period. During this time, a college coach may have in-person contact with you and/or your parents on or off the college's campus. The coach may watch you compete or visit your high school. You and your parents may visit a college campus, and the coach may write and telephone you during this period.

Core Course. Athletes wishing to compete at the NCAA Division I and II level are required to complete 16 core courses. A current list of core courses and required GPAs is available at www.eligibilitycenter.org. A core course must:

- Be an academic course in one or a combination of these areas: English, mathematics, natural/physical sciences, social sciences, foreign language, comparative religion or philosophy;
- Be four-year college preparatory; and
- Be taught at or above your high school's regular academic level (no remedial courses, those taught at a slower pace or those that cover less content.)
- These core courses must be completed during your first four years of high school. Any classes taken during a post-graduate year do not count towards your initial eligibility core courses.

Eligibility Center. The NCAA Eligibility Center certifies the academic and amateur credentials of all college-bound student-athletes who wish to compete in NCAA Division I or II athletics.

Evaluation. An evaluation is an activity by a coach to evaluate your academic or athletic ability. This would include visiting your high school or watching you practice or compete.

National Letter of Intent. The National Letter of Intent (NLI) is a voluntary program administered by the NCAA Eligibility Center. By signing an NLI, the college-bound student-athlete agrees to attend the college or university for one academic year. In exchange, that college or university must provide athletics financial aid for one academic year. Restrictions are contained in the NLI itself. Read them carefully. These restrictions may affect your eligibility. If you have questions about the NLI, visit the website at www.national-letter.org or call 317-223-0706. Men's rowing does not use the National Letter of Intent program.

Official visit. Any visit to a college campus by you and your parents paid for by the college. The college may pay all or some of the following expenses:

- Your transportation to and from the college;
- Room and meals (three per day) while you are visiting the college; and
- Reasonable entertainment expenses, including three complimentary admissions to a home athletics contest through the use of a pass list.

Before an NCAA program may invite you on an official visit, you will have to provide the college with a copy of your high school transcript (Division I only) and ACT, SAT or PLAN score and register with the NCAA Eligibility Center. At the Division I level, you are only allowed a total of five official visits and only one per school. If you are making an official visit to an IRA school, you may or may not be required to register with the NCAA Eligibility Center. Please check with each school to see if this is required prior to an official visit.

Pre-Reads. Pre-reads is a process done by the admissions or financial aid offices to give coaches an indication of the recruit's academic status for admissions (where they stand on the academic index) or status for financial aid. Once completed, a recruit has an indication of his or her academic chances of admissions or eligibility for financial aid,

and the coach knows if the recruit is a viable candidate for his or her program or what that prospect would need to do in order to become a viable candidate.

Prospective student-athlete (Prospect). You become a “prospective student-athlete” when:

- You start ninth-grade classes;
- Before your ninth-grade year, a college gives you, your relatives or your friends any financial assistance or other benefits that the college does not provide to students generally.

Quiet period. During this time, a college coach may not have any in-person contact with you or your parents off the college’s campus. The coach may not watch you compete or visit your high school during this period. You and your parents may visit a college campus during this time. A coach may write or telephone you or your parents during this time.

Unofficial visit. Any visit by you and your parents to a college campus paid for by you or your parents. The only expense you may receive from the college is three complimentary admissions to a home athletics contest through the use of a pass list. You may make as many unofficial visits as you like and may take those visits at any time.

Verbal commitment. This phrase is used to describe a college-bound student-athlete’s commitment to a school before he or she signs (or is able to sign) a National Letter of Intent. A college-bound student-athlete can announce a verbal commitment at any time. While verbal commitments have become very popular for both college-bound student-athletes and coaches, this “commitment” is NOT binding on either the college-bound student-athlete or the college or university. Only the signing of the National Letter of Intent accompanied by a financial aid agreement is binding on both parties.

Rules

Recruiting rules begin to apply to a prospective student-athlete at the start of his or her freshman year in high school. Under NCAA recruiting rules, parents, relatives and legal guardians are treated the same as the prospect. If a rules violation occurs, a prospect can be ruled ineligible to row for the school involved.

While the NCAA rulebook is expansive and is available online at www.ncaa.org, here are a few key rules athletes should know.

Phone Calls and Text Messages. Division I college coaches now can place telephone calls to prospects starting September 1 at the start of the prospect's junior year in high school (effective August 1, 2014). The date for Division II is June 15 immediately preceding the prospect's junior year in high school. There are no limits in Division III.

Once the applicable date is reached, phone calls from coaches are unlimited, rather than the previous one completed call per week, and text messaging is allowed in addition to phone calls. This change went into effect September 1, 2014.

Letters and E-mail. Division I college coaches can send printed recruiting materials, general correspondence and e-mail to prospects starting September 1 at the beginning of the junior year in high school. The date in Division II is June 15 prior to their junior year. There is no limit on the quantity of letters and e-mails that can be sent. Prospects can send letters and e-mails to college coaches at any time in their high school career as often as they want. Prior to the specified date, college coaches can only respond to a letter from a prospect requesting information with non-recruiting specific information such as information on NCAA rules or a referral to the admissions department. In Division I, coaches are not allowed to communicate with recruits through the use of text messaging, instant messaging, bulletin boards, chat rooms, or social networks such as Facebook.

Evaluations. College coaches may observe a prospect in practice and competition in order to evaluate their athletic ability. They can conduct evaluations at any point in the prospect's high school career. If a college coach is observing a practice, he or she may not ask the high school coach to have the team conduct a specific workout or drill, or otherwise influence the conduct of the practice session.

Contacts. Starting July 1 after completion of the junior year in high school, Division I college coaches can have face-to-face, in-person meetings with a prospect and the prospect's relatives that take place off the college's campus. Contacts are allowed much earlier in Division II: June 15 before the start of the junior year in high school. These contacts can take place in the prospect's home, prospect's high school (only with prior permission of the high school principal), at a practice site or at a competition site. In Division I, a maximum of three contacts can take place. There is no limit in Division II. A college coach may address a group of athletes following a practice session if the high school coach permits it. However, that group can only include athletes who have reached the date proscribed by the NCAA rules (e.g. seniors for Division I). Underclassmen may

not listen in at all, even on the periphery of the group, as this would constitute an improper contact.

The rules for contacts at a competition site are very restrictive. College coaches cannot contact or make telephone calls to a prospect from the time the prospect begins competition-related activity until all of the competition is over and the high school coach has released the athlete. This rule applies to multi-day events as well; no contacts or phone calls until completion of competition on the final day. Keep in mind that if the college coach puts himself in a position to greet or be greeted by a prospect or the prospect's relatives and a greeting is exchanged, this counts as a contact. Thus even a simple comment from the coach to the prospect like "good race" could constitute a contact. The college coach can have contact with the prospect's family at any time during competition.

Unofficial Visits: Visits that are not paid for by the school are called unofficial visits. Prospects and their parents can make visits to colleges at their own expense at any time during their high school career as many times as they want. The only thing that a college can provide during an unofficial visit is a maximum of three complimentary tickets to a home sporting event through the use of a pass list. Many schools encourage recruits to make unofficial visits in conjunction with home football and basketball games. During an unofficial visit, a school can provide transportation between campus and the rowing team's off-campus practice facility. But all other expenses associated with the unofficial visit, including parking, must be at the prospect's expense.

Official Visits. Prospects may make official visits that are paid for by the recruiting institution starting the opening day of classes their senior year in high school. Prior to any official visit to an NCAA program, the recruit must provide a copy of his or her high school transcript and either SAT, ACT, PSAT or PACT scores. The prospect also must be registered with the Eligibility Center prior to taking an official visit. If you are making an official visit to an IRA school, you may or may not be required to register with the NCAA Eligibility Center. Please check with each school to see if this is required prior to an official visit.

The college can pay for transportation for the recruit to and from the college campus, room and board during the visit, and reasonable entertainment. The recruit's parents or legal guardians can accompany the recruit on an official visit, and the college can pay for their room, board, and entertainment expenses. Under current NCAA rules, the college cannot pay for the parents' transportation unless the recruit and parents drive to the visit in the same car. A current member of the rowing team hosts most recruits. The recruit can stay in on-campus housing or at a nearby hotel. Official visits are restricted to a maximum of 48 hours in duration. At the Division I level, recruits also are limited to a maximum of five official visits with no more than one visit per school.

Scholarships. Some colleges and universities offer athletics-based scholarships for rowing. Athletics scholarships are separate from need-based and academic scholarships. Under NCAA rules, Division I and II schools can offer athletic scholarships. Division III

schools cannot offer athletic scholarships. Some athletic conferences, such as the Ivy League, have chosen not to offer athletic scholarships as a matter of conference policy.

Athletic scholarships can only pay for tuition, fees, room, board and required books. So an athletic scholarship does not pay for the full cost of attendance at a college. Transportation, school supplies, laundry and other incidentals cannot be covered. Under NCAA rules, student-athletes may be able to combine other sources of financial aid with athletic scholarships in order to cover the full cost of attendance.

The maximum number of scholarships that the NCAA permits is an equivalent of 20 for the entire team. But rowing scholarships can be provided on either a full or partial basis, so there may be more than 20 rowers on scholarship at any one time. Partial scholarships can be for any amount greater than zero but less than a full scholarship. Not all schools that offer rowing scholarships award the maximum of 20.

A school can make a scholarship offer to a recruit at any time, and a recruit can commit to a school at any time. But these commitments are not binding on either party. Only high school seniors can actually sign a binding scholarship offer. Most NCAA women's programs that offer rowing scholarships participate in the National Letter of Intent (NLI) program. This program provides a legally binding contract between the recruiting institution and the recruit. There are severe penalties if a recruit who signs an NLI decides to go to another rowing school that restrict the ability to compete for or receive a scholarship at the second institution. Information on the NLI program is available at www.national-letter.org.

There are two signing periods for women's rowing. The fall signing period is typically for a week in the middle of November. The spring signing period typically begins in the middle of April and extends until the fall semester/quarter begins.

Please keep in mind that most scholarship offers are only for a one-year period. Scholarships can be renewed, and also increased, throughout a student-athlete's years of eligibility. NCAA rules now allow for four-year guaranteed scholarships, but few schools have chosen to utilize that option.

Initial Eligibility. Every institution that offers a rowing program makes its own decision on whether or not to extend an offer of admission to a prospective rowing student-athlete. However, there is a completely separate and independent process that is used to determine if a graduated high school senior is academically eligible when they begin their collegiate rowing career. All college freshmen in NCAA Division I and II must be certified by the NCAA Eligibility Center. If a college freshman is not certified, they may not practice with the rowing team, compete with the rowing team or receive athletics-based scholarship. The eligibility determination is made based on the grade point average in 16 core courses, the results of the SAT or ACT test and proof of high school graduation. Complete information is available at www.eligibilitycenter.org.

High school rowers are encouraged to tell their guidance counselor that they intend to

participate in varsity-level athletics in college, so that they can plan to meet NCAA Eligibility Center requirements. They also are encouraged to register with the NCAA Eligibility Center at the beginning of their sophomore or junior years. The NCAA Eligibility Center also administers the process of certifying the amateur status of all high school graduates.

Ivy League Differences

(This information comes from the prospective-student athlete webpage on The Ivy League's website at: <http://www.ivyleaguesports.com/information/psa/index>.)

The Ivy League recruiting process is slightly different than that of other scholarship-based, varsity programs.

While the Ivy League schools have varsity-status programs, the conference does not allow athletic scholarships and instead offers financial aid based on need, which is determined by each school's financial aid office.

A coach may assist a prospective student-athlete to obtain an estimated financial aid award, but only the financial aid office can determine those awards and notify students officially of their actual or estimated awards. Ivy League coaches are knowledgeable about admissions policies, can help guide prospects through the process, and can offer advice based on feedback from admissions. Coaches also can support a prospect's application.

A recruit who receives an estimated financial aid award is allowed to share it with other Ivy League schools. In some cases, the other school's financial aid office may adjust an estimated financial aid award based on an estimate from another school.

There are two primary options for submitting an application and receiving an admissions decision. Prospective students who have decided on their first choice may apply to one Ivy League school by November 1 in order to receive notice of early decision or early action in December. Students also may apply under the regular decision application process to receive a decision in late March.

Under certain circumstances, institutions may issue a letter prior to the final admissions decision indicating that a candidate is "likely" to be admitted. This letter means that as long as the applicant sustains the academic and personal record reflected in the completed application, the institution will send a formal admission offer on the notification date. Only the admissions office can issue a likely letter after receiving a completed application and all required materials.

For more information on Ivy League recruiting guidelines, please visit <http://www.ivyleaguesports.com/information/psa/index>.

Timeline

Freshman Year

- The best advice for a high school freshman is to concentrate on your grades, start to develop good study habits and time management skills, and start some basic planning now.
- If you think you want to be a collegiate student-athlete, it is never too early to start working on the 16 core courses required by the NCAA Eligibility Center to be a Division I or II athlete. Talk to your guidance counselor and make sure that you are taking classes that meet this requirement. A list of these courses, a worksheet to help you plan out your high school courses, and an in-depth look at all of the requirements can be found in the NCAA Eligibility Center's 2012-13 Guide for the College-Bound Student Athlete found at http://web1.ncaa.org/ECWR2/NCAA_EMS/NCAA.jsp.
- At the end of your freshman year, review your grades and your progress on the 16 core courses to make sure you are on track for your sophomore year.
- You may want to attend a summer camp or a junior development camp where you can test your rowing skills against athletes from other programs, visit a college campus, and get coaching from coaches running the camp. This will help you with your skill development and give you some additional feedback on how you can improve as a rower.

Sophomore Year

- Continue to work on your academics. Check with your guidance counselor to make sure you are still on track with your core courses.
- Consider taking the PSAT. Although it is not required for college admissions, it gives you a chance to take a standardized test and learn what to expect when you take the SAT or ACT during your junior year.
- Be proactive. Start to make a list of colleges that you might be interested in and initiate contact with the coaches by mailing or e-mailing a personal profile or rowing résumé. Follow up with a call a few days later. Remember, by rule, you can contact a coach, but a coach cannot contact you. Don't be alarmed if a coach doesn't call you back.
- Create an online rowing résumé and recruiting profile. This should include your basic information, your rowing and academic accomplishments, and results.
- You also may want to prepare a video to provide to coaches and to include on your online profile. A rowing clip should include a couple of minutes of steady-

state rowing, as well as shots of your bladework. Race footage is not necessarily the best, because it may be shot at too far of a distance. If you are a coxswain, prepare an audio clip of your skills. Consider including audio of you running a practice, running a pre-race warm-up, and a race call. Remember to ask each coach individually if he or she wants you to submit a video clip before sending.

- Start planning unofficial visits to some of the colleges on your list. Remember, unofficial visits are at your own expense. You may talk to a coach while on an unofficial visit. The only expense you may receive from the college is three complimentary admissions to a home athletics contest through the use of a pass list. You may not make official visits until your senior year.
- At the end of your sophomore year, review your grades and track your progress on the 16 core courses to make sure you are on track for your junior year.
- During the summer, consider attending a college summer camp or an USRowing junior development or selection camp. More information on the USRowing Junior National Team camps is available later in this guidebook. These are a great way to test your rowing abilities with the best rowers in the country and get in front of college coaches.

Junior Year

- At the beginning of your junior year, you should register online with the NCAA Eligibility Center at www.eligibilitycenter.org.
- Register to take the ACT and SAT in the fall. Many students choose to take the ACT or SAT more than once in order to have multiple chances at a better score. By taking the test in the fall, it gives you more opportunities to take the test a second time and gives you more flexibility with your racing schedule come spring. Make sure you use the NCAA Eligibility Center code “9999” as a score recipient. This will send your official score directly to the NCAA Eligibility Center.
- Continue to work on your academics. Check with your guidance counselor to make sure you are still on track with your core courses. After your junior year, double check to see what courses you must complete as a senior in order to be eligible.
- Start, or continue, to send out contact letters with a personal profile. You should also send the coaches your fall and spring racing schedules as they become available. Have your high school or junior coach send letters of recommendation to the colleges.

- If you haven't done so already, create an online rowing résumé and recruiting profile. This should include your basic information, your rowing and academic accomplishments, and results. Remember to keep your profile up to date.
- Prepare or update your video to provide to coaches and to include on your online profile. A rowing clip should include a couple of minutes of steady-state rowing, as well as shots of your bladework. Race footage is not necessarily the best, because it may be shot at too far of a distance. If you are a coxswain, prepare an audio clip of your skills. Consider including audio of you running a practice, running a pre-race warm-up, and a race call. Again, remember to ask each coach individually if he or she wants you to submit a video clip before sending.
- Coaches may begin sending you recruiting materials starting September 1 of your junior year for Division I and starting June 15 before your junior year for Division II. For Division II schools, coaches are allowed unlimited calls starting June 15 before your junior year. Effective this year, Division I coaches are now able to contact prospects starting September 1 of the prospect's junior year in high school (10 months earlier than the previous date). Phone calls are now unlimited, rather than one completed call per week, and text messaging is allowed in addition to phone calls.
- After sending out your contact letters and schedules, you should follow up with a phone call a few days later. Remember, you can contact a coach at any time, but a Division I coach cannot contact you and cannot call you back until after the September 1 date. Try to call when a coach is likely to be available, and if you miss the coach, try back later.
- Make unofficial visits to as many of your top choices as possible. You may not start taking official visits until your senior year, but you can take as many unofficial visits as you like. Remember, unofficial visits are at your own expense. You may talk to a coach while on an unofficial visit. The only expense you may receive from the college is three complimentary admissions to a home athletics contest through the use of a pass list.
- Some programs have junior days, where potential student-athletes can meet the coach, learn more about the college or university, and learn more about the rowing program. Ask the coach of the programs you are interested in if they have a junior day and consider attending if they have one. Junior days are considered unofficial visits and follow those guidelines.
- After your junior year, have your high school send an official transcript to the NCAA Eligibility Center. If you have attended more than one high school, the NCAA Eligibility Center will need transcripts from all of your high schools. Please check with the NCAA Eligibility Center to see how to submit your transcript. Faxed and e-mailed transcripts and test scores are not accepted.

- Following your junior year, select the schools to which you want to visit and apply. Make sure you know the schools' admission deadlines, early admissions requirements, etc.
- During the summer, consider attending a college summer camp or an USRowing development or selection camp.

Senior Year

- Review your academic progress with your guidance counselor. Make sure you are still on track with your core courses. Continue to work hard and get the best grades possible.
- Take the ACT or SAT again, if necessary. The NCAA Eligibility Center uses the best scores from each section of the ACT or SAT to determine your best cumulative score.
- Prior to you signing your National Letter of Intent, coaches are allowed to send you recruiting materials, call you starting September 1 of your junior year in high school, and have up to seven evaluations your senior year.
- There are two signing periods for rowers. The early signing period is in November (November 13-20, 2013) and the regular signing period begins in April (April 14-August 1, 2014).
- By the start of your senior year, you should have narrowed your school list to a handful of top choices. You should continue to narrow this down during September to a couple of priority schools. Some coaches may want their recruits to verbally commit as early as the beginning of October. While this is six weeks before the early signing date, keep this in mind in case one of your top choices is looking for a quicker decision. Coaches use whatever influence they have at admissions based on your attractiveness as a candidate and the strength of your commitment.
- Tell the coaches on your short list where they stand because you may request an official visit or admissions help, and you don't want to mislead them or to waste their time and resources. If you're still unsure about your preference order, it's acceptable to say they're in your top (X) schools, but be prepared to narrow it down quickly.
- Ask coaches to let you know where you are in their recruiting hierarchy, how likely you are to be admitted with and without their support, and how much impact they expect to have on admissions decisions for the coming year.
- Take your official visits. In Division I, you can start taking official visits your opening day of classes your senior year. You are allowed one official visit to up to

five different schools. In Division II, you are allowed unlimited official visits, while you are allowed one official visit per school at the Division III level. Remember that prior to any official visit to an NCAA Division I or II program, you must have registered with the NCAA Eligibility Center, provided a copy of your high school transcript, and provided either SAT, ACT, PSAT or PACT test scores.

- If you have a scholarship offer and plan on signing your NLI in the early signing period, communicate your decision to the coaches recruiting you as soon as you make a decision.
- Send in your application, transcripts, and test scores by the admissions deadline. Make sure the coach knows that you have sent in your application, so they can tag it if necessary.
- If you are interested in an Ivy League program, devise an “early action” or “early decision” strategy in consultation with your parents and counselors. Remember that many “early action” programs now prohibit early applications to other schools. In these cases, though, they usually permit regular decision applications elsewhere and do not require you to accept their offer of admission until May 1.
- Review your amateurism responses and request amateurism certification after April 1 (for fall enrollees) or October 1 (for spring enrollees).
- After graduation, make sure your school sends your final transcript with proof of graduation to the NCAA Eligibility Center.

Additional Information

Other Tips

- Be proactive.
- Remember to make a good first impression. Keep your written correspondence concise, address the coach by name, and check all your materials for spelling and grammar.
- Be prepared and ask good questions on your unofficial and official visits.
- Attend a class during your campus visits to get the feel of the college experience.

Recruiting Profile

When you create your recruiting profile, treat it as if you were creating a job résumé. This is your opportunity to make a good first impression on a coach. Make sure you are concise and that your spelling and grammar are correct. Keep the most relevant information near the top.

Also, make sure you use a format that any computer can read. Coaches may be using different computer software or hardware than you, so a .pdf file is the safest bet.

Your recruiting profile should include your contact information including address, home phone, cell phone, name of parents and parents' phone numbers, if different. You also should include contact information on your high school and/or rowing program including address, coach's name, and coach's phone number.

Next, you should include your athletic results and accomplishments. This should include an ergometer score (2k and 6k), race results, team honors or awards, post-season honors or awards, etc. Include any junior national team development or selection camp invitations as well. Make sure you are accurate with your scores; don't embellish.

Next, provide your academic information including your GPA, ACT/SAT test scores, and any academic achievements you may have received such as National Honor Society or the USRowing Scholastic Honor Roll. You also may want to include extra curricular activities such as student council, yearbook editor, etc.

You can include a head shot on the profile if you like, and try to limit your profile to one or two pages at the most. The profile should give a coach a quick glance at you as a potential student-athlete. If it is too long, you run the risk that the coach will stop reading.

Video Clips

Video can be a great tool for your recruiting profile. You can email your clip directly to the coaches, as well as keep it updated on a recruiting profile. The clip should include a couple of minutes of steady-state rowing, as well as shots of your bladework. Race footage is not necessarily the best footage, because it may be shot at too far of a distance. If you are a coxswain, prepare an audio clip of your skills. Consider including audio of

you running a practice, running a pre-race warm-up, and a race call. Ask each coach individually if he or she wants you to submit a video clip before sending.

Recruiting Websites

In addition to creating your own online website, there are several recruiting databases out there where you can upload your athlete profile to get in front of coaches and research colleges.

Sparks Consulting (<http://rowingdb.sparksconsult.com>), Rower's Edge (<http://www.roversedge.com>) and Vespoli USA (<http://www.vespoli.com/recruiting>) offer databases of rowing colleges. Multi-sport recruiting databases such as beRecruited (<http://new.berecruited.com/>) also are available.

Recruiting Services

The Rowers Edge and Sparks Consulting are two fee-based, rowing-specific recruiting services that will help athletes find a college rowing fit. They provide more individual attention than standard recruiting websites.

Club Rowing

Club programs have limited recruiting budgets and do most of their recruiting on campus or through contacting incoming freshmen or other members of the student body. If you are interested in rowing for a club program, take a look at the recruiting websites and the ACRA website to see if the school that you will be, or that you are interested in, attending has a rowing program.

Once you've determined if the school has a rowing program, reach out to the coach or the club contact, which may be a current rower, to find out more information about the program such as costs to compete, dates for an open boathouse, dates for tryouts or calls for new rowers, competitive race schedules, etc. Once you get to school, keep your eyes open for on-campus recruiting information through flyers, campus posters, and rec sport days.

USRowing Junior National Team Development and Selection Camps

USRowing Junior National Team Development and Selection Camps serve the primary purpose of developing and selecting athletes to represent the United States in international competition at the junior level.

However, they also are a great way to improve your rowing skills, compare your abilities to athletes across the country, and increase your visibility as a prospect to college coaches across the country. And if you are fast enough to make the Junior National Team, it's a great accomplishment for your rowing résumé.

There are five primary kinds of Junior National Team camps available to rowers and coxswains including Junior ID Camps, Junior B Sculling Camps, Development Camps, High Performance Camps and Selection Camps. Complete information on all of these opportunities can be found at <http://usrowingjrs.org/usj/>.

ID Camps

These camps are instructional with a focus on providing insight into what is required of junior national team rowers and coxswains and the tools to achieve success at the international level. Our junior national team coaches work hard to demonstrate ways the athletes can improve and to help athletes discover that the junior national team is both attainable and fun.

Highlights of the ID Camp program include:

- The Junior National Team — who we are and what the selection camp and development camps are all about (open to parents and coaches).
- The learning experience of the Junior World Championships, with a question and answer session with a member of the squad, where members are available (open to parents and coaches).
- Expectations and things you can do to become a more effective rower/coxswain including how to use tapes (both audio and video) for feedback, technique issues, and review/demonstrations of core strengthening/circuit training exercises (open to coaches).

Junior B Sculling Camps

USRowing's Junior B Sculling Camps are a unique opportunity for 14- and 15-year-old athletes to get introduced to sculling in a fun and safe environment. The coaching staffs at each of the camps are all accomplished rowers and coaches from NCAA champions to former U.S. National and Olympic Team athletes.

Development Camps

The development camps provide young, talented, and tall athletes with an experience in either a sweep or sculling setting that incorporates the on-land, learning lab environments of development camp, with a competitive training and racing component through intra-squad scrimmages.

The goal of this camp is to identify athletes with potential early in their rowing careers and put them in an environment where they can learn and grow in the sport. This will better position them to understand the process behind contending for a world championship. High stress performance training, off-water learning labs, and water sessions will begin to address and develop all issues surrounding the continuation of the athlete toward the world championship level. Through the progression of camp, these sessions will become more competitive in nature with a focus on execution.

High Performance Camps

High Performance Camps provide young, talented athletes with an experience in either a sweep or sculling setting that incorporates the on-land, learning lab environments of development camp, with a competitive training and racing component.

The goal of this camp is to identify age-eligible athletes with potential to compete at a high level as identified through the development camp program or from their individual clubs. This camp puts them in an environment where they can learn, grow, and represent the USA in suitably competitive international and/or domestic training and racing opportunities. This will better position them to understand the process behind contending for a world championship. High stress performance training, off-water learning labs, and water sessions will begin to address and develop all issues surrounding the continuation of the athlete toward the world championship level. Through the progression of camp, these sessions will become more competitive in nature with a focus on execution.

Selection Camps

This is the highest level of camp for junior rowers. The selection camps select the big boats that will represent the United States at the World Rowing Junior Championships each year including the men's eight, women's eight, men's four with coxswain, men's four, women's four, men's quadruple sculls, and women's quadruple sculls. Selection camps also select some small boats for trials competition. Selection Camp invitations are sent out by the junior men's and junior women's national team coaches. More information regarding the junior national team selection process, as well as deadlines for submission, may be found at www.usrowing.org.

Recruiting Documents and Resources

NCAA Eligibility Center

http://web1.ncaa.org/ECWR2/NCAA_EMS/NCAA.jsp

NCAA on Amateurism

<http://www.ncaa.org/wps/wcm/connect/public/ncaa/eligibility/becoming+eligible/amateurism>

NCAA on Eligibility

<http://www.ncaa.org/wps/wcm/connect/public/ncaa/eligibility>

NCAA on Division III

<http://www.ncaa.org/wps/wcm/connect/public/ncaa/division+iii/information+for+prospective+students+athletes+and+parents>

NCAA on Recruiting

<http://www.ncaa.org/wps/wcm/connect/public/NCAA/Eligibility/Becoming+Eligible/Recruiting>

National Letter of Intent

<http://www.ncaa.org/wps/wcm/connect/nli/NLI/Home/>

Ivy League Sports: Prospective Student-Athlete Information

<http://www.ivyleaguesports.com/information/psa/index>

College Recruiting Services

Rower's Edge

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

Sparks Consulting

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

Other Resources

Here are some other great resources on recruiting that may be of interest.

Row in College – A Recruiting Guide for Female Student-Athletes by Ian Simpson

<http://athletesbooks.com/rowing/row-in-college/>

Rowing Recruiting (from Sparks Consulting)

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

Guide to the Athletic Recruiting Process for Parents E-Book (Not rowing specific)

<http://recruiting-101.com/five-steps-to-earn-an-athletic-scholarship/guide-to-the-athletic-recruiting-process-for-parents-e-book/>

Contacts

NCAA Eligibility Center

1-877-262-1492

http://web1.ncaa.org/ECWR2/NCAA_EMS/NCAA.jsp

Bill Zack

Chair of the Collegiate Rowing Coaches Association Legislative Review Committee

(Office): 1-619-594-0650

(Fax): 1-619-594-1674

USRowing

2 Wall Street

Princeton, NJ 08540

1-800-314-4ROW

members@usrowing.org

Coaches Q&A

We asked different coaches from a variety of programs to discuss recruiting. Here are their answers.

Al Acosta – University of California Women’s Head Coach (Varsity)
(Formerly Stanford University’s Lightweight Women’s Coach)

What is the top tool that you use to identify a prospect?

I think there are about four or five ways a rower can distinguish herself, and it’s really hard to say which one of these ways is better. Obviously, the various erg competitions are the easiest way to start sorting kids out. Our rowing camp over the summer is another good way to see these athletes. My assistant coach and I go to regattas or junior practices and are able to see the prospects in action. And a lot of kids just email us or fill out our online recruiting questionnaire.

What do you look at first: an athlete’s on-the-water performance or her accomplishments in the classroom?

Usually, we see their athletic accomplishments first. But in order for us to get really interested or take the next step, we have to see a strong academic résumé.

If you could offer one piece of advice to a prospect wanting to row in your program, what would it be?

Pull a good erg, get great grades, and then contact us. Fill out the online recruiting questionnaire on our website, email us, or call us. We talk to rowers and parents of rowers all the time.

How important are the impressions you take from your first meeting with a prospect?

Usually, we know a fair amount about the athlete before we meet. So in a sense, they've already made an impression. I discount the first meeting a bit. I mean, unless the kid is just texting away and not laughing at any of my jokes...sometimes the kids are nervous and they have a hard time talking about themselves, and sometimes they enjoy talking about themselves too much! During the recruiting process, there's a lot of back and forth between the coach and the athlete, so they have a lot of time to make a good impression.

For an athlete or a parent who are just starting the recruiting process, what is the first piece of advice you would give them?

Decide how much you want to commit to rowing in college. Once you have a good idea of where and why you want to row at a particular school, you should email the coach with a complete athletic and academic résumé and fill out the online recruiting questionnaire.

What is the best way for a recruit to initiate contact with a coach or a program if they have interest in that school?

The best way to initiate contact is to e-mail a résumé and then set up a time to chat on the phone.

Many of the recruiting rules between NCAA women's programs and varsity lightweight programs are similar, what are the biggest differences?

As far as I know, we follow the same rules.

Junior lightweights are unique in that an open weight NCAA program and a lightweight varsity program can recruit them. What are the nuances that a lightweight should be aware of in the recruiting process?

The nuance is 130 pounds. If they're under 130 pounds on a daily basis and the school has lightweight rowing, they should strongly consider rowing lightweight.

Martin Crotty – Princeton University Lightweight Men's Head Coach (Varsity)

What is the top tool that you use to identify a prospect?

We use our recruiting questionnaire, which is posted on our website as the main tool to first learn about an athlete. The fact that an athlete has gone online, discovered our website, and filled out the form indicates a real interest in Princeton, even if it's just initial interest.

What do you look at first: an athlete's on-the-water performance or his accomplishments in the classroom?

I notice as an athlete because of his on-the-water performance, published erg scores, or race results. Mike and I pour over results over the weekend, and on Mondays, try to discover the world's best talent. Our revelations are quickly followed by inquiries about academic profiles.

If you could offer one piece of advice to a prospect wanting to row in your program, what would it be?

Make your specific interest in Princeton known and be proactive in your communication with us. While we take pride in spanning the globe and "recruiting," there are only two of us, and we cannot possibly know who every eligible athlete is out there, and we cannot make guesses about their intentions. We form the best relationships with guys who can communicate their goals to us, set a course, and when we track their progress, we see that they are on a great trajectory for future development.

How important are the impressions you take from your first meeting with a prospect?

First impressions are very important to us. If you make a good one, it lasts a long time in our hearts and minds. Whether it's a firm handshake, being attentive during a brief boathouse tour, asking good, productive questions, or something as simple as compiling some of the information we asked for in a timely and organized manner, yes, they're important. Of course, anyone can certainly recover from a less than stellar first

impression. God knows, I've most likely come across the wrong way the first time someone has met me.

For an athlete or a parent who are just starting the recruiting process, what is the first piece of advice you would give them?

If you want to be “recruited,” or start a process that may result in a) a scholarship or b) your application getting supported at a school with very competitive admissions standards, I would ask yourself three questions. 1) Am I definitely committed to rowing for four years in college? 2) If yes, what are the academic standards for the universities I wish to attend (top, middle, bottom). 3) What are the athletic standards for the universities I wish to attend? After answering those three questions, you should have a decent tranche of universities to contact and start an initial conversation. If the answer to #1 is “no,” do not start the “recruiting process.”

What is the best way for a recruit to initiate contact with a coach or a program if they have interest in that school?

Go online and do a search for the contact information for the head coach and assistant coaches of the program you wish to contact. At first, email is best, and don't give up if you do not get a reply. Always follow up a few weeks after the first contact to make sure the coach has not been overseas, or involved in summer coaching or something. Most coaches understand the importance of close communication, but you would never want a lapse in communication to affect your desire to attend the university of your choice. You are not bothering us. It is our job to communicate effectively with each and every person who seeks initial contact.

Many of the recruiting rules between NCAA women's programs and varsity lightweight programs are similar, what are the biggest differences?

No need for NCAA Clearinghouse registration. Save your \$65! (This may differ by program. Please contact the specific program to see if they use the NCAA Eligibility Center.)

What are the key differences for a prospect between the Ivy League recruiting process versus other varsity programs?

There's no question that your academic profile will drive the process in the Ivy League. Not that academics are not important outside of our league, but in the Ivy League, there is simply no way around some specific measures. First and foremost, your past performance in your secondary school is paramount. The grades you have received to date, the competitiveness of your course load, and while it is becoming less and less common for individuals to have a class rank, how you stack up against your classmates is a big deal. In addition, SAT 1/ACT scores and SAT 2 Subject test scores carry some weight when it comes to eventually being admitted. Despite what you may have heard, you have to meet the base criteria to even get considered. This varies from university to university.

Hilary Gehman – Cornell University Women's Head Coach (Division I)

What is the top tool that you use to identify a prospect?

Talking to high school coaches! We also look at race results, ID camp results when available, and of course, having prospects contact us/fill out our recruiting form.

What do you look at first: an athlete's on-the-water performance or his/her accomplishments in the classroom?

Athletic performance first, followed closely by academic merit.

If you could offer one piece of advice to a prospect wanting to row in your program, what would it be?

Pull hard (on the water and on land) and work hard in the classroom!

How important are the impressions you take from your first meeting with a prospect?

Meeting someone in person is always helpful to get a better sense of who they are, what they are interested in, and their level of interest in our program and university. It is always helpful when the prospect has done some research on their own, so they come with informed questions and a basic knowledge of the university/rowing program.

Also, it's important that the prospect initiates the first contact with (or responds to) the coach. If a parent is the first one to contact the coach, it raises a red flag as to who is really interested in the school. Also, if your e-mail is blatantly generic ("Dear Coach, I am interested in your program"), it means that you're sending e-mail blasts out to many coaches. It's fine to be interested in multiple programs, but please take the time to personalize your e-mail correspondence.

For an athlete or a parent who are just starting the recruiting process, what is the first piece of advice you would give them?

Don't be afraid to contact the coaches. Ask a lot of questions and learn as much as you can about each program you are interested in. Visit the campus and get a sense of if the school itself is a good fit. It has to work academically and athletically.

What is the best way for a recruit to initiate contact with a coach or a program if they have interest in that school?

E-mail or fill out our online recruiting form.

What are the key differences for a prospect between the Ivy League recruiting process versus other varsity programs?

Academic qualifications are a critical component in the Ivy recruiting process. Also, there are no athletic scholarships in the Ivy League, and therefore, it does not use the National Letter of Intent (NLI).

Gregg Hartsuff – University of Michigan Men's Head Coach (Club)

What is the top tool that you use to identify a prospect?

I want four to five pieces of information on a recruit: 1) Recent 2K or 6K score, 2) weight, 3) height, 4) academic stats: ACT or SAT score and GPA, and 5) if he's won any important races in a single, double, or pair. (Results in fours and eights do not tell me much.)

If you could offer one piece of advice to a prospect wanting to row in your program, what would it be?

Be prepared to work very hard to improve your rowing skill and efficiency and your erg score, and be open-minded and realize what you were taught in high school may be different than what I, or another coach, will teach you.

For an athlete or a parent who are just starting the recruiting process, what is the first piece of advice you would give them?

When looking at places to attend, try and imagine how it would be at that place if you DIDN'T row. Things may not work out. You could find you don't like the team, coach, situation, get a career-ending injury, or other factors could cause you to drop out. Be sure you are at a place you would like if that were to happen.

What is the best way for a recruit to initiate contact with a coach or a program if they have interest in that school?

Email or a recruiting form is most preferred. This way, it is documented and communications can be reviewed. If you have good stats, you will get a return correspondence.

What recruiting methods do you focus on as a club program, and how do you recruit high school rowers?

Pretty standard: email, phone calls, arrange visits, interact with our student-athletes and coaches. But ideally, the school sells the program. Typically in most places, the freshman coach handles most aspects of recruiting for a men's team and initiates correspondence. We use berecruited.com and other services as well. Number one is to fill out the recruiting form on the website.

If a high school or junior rower is interested in rowing for a club program in college, what suggestions would you give that person in finding the right fit?

Besides being drawn to the institution itself, get a sense of how hard they work and what the commitment is. Commitment can vary drastically in college clubs. How much and often do they practice? Ask them what are acceptable excuses for missing practice - that will tell you a lot about their commitment level. Attend some of their practices and you will see if their level of seriousness matches yours. Ask about dues and fundraising obligations as well, if those are factors for you. Get a sense of what the programs mission is, if it is competitive, and what is that competitive mission.

Kate Maloney – Williams College Women's Head Coach (Division III)

What is the top tool that you use to identify a prospect?

I use a combination of recruit interest forms filled out on our website, coach conversations and email interest from the prospect themselves.

What do you look at first: an athlete's on-the-water performance or his or her accomplishments in the classroom?

Williams is a very academic institution, which places a high priority on classroom and testing accomplishment. Therefore, I look at academics first and then athletic accomplishment.

If you could offer one piece of advice to a prospect wanting to row in your program, what would it be?

Be proactive! If you like a school and its program, contact the coach via email. Be thorough! Give as much information as possible, both academic and athletic.

How important are the impressions you take from your first meeting with a prospect?

First impressions are very important. Give a good handshake. Make eye contact. Be humble but competitive.

For an athlete or a parent who are just starting the recruiting process, what is the first piece of advice you would give them?

Research the school. Understand the makeup of the campus, if it is undergraduate or graduate focused, where it is, its academic strengths, etc. Prospects need to be looking at the school and its community first, rowing program second.

What is the best way for a recruit to initiate contact with a coach or a program if they have interest in that school?

Email is best, with lots of pertinent information. A coach doesn't need to know every regatta finish, just the one's you feel showcase your athletic accomplishments. Include height, weight, erg score, GPA, testing (ACT/SAT/ SAT IIs). Attaching a résumé or CV is an easy way for a coach to start a file on a prospect.

As someone who has coached at Division I and Division III programs, what are the biggest differences in the recruiting process that a prospect should be aware of?

There are different recruiting rules! For instance, I can call a prospect in her junior year, but I cannot visit recruits off campus for a home visit in any year or have contact with them of any kind off campus (even after they have been released from a regatta). So, email and phone conversations are a big part of the process. Prospects can meet with me on campus only.

Dave Reischman – Syracuse University Men's Head Coach (Varsity)

What is the top tool that you use to identify a prospect?

Most of our recruits are identified because they send us an email and indicate they are interested in learning more. The next two most useful tools are when coaches contact us

about athletes, or we make a site visit at either a regatta or a program's practice. I think the best thing an athlete can do is get online, research programs you are interested in, and then send the coach an email with your academic and rowing information.

What do you look at first: an athlete's on-the-water performance or his or her accomplishments in the classroom?

To be honest with you, very little of the recruiting process involves an athlete's on-the-water performance. At some point, we want to look at them in a boat, but win/loss records mean very little. If you were recruiting for football and you found out about a 6'2" wide receiver that could run a 4.5-second 40-yard dash, would you want to know how many games his team won? Maybe somewhere down the road but not initially. I would say that the crucial pieces of information we want to start a conversation with are GPA, SAT/ACT scores, height, weight, and erg scores. In other words, does this athlete fit the academic profile of our institution, and does he/she have the physical tools necessary to be a Division 1 rower?

If you could offer one piece of advice to a prospect wanting to row in your program, what would it be?

Be prepared to work hard both academically and athletically. At any good program, they go hand in hand. We are not interested in athletes that "just want to row." Truly exceptional athletes want to excel at everything they do.

How important are the impressions you take from your first meeting with a prospect?

I think first impressions are very important, and I would say those impressions start with the first communications with a prospect and then extend over to the first in-person meeting. The current generation needs to know that your ability to communicate in an appropriate manner is still very important in establishing credibility. Save the "I want 2 row 4 U!" stuff for texting your friends. Make sure your initial email is well written and to the point. It may be a function of all the social media options people use in their daily lives, but you would be surprised at the number of emails we get that don't contain a single complete sentence.

When we meet an athlete in person, your ability to articulate and present yourself tells us a lot. Parents, if you are along on the visit, sit back and let your child speak! I usually give the parents time to ask questions at the end. During the meeting, I want to get to know the athlete. It's a great idea to show up with some questions that you want answered about the school or program.

For an athlete or a parent who are just starting the recruiting process, what is the first piece of advice you would give them?

I would tell them to do their homework. There are a lot of options out there for someone who wants to row in college – from the top D1/D2/D3/club programs that are seeking championships to other similar programs that are more participation oriented. Make a list of schools that participate at the level you want to compete at and then find one that is a good academic fit with a course of study that strikes your interest. Once you get to that

point, you can start looking at the programs. Every program has a different “personality,” and you need to find one that works for you.

What is the best way for a recruit to initiate contact with a coach or a program if they have interest in that school?

The best way to initiate contact with us is for the athlete, not the parent, to send us an email or call us on the phone. I always start off a little suspicious if a parent is emailing me for information or calling me to set up a visit. I want athletes that are capable of handling their own business. Parents are an important part of the process, but these are important life skills for your son or daughter to learn. By all means, give them direction and talk to them about how to go about it, but make sure they write the email and make the calls.

Many of the recruiting rules between NCAA women’s programs and varsity men’s programs are similar. What are the biggest differences?

Our league has chosen to follow all of the NCAA recruiting rules, so we follow the exact same rules as our women’s program.

Nathan Rooks – Stanford University Women’s Assistant Coach and Recruiting Coordinator (Division I)

What is the top tool that you use to identify a prospect?

For us, it’s a networking blend – checking in with the clubs that are performing well and following the U.S. Junior National Team identification and development system.

What do you look at first: an athlete’s on-the-water performance or his or her accomplishments in the classroom?

We have a general range of athletic performance standards, but the main hurdle for us is getting candidates with the success and rigor on the academic side of things to satisfy admissions. Every student athlete’s application is read individually at Stanford, just like every other applicant; there are no guarantees. With a 5.7 percent admittance rate this past year, we’re looking for the very best students who also happen to be exceptional athletes and want a place that supports being both.

If you could offer one piece of advice to a prospect wanting to row in your program, what would it be?

Take hard classes, get more As than Bs, and show that you can balance being a driven athlete and motivated student.

How important are the impressions you take from your first meeting with a prospect?

We are interested in rowers who understand what it means to be a student-athlete at Stanford and are willing to put in the work to access the opportunities that come with that. Throughout the recruiting process, we work with the pool of potential recruits to

assess how they would fit in at Stanford as a scholar, a teammate, and as a person. It usually takes more than a single meeting to fully judge that.

For an athlete or a parent who are just starting the recruiting process, what is the first piece of advice you would give them?

Communicate with coaches honestly, early and often, and try to go on unofficial visits to identify the schools you are truly interested in.

What is the best way for a recruit to initiate contact with a coach or a program if they have interest in that school?

For us, it's filling out our online questionnaire and emailing the assistant coaches.