



CHESTERFIELD UNITED FC

COLLEGE GUIDANCE PROGRAM

Below are list of headings that you will find very useful. Please read through the whole program. If you have any questions, please feel free to email Pat McStay at pmcstay@chesterfieldunited.com.

ACADEMIC GOALS

ACADEMICS

Student athletes spend a large part of their lives in school taking classes to meet graduation requirements. Unfortunately, many student athletes fall prey to the "bureaucracy" of the education system instead of using it to their advantage! Understanding how to make the education system work FOR you will be one of the most beneficial things you can do. In order to market yourself with colleges you must place priority on becoming the best student you can be, regardless of your academic capability. Colleges pay attention to your GPA, but they also want to ensure that they are making an investment in a student who is willing to put in the effort to be the best they can be! Don't forget, not all colleges require high grades! There is a school for you!

ACHIEVE GOALS

In order to achieve your goals, your plan must focus on...

YOUR ULTIMATE GOAL

It is important to "begin with the end in mind!" In other words you must clearly articulate what your dream actually is. Your ultimate goal is your dream, whether it be gaining a college scholarship or signing as a professional athlete. Your ultimate goal provides you with the focus so that every sub-goal and action you take is designed with the purpose of achieving your Ultimate academic/athletic dream!

Common mistake: Many athletes do not clearly articulate or communicate their ultimate goal to their family, loved ones and influential people like coaches, teachers etc. By defining and

communicating your ultimate goal you are getting influential people "on the same page" as you. This will help you harness the collective energies of these people and also help you stay on target during the tough times. When coaches know your intentions they will keep you in mind for special training opportunities that arise.

IGNITING THE PASSION

How much you really want a college scholarship or to play pro will be reflected on a daily basis in relation to how much you dedicate your time and actions toward that goal.

Your emotional energy will provide the fuel to ignite your passion toward your ultimate goal. Be very clear that this process is wonderful, but it is also one that will challenge you deeply as you work through adversities. It is your passion and dedication to your ultimate goal that will make the difference in your level of success. The more emotionally "charged or psyched" you are, the more it will help you achieve your goal!

QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU TAP INTO YOUR EXTRAORDINARY EMOTIONAL POTENTIAL...

1. How would you feel when you get a scholarship/sign a pro contract?
2. How would your family feel when you receive a scholarship/sign a pro contract?
3. How would your friends, teammates, coaches, etc. feel when you receive a scholarship?
4. Imagine speaking to a younger group of student athletes about how you achieved your dream?
5. How would the financial assistance you receive from a scholarship effect you? your parents? Your siblings?
6. How good would it feel to show the "negative people" that you have achieved your dream?

SUB-GOALS

Academics

Sport Specific Skills

Fitness and Conditioning

Social /Personal/family goals

Promotion

Timelines

Time & Resource Management

SPORTS SPECIFIC GOALS

College coaches are looking for student athletes who are good investments, academically and athletically. Preparing yourself athletically is a critical step in **PLANNING TO PREPARE YOURSELF PROPERLY TO BE PROMOTED.**

Common Mistake: Too many athletes "promote" themselves in front of college recruiters **BEFORE** they have developed the skills that the recruiters are looking for! This is a very common and profound mistake!

Your athletic ability in your sport and position and your overall athleticism will largely determine the level of scholarship that you are offered.

There are a few naturally gifted athletes who have the genetic makeup that make them "top prospects" seemingly without much additional effort. However, the majority of athletes are not as genetically privileged so it is imperative that they develop careful plans to develop and refine their sport specific skills.

2 very important points need to be made on the onset...

1. You must know what the recruiters are looking for! Find out specifically what recruiters in your sport for your position are looking for in potential prospects!
2. Utilize the expertise of the best training professionals that you possibly can. By receiving top professional training specifically pinpointing the skills the recruiters are looking for you will also be promoting yourself and developing a list of references for your athletic resume or profile.

SOCIAL, PERSONAL AND FAMILY GOALS

Each athlete and family also has personal, social and family goals. For example, parents often express the goal of "supporting their children in the quest and realization of their dreams." Sharing these goals within the family is a critical element because you need these goals to work in concert with each other rather than in opposition. The key to the success of the PLAN to achieve the ULTIMATE GOAL often lies in the ability to embrace the importance of personal, family and social life. Synchronizing social, personal and family life and their associated goals into the PLAN to achieve the ULTIMATE GOAL is absolutely necessary and will be one of the greatest assets in helping the family enjoy the process!

COMMON MISTAKES: The topic of "social and family life" is most often the culprit when it comes to frustration and conflict within the family. Parents often make what athletes feel are "unfair or unrealistic demands" in relation to the athlete's social life, largely due to a lack of trust. Conversely, the athlete often does not understand the pressures that parents face. The 3 most common mistakes that result in the breakdown of the process are...

1. Parents do not trust their children (the student/athlete) to follow through on their PLAN to achieve the ULTIMATE GOAL (eg. If the student athlete gets lower grades than expected parents will often feel it is because the student athlete spends too much time watching tv or playing video games!)
2. Student/athletes have not earned their parents' trust by demonstrating the positive work habits and commitment to their ULTIMATE GOAL.

Because parents put forth such huge time, financial and emotional commitments to the student athlete it is imperative that the student athlete gain the respect and trust of their parents by addressing their goals with commitment and passion. In short... parents must TRUST and student athletes must be GOOD INVESTMENTS! (Manage their time well and be serious about achieving their goals)

3. Parents have not clearly communicated the goals that they have for the family, themselves and other siblings.

By developing and sharing the PLAN to achieve the ULTIMATE GOAL, the family will be operating from the "same page" in terms of what needs to be achieved in order to reach the goal. This common understanding, as well as the synchronization of the sub-goals of the plan will allow the athlete and family to make optimal use of available time and resources. Parents will develop patterns of trust when the athlete exhibits a positive commitment and good habits toward the sub-goals. As well, the athlete will understand that they must be a GOOD INVESTMENT in regards to the manner and amount of time they spend achieving their goals.

The student athlete must be very aware of the importance of building "good character!" college coaches place high value on "character and make up" and will look deeply into a prospective athlete's personal and social behaviors.

Athletes must pay particular attention to any weaknesses they have in the area of personal or social development. Clear goals and specific actions to address any issues are extremely important!

By building in the personal, social and family sub-goals, the family and the athlete will have identified and addressed the importance of regularly sitting down and discussing the PLAN to achieve the ULTIMATE GOAL!

PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL SKILLS

Physical Skills (Mechanics, Technique, Actions, Movement patterns)

College coaches often make decisions on your potential after watching you perform for just a few minutes. They assess your movement patterns, the efficiency of your movement and skills as well as your potential for development and/or injury. They look at how "mechanically sound" you are to determine whether you are able to fit into the structure and philosophy of their particular program. Therefore, it is critically important for the student athlete to begin working on the proper mechanics, actions, movement patterns of their particular sport and position at the earliest possible time. Remember...promote a quality product!

College coaches pay attention as well to general athleticism and athletic ability. They may recognize a quality that you possess (such as running speed or explosive power, or first step quickness) and offer you a scholarship based on that skill alone! For example...you often hear coaches say, "You can't teach that kind of natural speed!" Coaches select these athletes with the belief that they can teach the exceptionally fast athlete the sport skills they require.

Mental Skills

Just as all athletes are not created equally physically, they are not created equal mentally! The "smart" athlete can often offset a perceived lack of physical ability through their understanding of the game and/or situation. Many coaches invest in "smart" athletes who naturally understand team and game concepts.

Emotional Skills

Many great athletes do not progress because of their lack of emotional control. The world of sport is a training ground for life. Obstacles, unforeseen challenges, poor officiating, politics, injury and the nature of sport itself all present the athlete with emotional tests on a daily basis. Athletes need to train themselves to "handle" these tests in positive, productive ways. Embedding emotional training into your planning is a critical element. Athletes need to practice controlling outbursts, maintaining composure and focus and dealing with the inevitable ups and downs of sport! Often, the expertise of a sports psychologist can be invaluable!

In addition to the physical, mental and emotional components of the Athletic Triad more and more athletes are investing in the benefits of supplemental training such as...

Vision training - baseball hitters, tennis players, hockey goaltenders etc. are beginning to utilize the expertise of professionals in the area of vision training. Certainly, including a vision training expert on your athletic resume will show recruiters that you are willing to do whatever it takes to prepare yourself as an athlete.

Visualization - mental rehearsals and other techniques of visualization offer many athletes an added advantage.

Spiritual or religious belief - provides many athletes with a strong foundation or support.

FITNESS AND CONDITIONING

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Just as with your skill development you must find out exactly what college coaches are looking for in terms of fitness and conditioning.

Common mistake: Athletes do themselves a grave disservice when they follow work out routines that are not tailored to their sport and position specific needs. As a consequence, the hard work they put into their physical conditioning could actually be working against the specific movement patterns they need to develop. Once again...you must promote a quality product! Make sure you enlist the advice and direction of an up to date, well qualified conditioning expert for your sport! By utilizing the expertise of top fitness and conditioning professionals you will also be helping to promote yourself.

Your fitness and conditioning goals need to be pinpointed on...

1. Addressing any weaknesses you have (ie. Speed, power, strength, flexibility) in relation to the needs of your particular sport and position
2. Enhancing your strengths
3. Preventing injury
4. Developing strength, power, flexibility around the critical movement patterns required for your sport and position
5. Critical times of the year (periodization of training)
6. Preparing yourself for any specific fitness tests that colleges may put you through

Important Hint: Athletes generally follow a "periodization of training" regimen that differentiates types of training during the off-season, preseason, in season etc. The athlete in search of a college scholarship must carefully plan their "off-season" training because the off-season is often one of the most important recruiting periods. This may not allow the athlete to take much time "off" in a recuperation phase. The athlete may have to alter their training regimen so they are at their physical best during recruiting periods during the off-season. For example, an athlete may incorporate intensive plyometric training to improve speed and power just prior to an important college visit or showcase event!

PROMOTION

The importance of promoting a quality product (student/athlete) cannot be overstated! A multifaceted approach to promotion is required. Through the implementation of the PLAN TO ACHIEVE THE ULTIMATE GOAL the student athlete will be promoting themselves as they develop their academic, social/emotional and sport skills as well as their fitness and conditioning sub-goals. By utilizing the expertise of professional trainers, coaches etc. the student athlete will be building a base of expert references that can be included in their athletic resume or profile. These experts will offer college coaches important information regarding

- Your dedication and passion
- Your ability
- Your improvement
- Your room for future improvement
- Your personal and social strengths

Once the student athlete is properly prepared to be promoted, more direct means of promotion are necessary. These include the development of an Athletic Portfolio, which may include an athletic and

academic resume, professional and personal references and evaluations, a DVD or video etc. The student athlete may also choose to attend college soccer camps, showcase events or school visits.

TIME AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Time and Resource management is essential for your success. Our goal is to assist you with managing your time, money and resources so that you will...

1. Be more successful in attaining your goals
2. Enjoy the process
3. Reduce feelings of futility, overwhelm and stress

Without question, the starting point for effective and efficient time and resource management is the plan to achieve the ultimate goal. By identifying your goals, sub-goals and actions you weave an intricate blueprint that assists you in managing your available resources wisely.

The synchronization of goals, sub-goals and actions is the route to the successful fulfillment of the ultimate plan for success. Synchronizing involves connecting your actions so they work to complement each other. By synchronizing and communicating goals and actions, athletes and their families are able to work together toward a common goal, learning valuable life lessons along the way!

As outlined in the plan to achieve the ultimate goal there are several sub-goals that the student athlete must attend to with the dedication and passion of a champion. This requires the support of the athlete's parents and families!

Studying and training to be the best student athlete you can be requires hours and hours of time, sacrifice and dedication. Blending the ultimate goal into daily life is no easy task...but it is worth every ounce of time and effort you put into it.

Perhaps the 2 most important points to be made to athletes and parents are...

1. Student athletes - ensure you are a good investment. Show yourself and your parents that you can be trusted to make the decisions required to fulfill your ultimate goal! Never cheat yourself or your family! Ensure that your school, athletic and personal habits assist you in achieving your dreams!
2. Parents: trust and support! Remember that your son or daughter is embarking upon a very honorable and life changing journey without the life experiences that you have already gained as parents. As your son/daughter experiences the inevitable challenges of life through this process of achieving the ultimate goal your role is to support and trust.

Time and Resource Management is critical to the success of the plan to achieve the ultimate goal. By working together, student athletes and their families will celebrate their successes in a much more meaningful way!

CHOOSE A SCHOOL

The goal is to create choice so you are better able to find the right school for you! There are many factors involved in selecting the "right school" for you so it is to your advantage to begin the "targeting" of schools at the earliest possible time.

CREATE A TARGET LIST Creating a target list of potential schools is an important step in the process. As you begin the process of targeting school you must consider the time you have available to you. Ideally, you will have lots of time and can follow the 3 Step process outlined below.

The earlier you create this list, the more time you have to contact and research the schools. The earlier college coaches find out about you, the more time they have to follow your progress. This will assist you in determining the best school to meet your academic and athletic needs. We suggest that you create your target list in Grade 10 or earlier.

IMPORTANT POINT: The connections between college coaches at all levels are amazing. The sooner that you can get connected to this coaches network the better! In creating your list of target schools, we encourage you to undertake the following 3-step process.

STEP ONE "The Shotgun Approach" The concept here is to contact as many schools as you possibly can as you early as you can. Your search at this point will be as broad and extensive as your time and resources allow. Your goal is to create connections and options for yourself!

Here are a few guiding principles during Step One.

1. Start early - begin making your list early in your Grade 10 year or before
2. Dream big! Include as many schools as you possibly can on your list! Do not be too "picky" at this stage. As a matter of fact, if you have the time, contact schools that you feel you may not have much chance in attending. Your goal is to contact as many schools as possible!! The more schools the greater your opportunity!
3. Keep a file for each school you contact so you can record each correspondence and other important details. This file will be extremely valuable as the process unfolds and more and more schools express interest.
4. Diversify! Do not limit your list in any way! Include schools from a variety of affiliations (NCAA, NAIA, NJCAA etc.)
5. If you are beginning the process late (in your Grade 11 or 12 year) you may have to reduce the scope of your Target schools as listed in 1-3 above.
6. Create a "buzz" about yourself. When schools know you and like you they talk about you this creates a "buzz" that travels quickly through the college systems!

STEP TWO As you move into your Grade 11 year you need to begin refining your list of schools according to your academic and athletic potential. You do not want to limit yourself in anyway keep dreaming big and keep as many schools at all levels as you possibly can.

1. Begin to Shortlist the schools in terms of your academic and athletic needs as you get closer to your Grade 11 and 12 years. Do not take schools off your list; just refine your focus to those schools that fit your needs.
2. Remember that college coaches are connected and the more of them that know you, the better! So keep your search as broad as time and resources allow!
3. Increase your correspondence and research with schools that you feel are definite possibilities! Their responses will give you a better idea of which schools to include in stage 3.
4. Begin to tighten up your criteria so that you become clearer about what things are most important to you.

STEP THREE This is the final or selection phase where you get down to serious "bargaining" with prospective schools. It is important that you remain open minded and flexible, but at the same time, clear about your goals and criteria. Your goal is to have several schools at each level or affiliation (NCAA, NJCAA, NAIA etc.) showing significant interest.

Some thoughts to consider

1. Things change very rapidly at this point! Be ready for surprises both positive and negative!
2. Keep your options open! Do not limit your thinking until you have serious offers that are meeting your criteria
3. Understand that this is a business and all colleges are in the business of recruiting you for the least amount of scholarship they can
4. Let schools know that you have some significant interest from a variety of schools, but do not tell them specifics.
5. Tell each school exactly what they want to hear "I am very interested in your school, you are my first choice and I would like to make this happen!"
6. You and your family must have very honest discussions regarding your financial need. If you need scholarship money then you must let schools know that you need them to offer you the most amount of support they possibly can.
7. Ask about other means of support i.e. Work-study programs, part time jobs, housing/meal incentives.
8. Unless you are absolutely certain, do not make a final decision regarding the level of school until you are ready to sign your Letter of Intent.

Selecting the Right School Student athletes need to carefully consider a number of key things prior to making a final decision

- Academics Ranking
- Academic support
- Transferability of courses
- Athletic Ranking
- Financial cost to your family
- Professional athletic prospects
- Coaching staff expertise
- Program reputation
- Large school? Small school?
- Large city? Small town?
- 4-year University? 2 year JC?
- Living arrangements
- West Coast? East Coast? South? North?

GET PROMOTED

As mentioned earlier, every time you seek the advice and expertise of an expert you are in fact promoting yourself. The professionals that you use to develop yourself as an athlete will serve as important references in your promotional efforts!

The student athlete and their family must also take a very direct approach to promoting themselves to colleges. This is where the athlete and family make direct contact with college coaches to let them know their interest in acquiring a college scholarship.

In many respects, this promotional process must be regarded as a job search in which the student athlete markets themselves to prospective schools.

Some very important points to consider...

1. Assume that no coaches know anything about you as a student athlete
2. Understand that college coaches are extremely busy
3. Understand that college coaches are very connected to each other
4. Coaches of one school may not have room for you , but would be happy to recommend you to another coach and program
5. You must take charge... leave nothing to chance... be proactive, positive and persistent! Communicate with coaches often!
6. Many colleges recruit primarily in their geographic area...you must go to them!
7. Coaches will need to see you in action...preferably in person, but also through video
8. Find out for yourself! There are a lot of myths and false information circulating ...do not let anyone get in the way of you and your dreams!
9. Use every connection you possibly can to increase your contact with schools and coaches.
10. You are promoting yourself as a STUDENT ATHLETE, as well as a STUDENT and an ATHLETE! (Schools are often able to offer academic scholarships to enhance the amount of your athletic scholarship!)

During stage one and two of the target listing process you need to do the following....

1. Contact as many schools as possible and fill out their prospect questionnaires either online or by mail, this first step is intended to get you into the school 's recruiting database!

Either at the same time as you complete the prospect questionnaires or very shortly afterward you must also persistently

communicate with schools through the development of your **Student Athlete Portfolio**

STUDENT ATHLETE PORTFOLIO

The Student Athlete Portfolio should include:

COVER LETTER

Develop a one-page cover letter, which you can email to college coaches. Introduce yourself, give a brief synopsis of your background and specifically explain that your goal is to gain an athletic/academic scholarship to play at the college level. If you can, make each letter personalized by mentioning specific things about each particular school's coaches/program.

RESUME

Don't forget... coaches are busy and need quick, easy to access information! One of your most important promotional tools will be your one page resume which provides busy coaches with immediate and important information about your personal characteristics, training information, accomplishments etc. (age, graduation year, contact information, position, height, weight, left or right hand/foot dominance, GPA, SAT score, your ultimate goal, a list of professional references who you have trained with, upcoming events etc.). This one page resume will be something that you can update and email frequently to prospective coaches and schools. You should also carry a number of resumes with you when you attend tournaments and other events. You can easily hand them to coaches/recruiters that may be in attendance.

VIDEO

Coaches will need to see you in action! Create your own personalized webpage! Athletes can also make their own videos and put them on DVD or on the internet (i.e. YouTube)

PROFESSIONAL EVALUATIONS and REFERENCES

Professional evaluations completed by highly respected coaches and trainers can be invaluable in letting prospective recruiters know your level of ability. These evaluations and references from influential people can open doors for you at many schools

HOW TO SELL YOURSELF

First and foremost, student athletes "sell" themselves by being "quality" student athletes. When colleges offer scholarships they are investing in you as both a student and an athlete! Their goal is to make good investments!

By developing and exhibiting excellent personal qualities ("character" or "makeup") you will immediately make a good impression when you meet coaches.

Additionally, there are a number of other ways to sell yourself:

1. Make early, frequent and ongoing contact with coaches
2. Compliment coaches and their programs by doing some research into the school, team, record etc.
3. Provide coaches with immediate information when they request it
4. Tell the coach that your ultimate goal is one that you have planned and work toward for several years.
5. Develop a strong set of personal and professional references
6. Be polite, confident, well mannered and purposeful
7. Let the coach know that you would really like to meet them by arranging a school visit or a meeting at an upcoming event
8. Invite coaches to see you in action at tournaments, showcases etc. Several days before the event phone or email coaches with your resume and the dates, times and locations of your games/events. Then send a reminder a few days before the event with information about where you are staying, cell phone number etc.
9. Show coaches that you are intelligent and knowledgeable by asking them good questions about their school, program, instructional philosophy etc.
10. Have a list of strengths and qualities about yourself as a student athlete that you can share with the coach.
11. Attend college camps of specific schools you are interested in
12. Use every connection that you possibly can and let them know that you are on a mission to gain an academic/ athletic scholarship.

Although it may feel a bit awkward, it is important for student athletes to maintain regular correspondence with college coaches. Regular correspondence shows the coach that you are very interested and can also provide you with opportunities that you may not get otherwise. You can develop a good rapport with coaches by contacting them through...

EMAIL - Once you have a recruiter's email, use it frequently to provide them with updated copies of your resume, quick notes about your performance or training, notices of upcoming events you will be involved in etc. These emails take very little time and show coaches that you are interested.

PHONE CALLS - personal phone calls to coaches and recruiters are also an excellent way to correspond with coaches. It is very helpful to have a set of good questions that you can ask coaches. Good questions such as those related to training practices or specific techniques

show the coach that you are an intelligent athlete who is in tune with what recruiters look for.