

Second Edition



# College Golf Road Map

**Creating Your Path to Play College Golf**

Developed for Students and Parents

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

# Table of Contents

○ Introduction: What is the College Golf Road Map?.....	4
○ Acknowledgements.....	5
<b>Section I - College Golf: The Inside Story</b>	
○ Key Terms to Know.....	8
○ What is it like to play college golf?.....	9
○ The truth about college golf.....	12
○ What does it take to play college golf?.....	13
○ 2016 college golf scores.....	14
○ The facts about college golf scholarships.....	15
<b>Section 2 - Developing Into A College Golfer</b>	
○ Starting off with the right perspective.....	17
○ Preparing for college golf: Building a successful junior golf foundation.....	18
○ Start early.....	18
○ Start small.....	19
○ Step up your game.....	21
○ Play where college coaches are.....	22
○ Key items to remember.....	23
○ Sample junior golf progression.....	24
○ College golf recruiting tools: Items every junior golfer needs.....	25
○ Getting your game ready for junior and college golf.....	26
○ Where does The First Tee fit in your equation.....	28
○ Limited financial resources? Make them stretch!.....	30
<b>Section 3 - The Recruiting Process: Positioning Yourself to Play College Golf</b>	
○ College golf recruiting checklist.....	33
○ College golf preparation timelines.....	34
○ NCAA Division II, NCAA Division III, NAIA and NJCAA teams.....	34
○ NCAA Division I teams (ranked outside top 50) as well as elite Division II and Division III teams.....	37
○ Top ranked NCAA Division I teams.....	40
○ Tips for researching college golf programs.....	43
○ Historically black colleges and universities.....	44
○ National Minority Junior Golf Scholarship Association.....	45
<b>Section 4 - Special Circumstances and Questions</b>	
○ What if I am behind in the process?.....	47
○ What if I have some bad or really bad scores on my resume?.....	48
○ What about social media?.....	48
○ What about going to visit schools?.....	49
○ What role do parents play in the college golf recruiting process?.....	50
○ What is a parent's role during junior tournaments?.....	50
○ What is a parent's role during campus visits?.....	52
○ What is a parent's role during the college decision making process?.....	53
○ How do I make the right college decision?.....	54
<b>Section 5 - Making Your Decision</b>	
○ Determining the right fit.....	59
<b>Section 6 – Resources</b>	
○ Online Resources.....	62
○ What to know about the NCAA and where to go for help.....	64

○ NCAA recruiting facts.....	65
○ Sample personal resume.....	66
○ Sample junior golf resume.....	67
○ Sample introduction letter to coaches.....	68
○ Swing video instructions.....	69
○ Sample meal-plan for competitive golfers.....	70
○ Sample college practice plans.....	71
○ College golf recruiting checklist (blank copy).....	76
○ College golf glossary.....	77
○ References.....	81

# Introduction: What is the College Golf Road Map?

**SPECIAL MESSAGE:** We are so excited you are reading the second edition of the College Golf Road Map. This updated and enhanced version is packed with lots of new content designed to help you find more success on your competitive golf journey. We hope you find this resource useful. If you would like to share your success stories or thoughts about the College Golf Road Map, email us at [rwilson@thefirsttee.org](mailto:rwilson@thefirsttee.org). We would love to hear about the good things you are doing on and off the course!

---

Dear Aspiring College Golfers,

Imagine receiving a phone call from a college golf coach at a school you have been envisioning yourself attending for the last several months. After asking about your family and your most recent tournament results, the coach offers you a scholarship to come play golf at their university for the next four years. Sounds amazing, right? This could be you!

The question now becomes, how do you make this dream become a reality? You are probably reading this guide because you or someone you know has an interest in playing college golf. If this is the case, then you have come to the right place!

The College Golf Road Map serves two main purposes:

1. To educate students and their families on the world of college golf. The road map will provide useful insight on what college golf is actually like, the different levels of competition, scholarships, the importance of being a well-rounded student and so much more.
2. To lay out a clear pathway for success. Young people and their parents can use the resources in this road map to successfully navigate the competitive golf landscape and better position themselves for an opportunity to play college golf.

You don't have to be a participant in The First Tee program for this guide to be useful. It is for everyone! It doesn't matter if you are a high school senior who has already been offered a scholarship, or a 6<sup>th</sup> grader just beginning to play competitively. There is something in this guide for you.

This information was created with the help of college coaches, college golf experts and former college golfers who are passionate about helping young people reach their potential on and off the course. The College Golf Road Map contains helpful information, timelines, tips, checklists, charts and quotes that will help you set and achieve your goals.

Thank you for downloading this resource. We hope you find its contents relevant and useful!

Should you have any questions or comments about the College Golf Road Map please use the contact information below.

Enjoy!

Ryan Wilson  
The First Tee  
[rwilson@thefirsttee.org](mailto:rwilson@thefirsttee.org)  
[www.thefirsttee.org](http://www.thefirsttee.org)

# Acknowledgements

Special thanks go out to the college coaches, industry professionals and The First Tee home office staff who contributed to the creation of this guide:

## College Coaches

- Dianne Dailey, Wake Forest University, Head Women's Golf Coach (*Salem College*)
- Terrance Stewart, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Head Men's Golf Coach (*Lenoir-Rhyne*)
- Jeanne Sutherland, Southern Methodist University, Head Women's Golf Coach (*University of Northern Iowa*)
- Andrew DiBitetto, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Head Men's Golf Coach (*University of North Carolina at Charlotte*)
- MJ Desbiens Shaw, Arkansas State, Head Women's Golf Coach (*University of Oklahoma*)
- Andy Walker, South Mountain Community College, Head Men's Golf Coach (*Pepperdine University*)
- Zac Zedrick, Miami University, Head Men's Golf Coach (*Michigan State University*)
- Kristi Knight, Kansas State University, Head Women's Golf Coach (*University of Oklahoma*)
- Mitch Wilson, Kalamazoo College, Director of Golf & Head Men's Golf Coach (*Central Michigan University*)

## Special Advisor

- Brandi Jackson, Brandi Jackson Golf, College Golf Consultant (*Furman University*)

## Industry Professionals

- Jeff Dunovant, PGA (*Fayetteville State University*)
- Mike Cooper, Ph.D.
- Kelli Corlett, LPGA (*Dominican University*)
- Andrea Bordeaux, Bill Dickey Scholarship Association
- T.D. Luten, (*Hampton University*)

## The First Tee Home Office Staff

- Ryan Wilson (*University of North Carolina at Charlotte*)
- Megan Pak (*University of Florida*)
- Emily Mock (*University of Findlay*)
- Beth Brown, Ph.D., LPGA, (*University of Oklahoma*)
- Ryan Graff (*University of Illinois*)
- Leon Gilmore (*Hampton University*)
- Hugh Smith (*Jackson State University*)
- Rachel Maruno (*University of Missouri-Kansas City*)
- Eric Clark, PGA (*Prairie View A&M*)
- Julie Jansa (*New Mexico State University*)
- Dedric Holmes
- Henry Sandles (*University of New Mexico*)
- Erik Pineda
- Tai Moran (*Texas Southern University*)
- Mark Lowry
- Amanda Zedrick (*Michigan State University*)

*The information in parentheses indicates where each individual played college golf.*





# **Section I**

## **College Golf: The Inside Story**

# Key Terms to Know

Being familiar with the following key terms will help as you read through the College Golf Road Map. Reference the College Golf Road Map Glossary at the end of the document for a more complete list of college and competitive junior golf terms.

---

**Handicap** - A scoring system designed to make the game of golf more enjoyable by enabling players of differing abilities to compete on an equitable basis. The system can also be used to determine a golfer's approximate skill level by comparing multiple scores against course difficulty and other important factors.

**National Collegiate Athletic Association or NCAA** - The NCAA is the athletics governing body for more than 1,280 colleges, universities, conferences and organizations. Their goal is to govern competition in a fair, safe, inclusive and sportsmanlike manner.

**NCAA Division I (DI)** - Among the three NCAA divisions, DI schools generally have the biggest student bodies, largest athletics budgets, have the most competitive athletics, and offer the most generous athletic scholarships.

**NCAA Division II (DII)** - A collection of NCAA colleges and universities that provide thousands of student-athletes the opportunity to compete at a high level of athletics while excelling in the classroom and fully engaging in the broader campus experience. DII schools do provide athletic scholarships, but there are less athletic scholarships available than compared with most DI schools.

**NCAA Division III (DIII)** - The NCAA DIII experience offers participation in a competitive athletic environment that pushes student-athletes to excel on the field and build upon their potential by tackling new challenges across campus. Division III schools only provide academic scholarships.

**NCAA Eligibility Center** - Responsible for certifying the academic eligibility for practice, competition, and financial aid of all prospective student-athletes for Division I and Division II. Was formerly called the NCAA Clearinghouse.

**National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics or NAIA** - A separate association of colleges who compete in intercollegiate athletics. The NAIA launched the champions of character program in 2000, an educational outreach initiative which emphasizes the tenets of character and integrity, not only for NAIA college students, but for younger students, coaches and parents.

**National Junior College Athletic Association or NJCAA** - A separate college athletic association that seeks to promote and foster two year college athletics. Athletic Scholarships are available.

**Official Visit** - Visit to a college campus by a student and/or parent that is paid for by the college.

**Student-Athlete** - A high school student who is recruited to attend a particular college to play on one of its athletic teams or a student who reports for practice at a college. Your child becomes a prospective student-athlete the day he or she enters high school.

**United States Golf Association or USGA** - Golf's official governing body in the USA. The USGA also runs several highly prestigious golf tournaments at both the amateur and professional levels for men and women of all ages.

**Unofficial Visit** - Any visit to a college campus paid for by a student and/or parents.

**Verbal Commitment** - A student verbally indicating that she/he plans to attend a college or university and play college sports. A verbal commitment is not binding, although it is a generally accepted form of commitment.

**Walk On** - A student who does not receive an athletic scholarship, but who is and/or attempts to become a member of the team.



# What is it Like to Play College Golf?

College golf offers student-athletes a unique and fantastic experience. Being a student-athlete means combining a college education with highly competitive athletics. College golf is a pathway for athletes to improve all aspects of their game, to grow emotionally from the experience of being away from home, to use and sharpen their time-management skills, goal-setting skills, resilience skills all while persevering to balance many new priorities.

The student-athlete will be required to attend classes and study, as well as attend daily golf practice, strength and conditioning/fitness sessions, and compete in a number of tournaments. Student-athletes will be provided with coaching, conditioning and practice in order to bring their golf game to a new level. College golf sets students up for a career after school and provides a stepping stone for athletes looking to play professional golf.

Below are several routines and tasks most student-athletes must balance in their daily, weekly and monthly schedules playing college golf.

- Team workouts 2 - 3 days per week
- Attend a minimum of 4 - 5 classes, 2 - 3 times per week
- Participate in evening study hall sessions
- Meet with tutors to prepare for class assignments
- Structured or unstructured practice daily with the team
- Meet with coaching staff to evaluate golf game and set goals
- Play in qualifying rounds and travel to a tournament for two to four days (practice round and 36-54 holes of competition)
- Cook meals, do laundry, visit with friends and rest



The schedules on the next two pages represent a potential week for a student-athlete who is in season. Student-athletes may or may not take on a harder course load and/or more workouts in the off-season, depending on the school. Regardless of school or division, remember that all student-athletes must – to some degree – balance academics, golf, and a social life.

*\*Keep in mind, these are sample schedules designed to give you an idea of what the student-athlete experience is like for a college golfer; actual times and schedules will likely vary based on factors specific to the division, athletic conference, school and coach.*

## Sample DI Schedule (Tournament Week)

TIME	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday		
6:00 AM	Workouts	Rest	Rest	Rest	Workouts	Travel to Tournament	Team Breakfast		
6:30 AM				Personal Workout/ Cardio			Warm Up for Tournament		
7:00 AM									
7:30 AM									
8:00 AM	Shower/Meal		Shower/Meal	Shower/Meal	Structured Individual Practice				
8:30 AM	Shower/Meal	Attend Classes	Attend Classes	Attend Class					
9:00 AM									
9:30 AM									
10:00 AM									
10:30 AM	Attend Classes			Attend Classes	Attend Classes		Attend Class		
11:00 AM									
11:30 AM									
12:00 PM									
12:30 PM		Freshman Study Hall	Workouts						
1:00 PM	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	36-hole Tournament			
1:30 PM	Day Off - Practice on your own	Qualifying Round 1		Attend Classes			Qualifying Round 2	Golf Team Practice	18-hole Practice Round
2:00 PM									
2:30 PM									
3:00 PM									
3:30 PM									
4:00 PM									
4:30 PM									
5:00 PM									
5:30 PM									
6:00 PM			Attend Class		Open Practice				
6:30 PM									
7:00 PM									
7:30 PM	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Team Dinner	Team Dinner		
8:00 PM	Freshman Study Hall	Group or Individual Tutoring	Freshman Study Hall	Freshman Study Hall	Free Time/Rest	Study/ Homework	Study/ Homework		
8:30 PM									
9:00 PM									
9:30 PM									
10:00 PM									
10:30 PM	Free Time	Free Time	Free Time	Free Time	Rest	Rest			
11:00 PM	Rest	Rest	Rest	Rest					

*\*This is a sample schedule designed to give you an idea of what the student-athlete experience is like for a college golfer; actual times and schedules will likely vary based on factors specific to the division, athletic conference, school and coach.*

## Sample DIII Schedule (Tournament Week)

TIME	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	
6:00 AM	Workouts	Rest	Workouts	Rest		Team Meal	Team Meal	
6:30 AM								
7:00 AM								
7:30 AM	Shower/Meal		Shower/Meal		Travel to Tournament	Warm-up for Tournament	Warm-up for Tournament	
8:00 AM	Attend Classes		Optional Individual Practice			18-hole Tournament Round	18-hole Tournament Round	
8:30 AM		Shower/Meal		Shower/Meal				
9:00 AM								
9:30 AM								
10:00 AM								
10:30 AM								
11:00 AM		Freshman Study Hall		Attend Classes				
11:30 AM								
12:00 PM								
12:30 PM								
1:00 PM	Lunch	Lunch		Lunch	18-Hole Practice Round		Travel Back to Campus	
1:30 PM			Lunch					
2:00 PM	Day Off - Practice on your own	Qualifying Round 1	Attend Classes	Qualifying Round 2				
2:30 PM								
3:00 PM								
3:30 PM								
4:00 PM								
4:30 PM								
5:00 PM						Open Practice or Study		
5:30 PM								
6:00 PM	Free Time							
6:30 PM								
7:00 PM	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Team Meal	Team Meal	Team Meal	
7:30 PM								
8:00 PM	Free Time	Freshman Study Hall	Attend Classes	Free Time	Study/ Homework	Study/ Homework	Travel Back to Campus	
8:30 PM								
9:00 PM								
9:30 PM								
10:00 PM		Free Time	Free Time					
10:30 PM								
11:00 PM	Rest	Rest	Rest	Rest	Rest		Rest	

*\*This is a sample schedule designed to give you an idea of what the student-athlete experience is like for a college golfer; actual times and schedules will likely vary based on factors specific to the division, athletic conference, school and coach.*

# The Truth about College Golf

**Myth:** Your average 18-hole score must be in the 70's to play college golf...

**Truth:** The truth is there are many different levels of college golf. D1 golf is the most competitive and many of the top schools will require these types of scores. However, there are lots of other opportunities to play college golf for lower ranked D1, DII, DIII, NAIA and Junior Colleges. If your goal is to play college golf, there is probably a program somewhere that will be a good fit for your game, even if your average competitive scores are in the 80s or low 90s.

**Myth:** Your golf ability by itself is enough to earn a college scholarship...

**Truth:** Every single college golf coach around the country will tell you being a well-rounded student-athlete is of the utmost importance. At a minimum, you must be academically eligible before competing, but being a strong student makes you more appealing to any coach. Also of extreme importance is your ability to transition into college life. Coaches base this decision on factors like your on-course attitude, high school grades, extra-curricular activities, as well as your interactions with parents, coaches, tournament volunteers and potential future teammates.

**Myth:** Hundreds of women's college golf scholarships go unused every year...

**Truth:** The women's collegiate game is incredibly competitive and scholarships at all levels are challenging to come by. Some scholarships go unused (roughly 10%), but generally these are at smaller schools that are less attractive to many student-athletes because of location, climate, etc. Coaches may also choose to not award scholarships if they cannot find a certain caliber of recruit. In this case, they will save the money for the next year's recruiting class.

**Myth:** Playing well in high school golf is my ticket to a college golf scholarship...

**Truth:** For most college coaches, high school golf is only a small part of the equation when it comes to evaluating players. College golf tournaments are generally 36 or 54 holes, while most high school competitions are only 9 or 18 holes. High school golf is a great way to stay competitive throughout the year, especially during slow seasons of the year, but your play (good or bad) will not likely have a huge effect on the college recruiting process with many coaches.

**Myth:** Your parents will hold your hand and do all the work in the recruiting process for you...

**Truth:** The individuals who have the most success in the recruiting process are those who take ownership and make things happen on their own. Parents aren't allowed to live on campus with you, so college coaches like to see young women and men who are proactive and take initiative.

**Myth:** You should be a skilled golfer before you start playing competitive tournaments...

**Truth:** Competitive golf is the best way to assess and improve your abilities. It allows you to compare your strengths and weaknesses with other youth your age and helps you create a plan for improvement moving forward. Start as soon as possible and play in as many tournaments as possible. There are tournaments offered for players of all skill levels.

**Myth:** Coaches will automatically recruit me because I am a good player...

**Truth:** Only the highest ranked players get the luxury of being pursued by college coaches. For everyone else, you have to be proactive and recruit the coaches yourself. It takes time, energy and effort on the part of the player to create interest from coaches and land a scholarship/spot on a team. Also keep in mind coaches will rarely, if ever, recruit you on golf ability alone. In addition to golf skill, coaches value academic performance, leadership capability and character.

**Myth:** I have lots of time and can wait until my junior or senior year to begin thinking about playing college golf...

**Truth:** Many scholarships and roster spots have already been claimed by your junior year. You need to start the process EARLY in order to have the best chance at earning a scholarship or a spot on the team.

**Myth:** I must quit playing all other sports and focus on golf in order to be recruited by college golf coaches...

**Truth:** Playing multiple sports, especially team sports, in high school is encouraged by nearly all college golf coaches. Playing golf at a high level requires many different aspects of athleticism and many of these can be learned or reinforced through participation in other sports. Early specialization in youth sports is a huge problem. Participation in several major sports has rapidly declined due to youth burnout, injury, cost, coaches that overemphasize competition, lack of play time and more.

# What does it take to Play College Golf?

How good are college golfers? Below, you will find some general guidelines for what college coaches at every division look for in potential recruits. Keep in mind that if you fall outside of these general requirements it is still possible to play at that level, but there will likely be fewer opportunities. Look at the next page for an in depth look at actual college golf scores from 2016.

\*Keep in mind the items below are only related to performance on the golf course. The NCAA has strict requirements on academic performance that if breached will keep a student from participating in practices and tournaments. College coaches will NOT recruit a player at risk of being academically ineligible or with poor character. Prospective student-athletes with strong academics and character will find they have many more options in the recruiting process than those who lack in these areas.

## **Men's Golf**

### **Lower Ranked DII, DIII, NAIA and NJCAA Teams**

Competes in local and state tournaments.

Average scores from courses over 6,700 yards:

Low End: 69

High End: Low 90's

### **Lower Ranked DI Teams and Top Ranked DII and DIII Teams**

Competes at the regional and state levels.

Average scores from courses over 6,800 yards:

Low End: 67

High End: 81

### **Top Ranked DI Teams**

Top finishes at the national, regional and state levels.

Summer golf schedule consists of AJGA, USGA, regional, state, and multiple local tournament wins.

Has a high national ranking.

Average scores from courses over 6,800 yards:

Low End: 65

High End: 75

## **Women's Golf**

### **Lower Ranked DII, DIII, NAIA and NJCAA Teams**

Competes in state and local tournaments.

Average scores from courses over 5,800 yards:

Low end: 74

High end: Mid 90's

### **Lower Ranked DI Teams and Top Ranked DII and DIII Teams**

Competes at the regional and state levels.

Average scores from courses over 5,900 yards:

Low end: 70

High end: 85

### **Top Ranked DI Teams**

Top finishes in national, regional and state level events.

Summer golf schedule consists of AJGA, USGA, regional and state level tournaments.

Has a high junior golf ranking.

Average scores from courses over 6,000 yards:

Low end: 66

High end: 78



# 2016 College Golf Scores

## WOMEN

	NJCAA			NAIA			NCAA Division III			NCAA Division II			NCAA Division I		
Course Yardage	5,800 - 6,000			5,900 - 6,100			5,900 - 6,100			6,000 - 6,200			6,000 - 6,300		
Team Rank	#1	#8	#13	#1	#66	#132	#1	#62	#176	#1	#71	#180	#1	#128	#263
	Scoring Avg.			Scoring Avg.			Scoring Avg.			Scoring Avg.			Scoring Avg.		
#1 Player	74.3	81	86.4	77.2	84	95.8	71.7	87	99.6	75.8	78.6	98.2	70.1	74.6	77.2
#2 Player	74.6	87.4	88.2	77.3	85.4	102.5	73.5	88.4	108.7	75.9	79.7	110.1	70.7	76.6	79.8
#3 Player	76.1	89.4	95.6	80.1	85.8	116.3	80.2	89	112.1	76	81.2	112.1	71.1	78.1	79.9

## MEN

	NJCAA			NAIA			NCAA Division III			NCAA Division II			NCAA Division I		
Course Yardage	6,500-7,000			6,500-7,000			6,500-7,000			6,500-7,100			6,600-7,300		
Team Rank	#1	#17	#39	#1	#88	#167	#1	#135	#280	#1	#101	#218	#1	#147	#294
	Scoring Avg.			Scoring Avg.			Scoring Avg.			Scoring Avg.			Scoring Avg.		
#1 Player	70.1	73	80.7	71.9	76	89.6	72.2	76.1	89.8	70.9	74.5	82	69	73.5	75.8
#2 Player	71.4	73.3	85	72	78.3	93.3	74.8	78.2	91.4	71.6	76.1	87.7	71.5	74.2	77.1
#3 Player	71.8	74.5	85.3	72.8	78.8	107.3	74.8	78.6	93.4	72.4	76.3	91.1	72.8	75.3	81.8

Scores were taken directly from the 2016 Golfstat Prep Report. Three teams were selected from each division: the #1 ranked team, the middle ranked team and the last ranked team.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Typically, five players travel to every tournament in college, but only the top 3 team scorers were included in this report. The top 3 scores are the individuals who tend to consistently play at each tournament. Keep this in mind as you determine which schools and golf programs you might fit into. Also keep in mind that most college coaches believe college golf tournaments are 2-3 shots more difficult each round than junior tournaments. Why? Here are some of the reasons: courses are much longer, players often play more than one round each day, so fatigue and fitness play much bigger factors, the challenges of balancing academics and athletics, course set-ups are more difficult, and college golf is a fall/spring sport and challenging weather is often a factor.

# The Facts about College Golf Scholarships

The chart below indicates the total number of golf scholarships offered at the various levels of collegiate competition.

**IMPORTANT:** These are the maximum amount of golf scholarships a school can offer at any point in time. These scholarships are spread out between all student-athletes ranging from freshman all the way to seniors. Many programs are not fully funded and cannot offer the full amount seen below.

An extremely small number of players receive a full golf scholarship. Full scholarships usually include tuition, room/board, school fees, and books. Most players receive a partial scholarship which is spread out between the schools top 5–7 performers.

Program Type	Women's Scholarships Available	Men's Scholarships Available
DI	6	4.5
DII	5.4	3.6
DIII	Academic Only	Academic Only
NAIA	5	5
NJCAA (Junior College)	8	8

Student-athletes always have the option to supplement their athletic scholarships with academic scholarships and other awards unrelated to their golf abilities. Start by doing a quick Google search to identify scholarships you may be eligible for. You should also contact your high school guidance office and the college/university admissions office to inquire about scholarships for the school(s) you would like to attend.

**Cost of Attendance (COA):** Some DI athletes have the opportunity to receive scholarships that include Cost of Attendance dollars, or more commonly known as COA. COA dollars are there to help student-athletes cover the full cost of attending college, such as travel to and from home. The rules and policies around COA dollars vary by school, including what expenses are covered and when funds will be distributed to student-athletes. To learn more about COA dollars, visit [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org). You should also ask coaches who are recruiting you when the time is appropriate.



The background is a dark red color with a faint, stylized map of Texas overlaid. The map is composed of thin, dark lines representing the state's borders and major roads. The text is white and positioned in the lower-left quadrant of the image.

# **Section 2**

## **Developing into a College Golfer**



# Starting Off with the Right Perspective

## The State of Youth Sports

Did you know that since 2008 participation in almost every youth sport (except golf) has been rapidly declining? When youth and parents were asked why they stopped playing sports, the following were some of their top answers:

1. Concerns about risk of injury
2. The quality or behavior of coaches
3. The emphasis on winning over having fun
4. Youth burnout

## What does this mean?

Adults should be aware there is a recommended progression for how youth experience and participate in sports, golf included. This recommended progression has major implications on how many sports youth should play and how often they should participate in order to create the healthiest environment for growth and skill development.

## Sampling Years: 6 to 12 Years of Age

During the sampling years, young people should be trying multiple (4 or more) sports and physical activities. The sampling stage should be characterized by a low frequency of deliberate practice (structured practice and formal competition) and a high frequency of deliberate play (unstructured play). As a parent/guardian you should be looking for coaches to focus on making the sport fun, creating a positive environment and your child should be learning primarily through games.

*“One of the most important periods of motor development for children is between the ages of 9 and 12. During this period, the foundation of athletic excellence will be built for later years.” - Dr. Istvan Balyi*

## Specializing Years: 13 to 15 Years of Age

During the specializing years, young people will begin to narrow their participation in sports and other physical activities; often times to two or three that are in opposite seasons. The specialization stage should be characterized by equal amounts of deliberate practice and deliberate play activities. Athletes will start to become more serious about their development. There begins to be an increased focus on competition and performance (with boundaries) and coaching should be aligned with the athlete's personal goals.

## Investment Years: 16+ Years of Age

During the investment years, most athletes will likely select one sport (sometimes two) which they deem to be their best sport. At this point there is heavy investment in skill development and athletes describe themselves as “all in.” During the investment years there can be more deliberate practice than deliberate play when training because the skills have already been learned. Most times athletes in the investment years look for high performance coaching that will help them achieve their goals.

Keep this information in mind as you continue to read through this guide. It's important parents and youth stay very close to the recommended progression above. Accelerating this timeline because your child shows promise in golf is likely to cause more harm than good and may ultimately cause them to miss out on opportunities that could have been there otherwise. For more information on this topic visit [Project Play from the Aspen Institute](#).



# Preparing for College Golf

## Building a Successful Junior Golf Foundation

Playing competitive junior golf is a must for young women and men hoping to play at the collegiate level. Junior golf tournaments provide players with opportunities to develop their games while providing college coaches with opportunities to evaluate players in order to make important decisions on playing opportunities and scholarships. Building a successful junior golf schedule can be a daunting and complex process. Use the recommendations below as a starting point in your journey.

---

## START EARLY

Obviously, the sooner you start playing competitive golf the better. If you haven't heard this saying yet, you will soon: "Competitive golf is very different than recreational golf." This is true! It takes time to adjust to the added pressure that comes along with playing for a score and signing an official scorecard at the end of a round. The more you can put yourself in this type of position, the better prepared you will be for the different environments and situations you are sure to encounter along the way.

The timeline of when you should begin playing competitive golf is dependent on a couple of factors.

Ask yourself these questions:

- **How fast are you developing?**

For some golfers, improvement comes quick and easy, but for most, the process is slow and challenging. Generally, a young person will need AT LEAST 3–6 YEARS of competitive golf experience to develop the necessary fundamentals and skills to play in college. Keep this in mind as you consider the next point.

- **What level of college golf do you want to play?**

The best golf schools in the country are committing almost all of their players in their freshman and sophomore years of high school. So if you have dreams of playing at schools like Texas, Georgia and Stanford, you need to be a nationally accomplished golfer by this time. You may have a little more time if you have less competitive aspirations, but don't delay! The earlier you start and the more proactive you are, the greater your chance of securing a place to play and scholarship money.

- **What if I am getting started late?**

The bad news is that you are behind and now have to play catch-up. The good news is that you always have options. They may not be your first choice or schools with a lot of name recognition, but with over 2,200 college golf programs in the US, the odds of finding a school with the right combination of golf and academics are in your favor. If you find yourself in this situation, assemble a Go-to Team of people who are familiar with the college golf process and ask them for help. These individuals will be able to help you lay out a plan to achieve your goal of playing golf in college.



# START SMALL

Once you have set a goal to play college golf, you need to begin playing competitive junior golf. Get started right away looking for local tournaments to begin sharpening your skills. Don't buy into the myth that you need to be a skilled golfer before you begin playing tournaments. States, cities and towns have lots of tournament options for golfers of every skill level.

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- **The First Tee Local Chapters**

In addition to golf and life skill classes, most chapters host individual and/or team golf tournaments throughout the year. The skill level of participants ranges from beginners all the way to older advanced players. Connect with your local chapter and find out what competitive opportunities they offer by visiting their website here: [www.thefirsttee.org](http://www.thefirsttee.org).

The First Tee program also gives students many opportunities to develop their personal résumés as well. Very few players receive full athletic scholarships to play college golf. This means that most prospective student-athletes will be looking for academic scholarships to cover additional costs. Academic scholarships are rewarded based on grades, test scores, leadership and volunteerism. The First Tee program, both locally and nationally, provides young people with many of opportunities to develop in these areas.



As a member of The First Tee, participants have the opportunity to coach and mentor other youth, utilize high quality learning centers, attend leadership academies, develop community service projects and immerse themselves in corporate work cultures. These experiences will help students distinguish themselves from their peers and will ultimately help them transition into college life more effectively.

- **LPGA\*USGA Girls Golf**

LPGA\*USGA Girls Golf is a community of more than 60,000 girls across the globe who are learning and loving the game. Girls Golf sites provide quality golf instruction led by LPGA and PGA teaching professionals or certified coaches from The First Tee. The coaches are experts in taking participants from beginner to advanced golfers, but they also empower girls by teaching them about life skills such as leadership and healthy living.

Program Values

The goal is for every girl who comes in contact with the program to always feel Important, Appreciated, Respected, Supported and Safe. Whether they are with the program for a season, a day, or even just an hour, her experience with the program will stay with her for life.

Program Goals

Keeping girls engaged in sports and increasing retention.  
Instilling confidence and inspiring girls to live active lifestyles.  
Providing social opportunities and lifelong friendships.  
Encouraging family involvement.

Visit [www.girlsgolf.org](http://www.girlsgolf.org) to learn more about the program including where to get plugged in and how to sign up.

- **PGA Junior League Golf**

PGA Junior League Golf is a fun, social and inclusive opportunity for girls and boys ages 13 and under to learn and enjoy the game of golf. Much like other recreational league sports, participants wear numbered jerseys and play on teams with their friends.

Each team is captained by a PGA or LPGA Professional, who serves as the coach and is at the forefront of creating a welcoming environment for all to enjoy the game. PGA Junior League Golf utilizes a popular scramble format that creates a nurturing environment for learning and development - both on and off the course. With more than 2,900 teams and 36,000 participants in 2016 - and Ambassadors like Rory McIlroy and Michelle Wie - PGA Junior League Golf has wide-ranging appeal for both youth and their parents.

Visit [www.pgajlg.com](http://www.pgajlg.com) to learn more.

- **Local Junior Golf Tours and Tournaments**

A majority of communities have junior tours serving young golfers in the area. Tournaments usually range from 9 holes for beginners and younger players, to 36 or 54-hole events for older and more advanced players. To find tours in your area, start by searching on the web (Google search example: St. Augustine, Florida Junior Golf Tours – OR – St. Augustine, Florida Junior Golf Tournaments). Also be sure to check into what entry level tournaments are offered in your area. Many cities and/or counties run a junior golf championship in conjunction with one or more of the public courses in the area. Most of the time these events have different age divisions and are great learning experiences for the new or relatively new competitive golfer.

- **Drive, Chip & Putt Championship**

A joint initiative founded in 2013 by the Masters Tournament, United States Golf Association and The PGA of America, the Drive, Chip and Putt Championship is a free nationwide junior golf development competition aimed at growing the game by focusing on the three fundamental skills employed in golf.

By tapping the creative and competitive spirit of girls and boys ages 7-15, the Drive, Chip and Putt Championship provides aspiring junior golfers an opportunity to play with their peers in qualifiers around the country. Participants who advance through local, sub-regional and regional qualifying in each age/gender category earn a place in the National Finals, which is conducted at Augusta National Golf Club the Sunday before the Masters Tournament and is broadcast live by Golf Channel.

Registration for the Drive, Chip and Putt Championship is open. Local qualifying will be available in all 50 states. For more information about the championship, please visit: [www.drivechipandputt.com](http://www.drivechipandputt.com)

- **US Kids Golf Tours**

U.S. Kids Golf Local Tours provide boys and girls, ages 5 to 14, the opportunity to advance their skills in the game in age-appropriate competition without having to take the time and incur the costs of having to travel long distances. A Local Tour consists of eight one-day tournaments including a season-ending one-day Local Tour Championship. Players earn awards and points for each tournament.

Players at U.S. Kids Golf events are encouraged to have caddies to help them play their best. Allowing caddies is a special component of tournaments and is part of their commitment to encouraging family interaction that builds lasting memories.

To learn more about US Kids Golf Local Tours, visit [www.uskidsgolf.com](http://www.uskidsgolf.com). US Kids Golf also makes high quality golf equipment for young people that is extremely lightweight, as well as age and size appropriate.

# STEP UP YOUR GAME

The more tournaments you can play, the more you will develop your skills. Every time you play an event, you should be learning about your golf game and what it takes to move to the next level. The following is a list of competitive golf opportunities that may be a good next step for you.

- **Middle School/High School Golf Teams**

Middle school and high school golf teams are a great way for students to get in competitive reps, especially during traditionally slow periods of the year. The drawback of school golf is that a majority of college coaches do not pay attention to middle/high school tournament results in their recruiting efforts. Coaches base nearly all their roster and scholarship decisions on individual tournament play that is unrelated to school golf.

- **State Golf Associations**

Nearly every state in the country has a state-wide golf association that serves junior and amateur competitors. Generally, state golf associations do a great job of providing quality tournaments for golfers of all abilities at very affordable prices. Tournaments can range from short events for beginners to multiple day championships for more advanced players. Look online if you are unfamiliar with your state golf association (Google search example: Florida State Golf Association). Note: some large cities or metropolitan areas have their own golf associations too (examples: Houston, Metropolitan NY/NJ, etc.).

- **Regional Golf Tours**

A quick Google search should bring up multiple junior golf tours serving participants in your region of the country. These are generally for players who are looking to compete with individuals beyond their local communities. They usually require some type of membership to the tour and participants will likely need a junior golf resume and a USGA Handicap Index to compete.

A drawback with tours like these is that they can often be a bit more expensive than local tours and state golf associations. Caution should also be exercised in the amount of tournaments that participants play on these tours. Junior golf tours will often sell themselves as great opportunities to get recruited by college coaches, however this is only true for a very select few. Junior golfers should be constantly striving to raise their level of play. Once you start having some success or begin feeling comfortable at a given level, you should look to challenge your game at the next level of competition.

Here's an example of a Google search that may help you locate regional junior golf tours serving your area: Junior Golf Tours in the Southeast



- **College Golf Camps**

College golf camps can be a good way to experience life as a college golfer, get a first-hand taste of living on campus, understand what it's like to be part of a team and even interact with college coaches. Many top ranked DI programs offer college golf camps during the summer months. There are also individual companies that host college golf camps and recruit coaches to attend and serve as instructors. Do your homework before signing up for a college golf camp as most of the time, these events carry steep price tags. For those interested, the College Golf Road Map recommends these types of events for younger players (under 15) as they provide multiple days of focused practice and play in a college setting. For older players (15 & older) who are in the middle of important recruiting time periods, the College Golf Road Map recommends focusing time, energy and resources on individual practice and competition, as these will have greater impact on your future college golf opportunities.



# PLAY WHERE COLLEGE COACHES ARE

Most college golf coaches have certain levels of golf tournaments they consistently recruit from. To be successful you have to do your homework and find out where the coaches will be. Know what types of schools you want to attract and work to play in tournaments where the coach will take notice of your results. Many times this may mean playing in tournaments close by the schools you are interested in attending. Many college coaches closely follow tournament results of events held locally and/or in their home state. Consider the following options as you are establishing your tournament schedule.

- **State Golf Association Championships**

There is a myth in junior golf that says you have to play American Junior Golf Association (AJGA) events in order to earn a college scholarship. While this may be true for a select group of elite DI schools, this is not true for a majority of the 2,200 men's and women's golf programs around the country. Most state golf associations host several advanced level junior events throughout the calendar year. These events could be billed as the "State Stoke Play Championship," "State Match Play Championship" or some other name. Typically, the highest ranked players in the state gain automatic entry into these events based on past performances, but there will usually be an open-qualifying process for everyone else looking to earn their way in. Performing well in strong state-wide events can put you on the radar of many colleges and universities. A major benefit of these events is they are usually multiple day tournaments offered at very reasonable costs.



- **National Junior Golf Tours**

Playing competitive golf on the national level is very important for junior golfers looking to attract the attention of many universities. National junior golf tours like the [American Junior Golf Association](#) (AJGA) are great ways to accomplish this. Tours such as these offer numerous multiple day competitions at courses around the country. All college coaches are familiar with these tours and recognize the talent/ability taken to compete at this level. You should be aware that these tours can be expensive and require that players purchase a membership before enrolling in their events. However, some tours provide financial assistance to players and their families that demonstrate a need (example: [AJGA ACE Grant](#)). A quick Google search of "national junior golf tours" will help you find what options are available.

- **Independent Junior Golf Tournaments**

Multiple day, independent junior golf tournaments are offered for elite participants all around the country. A quick Google search or visit to the [AJGA Points Based Entry Map](#) will help you identify what these events are. You can also do a tournament search on [www.juniorgolfscoreboard.com](#). Potential benefits of playing in these events are exposure to college coaches, strengthening your junior golf resume, the opportunity to improve your state/national ranking, or gaining entry into other elite junior events.

- **United States Golf Association (USGA) Championships**

The most prestigious junior and amateur golf competitions in our country are conducted by the [United States Golf Association](#) (USGA - US Junior Boys Championship, US Junior Girls Championship, US Amateur Championship, US Women's Amateur Championship, etc.). Each of these events has a qualifying process open to anyone who meets minimum handicap requirements. Qualifying is very difficult, but doing so will garner attention from numerous college coaches. Participants should make an effort to qualify for these events as often as possible.

- **International Events**

Some elite junior golfers may choose to play in tournaments outside of the United States. Doing this is not necessary to earn a college scholarship, but can be a meaningful and educational experience.

# KEY ITEMS TO REMEMBER

Keep the following points in mind as you create your tournament schedule.

- **Unofficial Visits**

Try to schedule unofficial visits whenever you are traveling for golf tournaments or family vacations. Contact the coach well in advance and let them know you will be in the area and would like to come by for a visit. You may get to meet the coach and they may come watch you play.

- **Junior Golf Resume**

Every junior golfer wanting to play in college MUST create and maintain a junior golf resume. Your junior golf resume is what you will use to communicate your skills and progress to college coaches. Keep it under 2 pages and include your most recent tournament results at the top.

- **USGA Handicap**

All junior golfers MUST establish a USGA Handicap Index. This measure is used in the application process for most junior and amateur golf tournaments. USGA Handicaps can be established at many locations. Start by checking your local golf course where you play most often. Other options may be your state golf association or junior golf tours you hold membership to.

- **Multiple Day Events**

College coaches are looking for events that are at least 36-holes. College tournaments can be 36, 54 or even 72-holes. For high school golfers faced with the decision to play an 18-hole or 36-hole event, it is recommended that you go with the 36-hole event most of the time. 54-hole events are even better, especially for those students looking to play at the elite DI level.

- **Important Time Periods**

Depending on what level of college golf you wish to play, there are time periods that are extremely important to demonstrate good results in strong tournament fields. Playing your best golf during these time periods will attract the most attention from college coaches and provide you with the best chance for playing opportunities and scholarships. As always, there are exceptions to the information below, but not many.

- **Lower Ranked DII & DIII Programs, as well as NAIA and NJCAA Programs**

Sophomore year graduation thru senior year graduation.

- **Lower Ranked DI Programs, as well as Top Ranked DII and DIII Programs**

Middle of your sophomore year thru your junior year graduation.

- **Top Ranked DI Programs**

Beginning of your freshman year thru the middle of your junior year.



- **Academic Performance**

Those fortunate enough to play in college will be known as “student-athletes” while in school. Pay close attention to the order of those words; student first and athlete second. Your grades and leadership abilities will play a huge part in your recruiting process and how successful you are transitioning into college life and athletics. College-bound athletes should always be thinking about how to balance their “on-course” and “off-course efforts.”

# SAMPLE JUNIOR GOLF PROGRESSION

Below you will find a recommended tournament progression for a junior golfer living in the Jacksonville/St. Augustine area of Florida. Similar options will most likely be available in other cities, states and regions. Start by doing a quick Google search, talk to an LPGA/PGA professional in your area, or connect with a local The First Tee chapter to find what options are available.

1. Enrolled with The First Tee of North Florida. Takes after school classes and competes in a chapter hosted tournament every 4–6 weeks.
2. Joins a local PGA Junior League Team
3. Joins the North Florida Junior Golf Tour and competes in multiple events.
4. Plays in the Jacksonville City Junior Championship
5. Joins the middle school golf team
6. Continues playing in a few North Florida Junior Golf Tour events
7. Begins playing in some Florida Junior Tour events, which are conducted by the Florida State Golf Association (FSGA).
8. Attempts to qualify for some of the Florida State Golf Association (FSGA) Junior Championships.
9. Joins the Hurricane Junior Golf Tour (HJGT) and the Southeastern Junior Golf Tour (SJGT) to begin competing against players from outside of the Jacksonville/St. Augustine area.
10. Joins the American Junior Golf Association and looks to play in a couple “Junior All-Star” designated events if possible.
11. Joins the high school golf team
12. Plays in multiple Florida State Golf Association (FSGA) Junior Championships.
13. Identifies and plays in multiple independent junior tournaments held in the southeastern US.
14. Joins the Future Collegians World Tour (FCWT) and the International Junior Golf Tour (IJFT) and competes in a few events.
15. Attempts to qualify for the United States Golf Association (USGA) Junior Championships and American Junior Golf Association (AJGA) open events.
16. Plays in as many highly ranked junior events as possible. These may be offered through a tour, state golf association, national golf association or independent tournaments.
17. Before going to college, plays in multiple local, regional or national level amateur competitions.



*\*\*\*If you are starting the process late and have less time to develop, your progression may look different. Hopefully, you have created a Go-to Team to help you as you pursue your competitive golf goals. If this is the case, reach out to somebody with experience playing college golf, or someone who is very familiar with the process. Ask them to evaluate your game and help you create a game plan for achieving your goals. This is the best place to start\*\*\**



# College Golf Recruiting Tools

## Items Every Junior Golfer Needs

### Junior Golf Resume (MUST HAVE)

Your junior golf resume is where you record and track your competitive golf results. It should be easy to read, current and accurate. College coaches will view your results and determine whether or not you are a potential recruit for their school. Make it a priority to update your junior golf resume after every event. A sample is included in the “Resources” section of this guide.

### Personal Resume (MUST HAVE)

Academics are an important piece of the recruiting puzzle for every college coach. Students with strong grades are more likely to excel in the college classroom, are more capable of managing their time and have a higher likelihood of earning academic scholarship money. Your academic resume is the place you should keep track of your GPA and your class rank for coaches. You should also keep a detailed account of the extracurricular, service and leadership activities you take part in. Being a well-rounded student can only increase your odds of playing golf in college.



### USGA Handicap Index (MUST HAVE)

The USGA Handicap system has several benefits, but the most useful for junior golfers is that it helps establish a baseline measure of ability. Players frequently have to submit their USGA Handicap Index when they apply for various tournaments. Some tournaments have minimum handicap requirements that must be met in order to gain entry. Contact your local golf course to inquire about establishing a USGA Handicap.

### Introduction Letter (MUST HAVE)

Your first communication with a college golf coach will often take place through a written letter or email. Taking the time to write a thorough and articulate letter increases the chance your first impression is a positive one. Doing the opposite could potentially damage your chances of playing golf for a school of interest. Do your homework and make sure that you are, or could be, a potential recruiting match. Always try your best to use proper grammar, punctuation and spelling. If possible, have someone proofread your letter. Avoid being generic; tell the coach why you are interested in their school. Always include the coach's name in the opening. **IMPORTANT:** *Invite the coach to come watch you play and include your upcoming tournament schedule.* Be patient as you await responses and remember to say “thank you” for their time. A sample has been included in the “Resources” section of this guide. Parents should NEVER write/send your intro letter.

### Swing Video (Very Important)

Swing videos are great for communicating with college coaches. Often times, coaches are unavailable to watch you play in person and videos help them evaluate your fundamentals/athleticism. A great swing video may encourage a coach to come watch you play. Swing videos should include footage of you hitting all types of shots (full swings, knock downs, pitches, chips, bunker shots, putts, etc.). See the “Resources” section of this guide for tips on creating an effective swing video.

### Website/YouTube Video (Very Important)

After you have developed the items listed above, you are going to need a place to present them nicely. A website and YouTube video are two ways to accomplish this. These mediums have the luxury of being easily updated and can cut down the time you spend sending out emails to coaches. They also have the advantage of helping coaches more easily keep track of your progress and results, by not having to constantly look for old emails and attachments. Google Sites is a free alternative to buying a recruiting profile or website. Some players may want to look into paid recruiting profile services, however you should know these services often carry steep price tags and coaches may be less likely to respond to 3<sup>rd</sup> party communication.

### Combine (Potentially Helpful)

College golf combines are becoming more popular these days. There is no substitute for playing tournaments, but these events have advantages. Combines often make use of new technology like Trackman to analyze swing and ball-flight statistics. They also provide coaches with the opportunity to evaluate more players in a shorter amount of time. Try a quick Google search to locate college golf combines in your area. Be sure to do your research on price and reputation.

# Getting Your Game Ready for Junior and College Golf

## Professional Instruction

A large majority of competitive junior golfers take private or small group lessons with a LPGA or PGA Teaching and Club Professional. Working with a professional instructor has many advantages, including shaping/improving your swing, providing you with practice routines and drills, giving you mental coaching, preparing you for tournaments, personal mentoring, and even acting as a point of contact or advocate in the college golf recruiting process. Get online or ask around to find out who the quality golf instructors are in your area ([www.lpga.com](http://www.lpga.com) or [www.pga.com](http://www.pga.com)). Two things to remember about professional golf instruction: First, it can be expensive so make sure to ask for a junior discount or talk to your local The First Tee chapter to see what relationships they may have. Second, instructors and coaches should be long-term relationships. Choosing an instructor should be a thoughtful process. Do your homework and find a coach you can build a lasting relationship with; try not to bounce from coach to coach because your swing and ultimately your progress may suffer.



## Practice Habits

How productive are your practice sessions? Do your practice sessions have a purpose and clear defined goals? Are you creating situations that will prepare you for the challenges and stressors that will undoubtedly come from competition? If not, you should be! This requires a great deal of discipline and some prep work, but rest assured that the best players at every level are doing so.

Start by doing online research on how college and PGA TOUR players practice. Talk to a current college golfer and learn how they practice. Identify a friend or a group of friends you can practice with regularly. Turn drills into fun competitions with yourself and with others. Set goals for what you want to accomplish before going to the course. Learn how to use statistics to track your results, plan your practice and evaluate your performance. Record your results in a practice journal and track your improvements. Identify weaknesses in your game and spend a greater percentage of time focused on these areas. Sample practice routines and drills from top college programs have been included in the “Resources” section of this guide.

## Mental Preparation

Anyone who has ever picked up a golf club understands the importance of a strong mental game; especially those who play competitively! Practicing the mental game should be just as important as hitting range balls, playing 18 holes or heading to the gym. However, most aspiring golfers neglect this important piece of the puzzle. There are lots of great mental game resources available to you. The key is finding something that works for you and sticking with it. Avoid switching from one method to the next.

### Here are some thoughts to get you started:

1. Check out the section dedicated to mental preparation at Junior Golf Scoreboard: [http://www.juniorgolfscoreboard.com/ss\\_mental\\_game.asp](http://www.juniorgolfscoreboard.com/ss_mental_game.asp)
2. The First Tee consultants Lynn Marriott and Pia Nilsson are two of the top ranked coaches in the world and have written several great books that blend mental and physical preparation. Purchase *The Game Before the Game*, *Every Shot Must Have a Purpose* and other great titles here: <https://www.vision54.com/>. There are many other great books on being mentally prepared to handle competitive golf. Do a quick Google search or ask for recommendations from someone on your Go-to Team.

3. Connect with a local sports psychologist in your area. See whether they offer group or individual sessions. Ideally the sports psychologist should have experience working with elite level golfers.

## Physical Preparation

The old perception that golfers are not athletes is a thing of the past. The modern college player carefully prepares their body for peak performance during competition. Start building a sound base of strength, flexibility, mobility, agility and balance at a young age. Make physical fitness a regular part of your daily practice routine.



### Physical Fitness Resource:

The best place to start is by visiting the Titleist Performance Institute website: [www.mytpi.com](http://www.mytpi.com). The website contains drills, exercises, articles and videos all dedicated to golf specific physical fitness.

## Nutrition

Proper nutrition is critical to an athlete's performance under the stress of competition. College golfers are paying more attention than ever to the foods they use to fuel their bodies. Do your homework and become an expert on what you eat and how it makes you feel. Proper nutrition isn't always fun, but it will give you the energy you need to compete at your best on college golf's grueling 36-hole tournament days. A great habit is to keep a food journal of what you eat, how much you eat and how it makes you feel during practice and competition. Start by doing your research online, but make sure the information is from credible sources who have experience working with golfers. A sample meal-plan for competitive golfers has been included in the resources section of this guide.

# Where Does The First Tee Fit in Your Equation?

A common misconception in the world of competitive junior golf is that young people bound for the college ranks eventually outgrow The First Tee. This is simply not true. According to 2016 survey data, there are over 500 current college golfers who were participants at a The First Tee chapter, and this number continues to grow every year. The First Tee alumni can be even be found competing on the biggest professional stages around the world, including the: PGA Tour, LPGA Tour, Web.com Tour, Duramed Futures Tour, PGA Tour China, etc.

The following are recommendations for how a participants' involvement with The First Tee will likely need to shift as they progress through the program and get closer to their goal of playing college golf.

## Getting Started

The First Tee program is one of the absolute best ways youth can be introduced to the game of golf. The First Tee's mission is to impact the lives of young people (ages 7 - 18) by providing educational programs that build character, instill life-enhancing values and promote healthy choices through the game of golf. There are approximately 150 The First Tee chapters around the country equipping students with golf and life skills taught by trained coaches/mentors. Visit [www.thefirsttee.org](http://www.thefirsttee.org) for a map of chapters and program locations in your area.

In The First Tee, all participants start at the PLAYer level and advance to the program's higher levels (Par, Birdie, Eagle and ACE) based on age and time in the program, as well as other factors, such as their understanding and application of golf and life skills taught in class. At all levels of the program, coaches deliver golf and life skills in group settings through fun and seamless activities.



In addition to golf and life skill classes, most chapters offer individual and/or team golf tournaments, open practice opportunities and specialized golf specific instruction for aspiring young players throughout the year. The skill level of participants ranges from beginners all the way to advanced players. Connect with your local chapter and find out what competitive opportunities they offer.

## Supplementing Your Involvement

For many young people, The First Tee is their only exposure to the game of golf. However, those interested in playing competitively will eventually need to supplement The First Tee programs with additional opportunities offered outside their local chapter. Some additional opportunities that should be explored are:

- Private lessons with a LPGA or PGA instructor
- Individual practice time - multiple days per week
- School golf teams
- Individual tournaments not run by a chapter of The First Tee

These opportunities and others are important to developing the skill-set necessary in order to play competitive junior and college golf. The First Tee chapter staff members regularly encourage parents and participants to take part in outside opportunities, while maintaining their involvement with their chapter.

## Stay Connected

As a young person's golf skills and competitive aspirations grow, it becomes increasingly more important to seek specialized instruction and more competitive tournaments. This may mean your participation in The First Tee lessens at certain times of the year, and that is okay (for example: during high school golf season or during a busy summer tournament season). However, participants and parents should keep in mind all the benefits of staying involved with your local The First Tee chapter, especially into the teenage years. Many young people are missing out on some of the best events and opportunities The First Tee has to offer. Keep reading below to find out more!

The First Tee home office annually hosts 10 or more national events open to participants from all chapters to apply for once they reach high school. Each event has a different focus such as: college golf preparation, leadership development, STEM education, networking, entrepreneurial experiences and more. Each event is completely FREE to the participant (including travel) thanks to the generosity of The First Tee's corporate partners. These are "life changing" events that further prepare students to be successful on and off the golf course as they move towards and transition into college. Having these events on a resume will provide more opportunities for academic and athletic scholarships. Visit [www.thefirsttee.org](http://www.thefirsttee.org) for a full listing of participant opportunities offered each year.



In addition to the national opportunities listed above, local chapters offer an array of incentives to keep teenagers with competitive aspirations "plugged in." Each chapter is different, but some of the benefits The First Tee chapters offer are: access to top local courses and instructors, equipment and clothing discounts, free or discounted practice at program locations, college scholarships, participant advisory boards, use of chapter learning centers/computer labs, special guest speakers, volunteer opportunities, and more! Be sure to do your homework and know what special opportunities will be waiting when you reach the upper levels of the program.

### **Cross the Finish Line**

Full scholarships are becoming increasingly less common in college golf. Coaches are tasked with managing tight budgets, which commonly means spreading partial scholarships between numerous team members. This can leave you and/or your parents with a significant amount of tuition and fees still to pay. Thankfully, by showing a strong academic track record and proven leadership skills, you can be awarded additional scholarship dollars. Non-athletic scholarships can give you more options and may ultimately impact the school you choose to attend. In order to be a strong candidate for non-athletic scholarships you must be involved in many different extra-curricular activities. One such opportunity The First Tee offers is the ACE program.



The ACE program is the pinnacle of The First Tee Life Skills Experience. As part of the ACE program, you will work on a series of projects in the areas of golf, education, career planning and giving back to your community. The ACE designation has the potential to set you apart from your peers as you apply to colleges and for academic scholarships. The ACE designation is a defining achievement for high school students and is comparable to the Gold Award in Girl Scouts, a Black Belt in martial arts or being an Eagle Scout in Boy Scouts. These achievements show ingenuity, leadership, and determination. Additionally, several chapters offer incentives such as scholarships and special recognition for participants that become ACE graduates.

### **Become an Alumni**

After graduating high school, be sure to join The First Tee's Alumni Network. As the number of The First Tee Alumni continue to grow, so do the benefits of membership! There is no cost to become a member of The First Tee Alumni Network which offers additional education, leadership, career and networking opportunities such as competitive internships at companies like PricewaterhouseCoopers, The PGA TOUR and The First Tee home office. Alumni will have special events to apply for such as The First Tee Alumni Summit and the Congressional Breakfast during National Golf Day, as well as access to a private LinkedIn group where full and part-time employment opportunities are listed. Joining The First Tee Alumni Network also means you will be some of the first people to hear new and exciting developments about The First Tee. Don't miss out on joining a rapidly growing network of young professionals with similar interests, experiences and passions as you! Visit the alumni portion of [The First Tee website](http://The First Tee website) to sign up and reconnect with fellow alumni!



# Limited Financial Resources? Make Them Stretch!

When a young person decides to play any sport competitively the costs go up. Golf is no exception. However, there are some strategies you can use to minimize costs.

**The First Tee:** Did you know nearly every The First Tee chapter in America offers scholarships to participants needing financial assistance? In fact, most chapters will never turn a participant away because they are unable to pay. The First Tee chapters want every young person to have the opportunity to learn life and golf skills in a fun and encouraging environment. This applies for regular classes and all other events like tournaments, camps, special clinics, traveling teams, private lessons, etc. Other ways The First Tee helps save money is by providing access, equipment and clothing to participants. Chapters typically arrange free or reduced cost practice and play privileges at local golf courses. Chapters will provide new or gently used golf equipment (clubs, bags, shoes, balls, etc.) and clothing to participants. Some chapters even provide developing young players with professional individual instruction opportunities. Call your local chapter and ask how they may be able to help!

**Play Local Events:** A quick Google search of junior golf tournaments will turn up tons of results for competitive tours in your area. Junior golf tours are great, but often come with high cost memberships and tournament entry fees to support the salaries of those who run the tours for full-time employment. If cost is an obstacle, you're better off looking for independent junior events or tournaments run by a local LPGA/PGA Teaching Professional at a local course. Many communities around the US also offer city and/or county junior championships at local public golf courses. To figure out what options you have available, start by contacting all the local public golf courses in your area and see what junior tournaments they have available or if they know of others.



**Create a Go-to Team:** Most of the expenses incurred playing competitive golf come from traveling to play tournaments. Like with any other sport, gas, hotels, food and other costs add up quickly. Create a Go-to Team of other players and parents to keep costs down. Look at the field list to see what players from your area are competing. Organize a carpool, share a hotel room, rent an inexpensive Airbnb and cook your own meals. Get creative and see what other expenses you might be able to save on. Bottom line...create and lean on your Go-to Teams to make dollars stretch farther!

**Get Involved With Your State Golf Association:** State golf associations are a great place to look as the level of competition goes up. Most state golf associations are non-profit organizations with a mission to offer competitive golf opportunities at affordable rates, especially for junior golfers. State golf association tournaments are typically far more affordable than junior tour events. Some state golf associations have comprehensive junior golf schedules for the entire state. To find your state golf association, do a quick Google search like the following..."[California State Golf Association](#)" (change state name as necessary). State golf associations may also be able to connect you with caddie opportunities. Caddying can be a good way to earn income, practice/play privileges, get sponsored for tournaments and even receive college scholarships.

**Swing Video:** With the advancement in modern technology, anyone can make a swing video simply by having access to a smart phone. Swing videos are great for communicating with college coaches. Often times, coaches are unavailable to watch you play in person and videos help them evaluate your fundamentals/athleticism. A great swing video may encourage a coach to come watch you play. Swing videos should include footage of you hitting all types of shots (full swings, knock downs, pitches, chips, bunker shots, putts, etc.). See the "Resources" section of this guide for details on what you should include. When your video is complete, upload it to a free online video service like YouTube or Vimeo. A strong video may help offset not being able to travel across the state or country to play in tournaments. A comprehensive junior golf resume, solid grades and an excellent swing video may help you attract the attention of some schools you are interested in, but can't afford to go see.

**Google Sites:** Check out Google Sites for a great way to showcase your recruiting information online. It is completely FREE if you have a Google account/Gmail address. You can use your Google Site to display your most up-to-date golf and personal resumes. You can embed a YouTube link to your swing video. You can write up a short bio about yourself and your aspirations. You can even upload pictures of yourself playing in tournaments or taking part in one of your many leadership/extracurricular activities. This is a great alternative to purchasing a domain name (web address) or paying for an expensive recruiting profile service. Once complete, be sure to include a link to your Google Site in every email you send out to college golf coaches. Also, don't forget to keep your Google Site updated with your most recent tournament results and academic achievements.

**Sponsorships or Fundraising Tournaments:** There are lots of creative ways to raise money for participation in youth sports. Get online and do a little research. You will find the classics like selling candy and washing cars, but you will also find some creative new methods like holding clinics, sports night out, rent-a-kid and more. The key is to have fun with it and smile!

**AJGA ACE Grant:** The Achieving Competitive Excellence (ACE) Grant provides financial assistance to young men and women who aspire to earn a college golf scholarship through competitive junior golf. Since the program began, over 3.5 million dollars have been reimbursed to ACE Grant recipients. The ACE Grant covers expenses incurred while attending AJGA events, as well as select USGA junior events and State Championship (not high school). In addition, there are reimbursement limits the AJGA feels are appropriate for each event. To learn more, visit: [www.ajga.org](http://www.ajga.org).

**Got any other great ideas?** If so, we want to hear from you! Send us an email ([rwilson@thefirsttee.org](mailto:rwilson@thefirsttee.org)) with proven and innovative ways to save money and make limited funds stretch.



# **Section 3**

**The Recruiting Process:  
Positioning Yourself to Play  
College Golf**



# College Golf Recruiting Checklist

Use this checklist to track your progress through the college golf recruiting process. A blank copy has been provided in the “Resources” section of this guide.

Determine your goals	✓
Maintain a strong academic record	✓
Play as many junior golf events as possible	✓
Educate yourself on the recruiting process	✓
Learn about NCAA recruiting rules	✓
Have someone knowledgeable evaluate your game	✓
Build and maintain your junior golf resume	✓
Practice like a college golfer	✓
Research schools you may want to contact	✓
Write a strong introduction letter	✓
Make a quality swing video	✓
Contact at least 50–75 schools	✓
Schedule and take unofficial visits	✓
Continuously communicate with coaches	✓
Ask lots of questions	✓
Find the best option for you	✓
Make a decision	✓

# College Golf Preparation Timeline

## NCAA DII and DIII Teams, NAIA and NJCAA

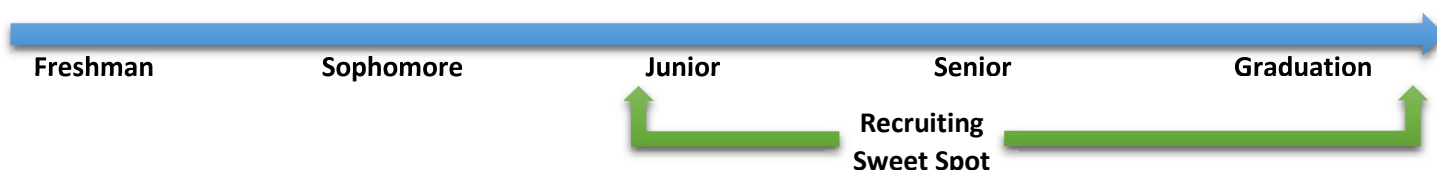
### GENERAL INFORMATION:

**Examples of Teams in This Category:** Daytona State College, Montreat College, Midland University, Sandhills Community College, Tyler Junior College, Dalton State College, etc. Check out the [www.golfstat.com](http://www.golfstat.com) rankings to view teams in this category.

**Tournaments:** Regional and Local Junior Golf Tours, State Golf Association Events, Independent Junior Golf Tournaments, City and Local Championships, etc.

**Scores (Women & Men):** See “What does it take to play college golf” document

**Recruiting sweet spot:** Sophomore year graduation thru senior year graduation. The recruiting timeline is a bit more open and extended for these types of golf programs. Opportunities will be available through the summer of a student’s senior year. However, this doesn’t mean you can or should wait to pursue these opportunities. Students who begin this process earlier will have more playing opportunities, more academic and athletic scholarships available, and will generally have less stress to deal with.



### RECRUITING TIMELINE

#### Prior to High School

- ✓ Students may or may not have had experience playing tournament golf. Ideally, it would be advantageous for students to have had some experience playing local and/or state level tournaments, but it is not a requirement.
- ✓ Students should be regularly practicing and playing golf to prepare for individual junior tournaments and high school golf.

#### Freshman Year

- ✓ Students should be demonstrating a strong academic performance and should be involved in extracurricular activities outside of golf.
- ✓ If they haven’t already done so, students should begin playing competitive golf tournaments. This should take the form of individual junior tournaments throughout the year and high school golf during the school year to stay competitive. The most important thing is that students begin gaining experience playing competitive golf and learning how it differs from recreational golf. Local junior golf tours are great places to start playing competitive junior golf.
- ✓ Students should quickly establish a USGA Handicap.
- ✓ Students should keep track of their tournament results and begin to develop their junior golf resume by recording their tournament finishes (see example in “Resources section”).
- ✓ Students should develop a personal resume that keeps track of their academic results and extra-curricular involvement (see example in “Resources” section).
- ✓ Students and parents should begin reading about important NCAA rules and regulations that apply to the college golf recruiting process.



## Sophomore Year

- ✓ Students should be demonstrating a strong academic performance and should be involved in extracurricular activities outside of golf. Leadership should be a focus of these extracurricular activities.
- ✓ Students should begin adding top local and state events to their competitive golf schedules as soon as possible. High school varsity golf is also a good thing to play in order to stay competitive throughout the year.
- ✓ Students and parents should continue educating themselves on important NCAA rules and regulations that apply to the college golf recruiting process.
- ✓ Students should be regularly updating their junior golf and academic resumes. Students should be building their junior golf resumes to gain entry into a greater number of state, regional and national events. These events may come in the form of a tour such as the AJGA, IJGA, FCWT or independent events.
- ✓ Students and their parents should start looking into completing the necessary steps for the [NCAA Eligibility Center](#) (formerly known as the NCAA Clearinghouse).
- ✓ Towards the end of the sophomore year, students should begin to research colleges they may be interested in attending. Students should create a list of 50–75 schools (refer to Tips for Researching College Golf Programs).

### College Coach Tip

Players should treat every round as if a college coach is following, regardless of whether they are watching or not.

College coaches will be looking to see how you prepare for the round, your pre-shot routine, your course-management, how you react to good and bad shots, how you bounce back from bad holes, how you follow up good holes, how you treat your parents and how you interact with your playing partners.

All of this matters just as much as your score at the end of the day. These details will help coaches make judgments on whether or not players will make a successful transition into college, college golf and living with greater independence.

## Junior Year

- ✓ Students should be demonstrating a strong academic performance and should be involved in extracurricular activities outside of golf. Leadership should be a major focus of extracurricular activities.
- ✓ If the student has not already done so, the beginning of the junior year is the time to begin researching colleges they may be interested in attending. Students should create a list of 50–75 schools (refer to Tips for Researching College Golf Programs).
- ✓ Ideally, students should now be playing a full schedule of top local, and state events. If possible, students should look to add multiple regional and national events to their schedule as well. Students should continue playing high school golf to stay sharp and competitive throughout the year. Students looking to play at this level will likely need to begin posting some strong finishes in these events. Students hoping to secure a scholarship may need to have several strong finishes.
- ✓ Students should be regularly updating their junior golf and academic resumes.
- ✓ If possible, students should look to create a swing video to post online or send to coaches.
- ✓ Students should have contacted all the schools they are interested in attending by this time.

- ✓ Students should be trying to coordinate “unofficial” campus visits with college coaches. Students can schedule visits to schools close to home anytime or visit schools farther away as they travel to tournaments and/or family vacations.
- ✓ Students and their parents should be completing all the necessary steps for the [NCAA Eligibility Center](#) (formerly known as the NCAA Clearinghouse).
- ✓ Students should be keeping college coaches updated with their recent results and upcoming events.

## Senior Year

- ✓ Students should be demonstrating a strong academic performance and should be taking leadership roles in extracurricular activities outside of golf.
- ✓ Many students will already be in communication with college coaches and looking to make verbal commitments by this time.
- ✓ Students should now be playing a strong schedule of top local and state events, as well as regional and national events if possible. Students should also look to incorporate a few amateur level competitions in their tournament schedule if possible. These events will help show coaches they are preparing for college length courses and deeper fields. Students should continue playing high school golf to stay sharp and competitive throughout the year. Students looking to play at this level will likely need to begin posting some strong finishes in tournaments.
- ✓ Students should be narrowing down their list of potential schools to the most interested and realistic choices.
- ✓ Students should now be communicating regularly with college coaches and keeping them updated with recent results, upcoming events, what they are learning and how they are improving throughout this process.
- ✓ Students who receive scholarship offers may want or be asked/encouraged to make a verbal commitment to a school sometime during this year.
- ✓ During this time, students will be applying to the school(s) of their choice.
- ✓ Students and their parents should have completed all the necessary steps for the [NCAA Eligibility Center](#) by now (formerly known as the NCAA Clearinghouse).
- ✓ Students who have made a verbal commitment will be signing their National Letter of Intent in the fall of their senior year. There is also an open signing period in the spring for students who did not make a verbal commitment during the “early signing period.”
- ✓ Students may look to take an “official” visit to a campus during their senior year.
- ✓ Students should be regularly updating their junior golf resumes for future amateur competitions.
- ✓ Students should be regularly updating their personal/academic resumes to apply for academic scholarship opportunities.

# College Golf Preparation Timeline

## NCAA DI (Teams Ranked outside the Top 50) as well as Elite DII and DIII Teams

### GENERAL INFORMATION

**Examples of Teams in This Category:** DI - University of North Florida, UNC Charlotte, Houston, East Carolina, Kent State, Liberty, Kansas State, Middle Tennessee State, Princeton, Georgetown, Texas Tech, Maryland. DII – Nova Southeastern, Lynn, USC Aiken, Barry, Chico State, CSU Monterey Bay, Flagler, Florida Southern. DIII – Redlands, Methodist, Oglethorpe, Illinois Wesleyan, Guilford, LaGrange. Check out the [www.golfstat.com](http://www.golfstat.com) rankings to view more teams in this category.

**Tournaments:** USGA, AJGA, Regional Junior Golf Tours, State Golf Association Events, Independent Junior Golf Tournaments, etc.

**Scores (Women & Men):** See “What does it take to play college golf” document

**Recruiting sweet spot:** January 1<sup>st</sup> of sophomore year thru junior year graduation. The time between January 1<sup>st</sup> of a student’s sophomore year and a student’s junior year graduation is generally accepted as the most important time for recruits to be playing their best golf.



### RECRUITING TIMELINE

#### Prior to High School

- ✓ Students should have some experience playing local and/or state level tournaments. Examples of these are local tours, state golf association tournaments and championships, city championships, etc. Students should be posting some strong finishes in these events.
- ✓ Students should establish a USGA Handicap.
- ✓ Students should keep track of their tournament results and begin developing their junior golf resume by recording tournament finishes (see example in “Resources section”)

#### Freshman Year

- ✓ Students should be demonstrating a strong academic performance and should be involved in extracurricular activities outside of golf. Leadership should be a focus of extracurricular activities.
- ✓ Students should begin adding state and regional events to their competitive golf schedules in addition to playing high school golf. Students should be posting top finishes in local events and have 1 or 2 solid showings at the state or regional levels.
- ✓ Students should be updating their junior golf resumes with their latest results.
- ✓ Students should be building their junior golf resumes to gain entry into a greater number of regional and national events. These events may come in the form of a tour such as the AJGA, IJGA, FCWT or in stand-alone events.



- ✓ Students should develop a personal resume that keeps track of their academic results and extra-curricular involvement (see example).
- ✓ Students and their parents should start looking into completing the necessary steps for the [NCAA Eligibility Center](#) (formerly known as the NCAA Clearinghouse).
- ✓ Students and parents should begin reading about important NCAA rules and regulations that apply to the college golf recruiting process.

## Sophomore Year

- ✓ Students should be demonstrating a strong academic performance and should be involved in extracurricular activities outside of golf. Leadership should be a focus of extracurricular activities.
- ✓ By this time students should be playing a strong schedule of top local and state events, in addition to a few regional and/or national events. Students should be posting strong finishes in a few of these events. High school varsity golf is also a good thing to play in order to stay competitive throughout the year.
- ✓ Students should begin to research colleges of interest. Students should create a list of 50–75 schools they may be interested in attending (refer to Tips for Researching College Golf Programs).
- ✓ Students and parents should continue educating themselves on important NCAA rules and regulations that apply to the college golf recruiting process.
- ✓ Students should be regularly updating their junior golf and academic resumes.
- ✓ If possible, students should look to create a swing video to post online or send to coaches.
- ✓ Students should begin contacting the schools they are interested in and should be keeping college coaches updated with their recent results and upcoming events.

### College Coach Tip

Players should treat every round as if a college coach is following, regardless of whether they are watching or not.

College coaches will be looking to see how you prepare for the round, your pre-shot routine, your course-management, how you react to good and bad shots, how you bounce back from bad holes, how you follow up good holes, how you treat your parents and how you interact with your playing partners.

All of this matters just as much as your score at the end of the day. These details will help coaches make judgments on whether or not players will make a successful transition into college, college golf and living with greater independence.

- ✓ Students should try to coordinate “unofficial” campus visits with college coaches. Students can visit schools close to home anytime or visit schools farther away as they travel to tournaments and/or family vacations.

## Junior Year

- ✓ Students should be demonstrating a strong academic performance and should be taking leadership roles in extracurricular activities outside of golf.
- ✓ Many students will be receiving scholarship offers and be making verbal commitments throughout their junior year of high school.
- ✓ Students should now be playing a strong schedule of state, regional and national events in addition to high school varsity golf. Students looking to play at this level will likely need to post multiple strong finishes in these types of

events. Students hoping to secure a large scholarship may need to win one or more events or have several top 5 and top 10 finishes.

- ✓ Students should have already contacted the schools they are interested in by this time. Students should now be communicating regularly with college coaches and keeping them updated with recent results, upcoming events, what you are learning and how you are improving throughout this process.
- ✓ Students should be regularly updating their junior golf and academic resumes.
- ✓ Students and their parents should be completing all the necessary steps for the [NCAA Eligibility Center](#) (formerly known as the NCAA Clearinghouse).
- ✓ Students should be trying to coordinate “unofficial” campus visits with college coaches. Students can visit schools close to home anytime or visit schools farther away as they travel to tournaments or family vacations.
- ✓ Students should be narrowing down the list of schools they may be interested in attending to their top 5 or 6 choices.
- ✓ Students who receive scholarship offers may want or be asked/encouraged to make a verbal commitment to a school sometime during this year.

## Senior Year

- ✓ Students should be demonstrating a strong academic performance and should be taking leadership roles in extracurricular activities outside of golf.
- ✓ By this time a majority of roster spots and scholarship dollars will have been given out to students who have made verbal commitments.
- ✓ Students should look to make a verbal commitment or sign during the appropriate time frames if options are available.
- ✓ At this point, students should look to begin mixing in amateur level competitions to their junior events. These competitions will help students prepare for college length courses and stronger fields. It would also be beneficial to play in any major national junior tournaments the student can gain entry into, such as the US Junior, AJGA majors and other stand-alone events such as the Junior Invitational.
- ✓ During this time, students will be applying to the school(s) of their choice.
- ✓ Students and their parents should have completed all the necessary steps for the [NCAA Eligibility Center](#) by now (formerly known as the NCAA Clearinghouse).
- ✓ Students who have made a verbal commitment will be signing their National Letter of Intent in the fall of their senior year. There is also an open signing period in the spring for students who have not made a verbal commitment prior to the “early signing period deadline.”
- ✓ Students may look to take an “official” visit to a campus during their senior year.
- ✓ Students should be regularly updating their junior golf resumes for future amateur competitions.
- ✓ Students should be regularly updating the personal/academic resume to apply for academic scholarship opportunities.





# College Golf Preparation Timeline

## Top Ranked NCAA DI Teams

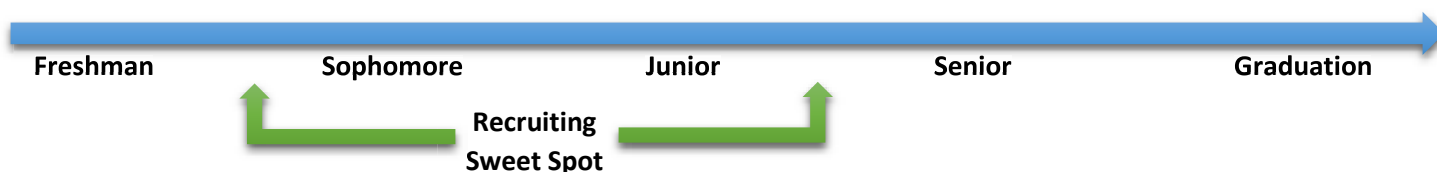
### GENERAL INFORMATION

**Examples of Top Ranked Golf Programs:** Oklahoma State, Georgia, Georgia Tech, Florida, Florida State, Duke, UNC, Wake Forest, USC, UCLA, Oklahoma, Texas, Texas A&M, Ohio State, Michigan, Oregon, Illinois, Arizona State, UNLV, etc. Check out the [www.golfstat.com](http://www.golfstat.com) rankings to view teams in this category.

**Tournaments:** USGA, AJGA, State Golf Association Championships, Top ranked independent events, etc.

**Scores (Women & Men):** See “What does it take to play college golf” document

**Recruiting Sweet Spot:** January 1 of freshman year thru December 31<sup>st</sup> of junior year. The time between January 1<sup>st</sup> of a student’s freshman year and December 31<sup>st</sup> of a student’s junior year is generally accepted as the most important time for recruits to be playing their best golf.



### RECRUITING TIMELINE

#### Prior to High School

- ✓ Students should ideally have considerable experience playing local and state level tournaments such as state golf association championships, AJGA Junior All-Star events, as well as other regional tours and stand-alone events. Students should be posting top finishes in these events.
- ✓ Students should have already established a USGA handicap
- ✓ Students should begin to develop their junior golf resume by recording their tournament finishes (see example in “Resources section”).

#### Freshman Year

- ✓ Students should be demonstrating a strong academic performance and should be involved in extracurricular activities outside of golf. Leadership should be the focus of extracurricular activities.
- ✓ Students should be playing a strong schedule of state and regional events in addition to high school varsity golf. Students should be consistently posting top finishes in these events.
- ✓ Students should begin to play in national events. These events may come in the form of a tour such as the AJGA, IJGA, FCWT or in stand-alone events.
- ✓ Students should develop a personal resume that keeps track of their academic results and extra-curricular involvement (see example in “Resources section”).
- ✓ Students should begin to research colleges they may be interested in attending. Students should create a list of 50-75 schools (refer to Tips for Researching College Golf Programs).
- ✓ Students and parents should make themselves aware of important NCAA rules and regulations that apply to the college golf recruiting process.

- ✓ Students should be updating their junior golf resumes with their latest results.
- ✓ Students should create a swing video to post online or send to coaches if available.
- ✓ Students should contact the schools they are interested by sending an introductory email (see example), academic and golf resumes, as well as their upcoming tournament schedule and other pertinent information.

## Sophomore Year

- ✓ Students should be demonstrating a strong academic performance and should be involved in extracurricular activities outside of golf.
- ✓ Students should continue playing a strong schedule of state, regional and national events in addition to high school varsity golf. Students should be posting top finishes in these events. Students hoping to secure a large scholarship at a major university will likely need to show they are capable of winning or finishing very high (top 5) in state, regional and/or national events (US Junior, AJGA majors and other events, top ranked stand-alone junior events)
- ✓ Students should have already contacted the schools they are interested in and should now be keeping college coaches updated with their recent results and upcoming events.
- ✓ Students and parents should continue educating themselves on important NCAA rules and regulations that apply to the college golf recruiting process.
- ✓ Students should be regularly updating their junior golf and academic resumes.
- ✓ If they haven't already done so, students should create a swing video to post online or send to coaches.



### College Coach Tip

Players should treat every round as if a college coach is following, regardless of whether they are watching or not.

College coaches will be looking to see how you prepare for the round, your pre-shot routine, your course-management, how you react to good and bad shots, how you bounce back from bad holes, how you follow up good holes, how you treat your parents and how you interact with your playing partners.

All of this matters just as much as your score at the end of the day. These details will help coaches make judgments on whether or not players will make a successful transition into college, college golf and living with greater independence.

- ✓ Students should be trying to coordinate “unofficial” campus visits with college coaches. Students can visit schools close to home anytime or visit schools farther away as they travel to tournaments and/or family vacations.
- ✓ Students should be narrowing down the list of schools they may be interested in attending to their top 5 or 10 choices.
- ✓ Students and their parents should start looking into completing the necessary steps for the [NCAA Eligibility Center](#) (formerly known as the NCAA Clearinghouse).
- ✓ Many elite junior golfers looking to attend a top DI school are making verbal commitments during their sophomore years.

## Junior Year

- ✓ Students should be demonstrating a strong academic performance and should be taking leadership roles in extracurricular activities outside of golf.
- ✓ Almost all top ranked teams will have filled their rosters and distributed scholarship dollars by the middle/end of the recruit's junior year. Students looking to receive a spot on the team and/or scholarship money will most likely need to make a verbal commitment by this time.
- ✓ Students should continue playing a strong schedule of state, regional and national events in addition to high school varsity golf. Students should be posting top finishes in these events. Students hoping to secure a large scholarship at a major university will likely need to show they are capable of winning or finishing very high (top 5) in state, regional and/or national events. Students may also want to test the waters playing in 1 or 2 amateur events. These tournaments will be played on college length courses and will feature stronger fields. This is a great way to begin measuring your game and seeing what areas you need to improve in.
- ✓ Students should have already contacted the schools they are interested in and should now be keeping college coaches updated with their recent results and upcoming events.
- ✓ Students should be regularly updating their junior golf resumes for future amateur competitions.
- ✓ Students should be regularly updating their personal/academic resumes to apply for academic scholarship opportunities.
- ✓ Students and their parents should be completing all the necessary steps for the [NCAA Eligibility Center](#) (formerly known as the NCAA Clearinghouse).
- ✓ Students should be trying to coordinate "unofficial" campus visits with college coaches. Students can visit schools close to home anytime or visit schools farther away as they travel to tournaments or family vacations.
- ✓ Students should be narrowing down the list of schools they may be interested in attending to their top 2 or 3 choices.

## Senior Year

- ✓ Students should be demonstrating a strong academic performance and should be taking leadership roles in extracurricular activities outside of golf.
- ✓ By this time nearly 100% of roster spots and scholarship dollars will have been allocated to students who have made verbal commitments to elite golf programs.
- ✓ At this point, students should be playing in a majority of amateur level competitions. These competitions will help students prepare for college length courses and stronger fields. It would also be beneficial to play in major national junior tournaments such as the US Junior, AJGA majors and other stand-alone events such as the Junior Invitational.
- ✓ Students will be applying to the school(s) of their choice.
- ✓ Students and their parents should have completed all the necessary steps for the [NCAA Eligibility Center](#) by now (formerly known as the NCAA Clearinghouse).
- ✓ Students who have made a verbal commitment will be signing their National Letter of Intent in the fall of their senior year. On some rare occasions, students may sign their National Letter of Intent in the open signing period during the spring of their senior year.
- ✓ Students may look to take an "official" visit to a campus during their senior year.
- ✓ Students should be regularly updating their junior golf and academic resumes for amateur competitions and scholarship opportunities.

be



# Tips for Researching College Golf Programs

Doing your homework in the college recruiting process can make a huge difference in whether or not you receive a college golf scholarship and a chance to play competitive golf at the next level. Keep these items in mind as you search for schools you might be interested in.

## 1. Expand your horizons

Some students want to stay in state or close to home for college and that's okay; but there are over 2,000 men's and women's golf teams across the country looking for student-athletes. Where do you want to spend the next 4 years of your life...New York, California, Texas, South Dakota, Colorado or Louisiana? The choice can be yours!

## 2. Think about the school

Have you considered what type of school you want to attend?

- School size:** Huge, big, medium, small, or really small? Larger schools usually have more competitive golf programs that will be tougher to earn a scholarship or playing spot on.
- Major:** IMPORTANT - Does the school have the course of study or major that you are interested in? Will the athletic department allow you to enroll in this major and play golf?
- Cost:** Affordable, slightly expensive, or really expensive? How beneficial will a degree from this college or university be as you search for a career? Will you be required to take on a loan to help pay for school?
- Scholarships:** What are the odds you will receive academic or athletic scholarship money?
- Climate:** Do you mind the cold, do you enjoy 4 seasons, or would you rather be warm all the time?
- School Type:** Public vs. private?



## 3. Contact 50–75 schools

This may sound like a lot at first, but only the very best players are able to contact a small number of schools and generate the necessary communication and interest. Typically, recruits only receive a response from 20–25% of coaches they contact and not all of these responses are realistic or positive. Remember to contact schools at various levels (dream schools, stretch schools and realistic schools). You never know what is going to happen to your golf game in the future. You may start playing your best golf ever and have a whole new set of opportunities open up! Students that cast a wider net have more options and more leverage in scholarship discussions. Need more reasons why you should contact a lot of schools?

Here are some!

- Having multiple schools interested in you can be a major confidence boost, and confidence usually leads to better golf scores!
- Opportunity to practice phone calls, playing in front of coaches and going on visits with schools lower on your priority list, so you nail the ones you are really interested in!
- Helps create a solid group of options in case your first choice doesn't work out.



## 4. Use an online research tool

The Ping College Golf Guide found at [www.collegegolf.com](http://www.collegegolf.com) is a great tool for researching colleges and universities with golf programs. This program allows you to filter schools by divisions, academics, majors, conferences, location, university enrollment, etc. There is a cost associated to this program, but it is well worth the investment in the long run! Email Ryan Wilson ([rwilson@thefirsttee.org](mailto:rwilson@thefirsttee.org)) at The First Tee home office if cost prohibits you from utilizing this service.

# Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU)

HBCUs are a source of accomplishment and great pride for the African American community, as well as the entire nation. The Higher Education Act of 1965, defines an HBCU as: "...any historically black college or university that was established prior to 1964, whose principal mission was, and is, the education of black Americans."

HBCUs offer all students, regardless of race, an opportunity to develop their skills and talents. These institutions train and educate young people who go on to serve domestically and internationally in professions as entrepreneurs and in the public and private sectors. Over the course of history, HBCU schools have continuously developed alumni who have gone on to have highly successful careers in business, health care, politics, athletics and more.

Nearly 50 HBCU schools around the country have collegiate golf programs and several of these are highly competitive. HBCU golf programs compete at all different levels of competition, from NCAA DI to Junior College (NJCAA). HBCU schools are great options for students who want to receive a quality education while continuing to hone their skills playing competitive golf.

**Golf Scholarships:** many HBCU schools offer fully funded golf programs. Women's teams may have up to 6 full scholarships available and men's teams may have up to 4.5 full scholarships available.

**Examples of HBCU Schools:** Edward Waters College, Fisk University, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Lincoln University, Prairie View A&M University, Tennessee State University, Morehouse College and more.

Visit <https://sites.ed.gov/whhbcu/> for a complete listing of HBCU schools by state and additional information *(including scholarships and internships)*.

Resource: The White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities - U.S. Department of Education



# National Minority Junior Golf Scholarship Association (Bill Dickey)

William “Bill” Dickey began the National Minority Junior Golf Scholarship Association (NMJGSA) in the early 1980’s to expose young minority men and women to the game of golf, it’s fundamentals and its’ inherent values. Though Mr. Dickey is no longer with us, the important work he began lives on!

Now known as the Bill Dickey Scholarship Association (BDSA), its “mission is to increase the participation of minority young people in the sport of golf, as well as provide financial assistance in support of their efforts to experience the advantages of education.”

The Bill Dickey Scholarship Association has been awarding college scholarships to young minority women and men for over 30 years. In that time, nearly 4 million dollars have been given to deserving students who have been involved in competitive junior golf and are pursuing a college education. Bill Dickey Scholars are continuing to complete their college education and play golf at the highest levels of competition.

In addition to scholarships, the BDSA hosts the annual Bill Dickey Invitational (BDI), which is a 36-hole stroke play event for many of the country’s top minority junior golfers. In addition to the tournament, BDI week also features a Junior Am/Corporate Challenge, career symposium, special guest speakers and more. The tournament is nationally ranked and top finishers/winners earn points and exemptions to other elite events.

For more information on scholarship eligibility and the Bill Dickey Invitational, visit their website: [www.billdickey.org](http://www.billdickey.org).





The background of the slide is a dark red color with a faint, stylized map of the United States. The map is composed of thin, dark lines representing state boundaries and major roads. The text is overlaid on the lower-left portion of the map.

# **Section 4**

## **Special Circumstances and Questions**



# Special Circumstances and Questions

The following section of the College Golf Road Map contains content created by College Golf Road Map Special Advisor Brandi Jackson. Brandi is one of the top college golf consultants in the country and works with players of all abilities to help them accomplish their goals of playing competitive golf in college. Brandi was an NCAA All-American at Furman University and went on to have a successful professional career on the LPGA and Symetra tours. Brandi has over 10 years of college golf consulting experience and has successfully guided hundreds of young people onto successful careers as student-athletes at various schools across the United States. We are lucky to have Brandi as an advisor and contributor to the College Golf Road Map! You can read more about Brandi Jackson, her thoughts on college golf recruiting, and the services she offers by either visiting her website ([www.brandijacksongolf.com](http://www.brandijacksongolf.com)) or by going to her blog ([www.recruit.pkbgt.org](http://www.recruit.pkbgt.org)).



## What if I am behind in the process?

### Recruit PKB: Behind in the process

One of the hardest parts of my job is talking with families who have gotten behind in the process and realize they have missed out on a lot of opportunities. They see other players taking visits and committing to schools while they struggle to get coaches to reply to emails. Many times these are players who are just as good as the ones getting all of the opportunities. It's tough to hear these stories of players who really want to play in college but struggle to find somewhere to play. If you're not one of the top 5 players in your recruiting class in your state then the process can quickly pass you by. You must be the one recruiting the coaches and not waiting for them to recruit you.

Once the thought of playing college golf comes into the equation you need to set some goals and a game plan for college recruiting. For starters, you must be realistic about your abilities and what level you can play at. The higher above your current level that you contact, the tougher it will be to get the coaches to reply to your emails and come out to watch you play. You may be a Division I caliber player but don't limit your communication to only Division I coaches. It helps to simply get some communication going with coaches so look across the board at all schools.

It takes more than sending out some emails and waiting for responses. You must keep the coaches posted on your results and your upcoming schedule. Make a calendar for when you email each coach and when you need to follow up with them. Then plan out some times to make calls to coaches. I know it can be nerve racking to call a coach but this will be a huge step for players to take the initiative to call them on their own. Depending on your grad year coaches may not be able to reply to emails or return calls but continue doing all that you can to keep them updated.

Try to schedule some visits. If you can't get in touch with a coach but plan to visit the school anyways then take advantage of being on campus. Ask admissions if you can tour the golf facilities. You may get lucky and the coach is in their office and you can introduce yourself. Take some hard copies of your resume to give to the coach or leave for them. This shows you have serious interest in the school.

Always keep in mind that you must work as hard at the recruiting process as you do your game. Don't expect it to just happen for you, make it happen for yourself.

## What if I have bad or really bad scores on my resume?

### Recruit PKB: Tournament Results

Now that summer is coming to a close, many of you have accumulated an array of tournament results. It's a great time to make sure you put them together in a nice format and send them out to college coaches. The results need to be easy for a coach to read and understand. Putting them in a chart or bullet point list is recommended. You need to include the date, tournament name, golf course, scores, finish and stats. Stats would include the par, yardage, slope and rating if available. A big majority of coaches will know the conditions and strength of field for many of the tournaments but if you are emailing coaches outside of your region they may not know them all.

If you have already sent an intro email to coaches then use this as a time to email them your results from this summer. I know it's tempting to leave out the bad scores but make sure you include them all. Coaches understand you are going to have bad days and bad tournaments. They would rather be able to get the total picture and not look on the internet to find scores you didn't include. You can add any severe weather conditions, injury or illness as a side note but you want to make sure there isn't a trend with withdrawing or always having an excuse/reason for a bad round. Once you have the results together in a nice and neat format, send it out to all of the coaches on your list.

## What about social media?

### Recruit PKB: Utilizing Social Media

Social media can be a very useful tool to utilize during the recruiting process but it can also be a way to cost you opportunities if you don't use it wisely. While there are rules on the coach's end for connecting with recruits through social media, they can still do their homework to investigate what you are posting about, what your friends are posting about, and how you present yourself when you aren't in front of them. However, if you use social media wisely, it can be a great way to learn more about the coach, the golf program, and share your own progress throughout your junior golf career.

### Furman University Head Women's Golf Coach shared her thoughts on the use of social media:

*"We are a little limited on who we can friend and things like that, but there's probably a good chance that I might have players that are friends with some of the kids and if there's a lot of drama popping up then that's probably going to come to the surface. Just like we tell our college kids that a future employer is going to monitor and go back to look at somebody's Facebook photos and language and things like that. This is one level down but college coaches are gonna be looking at some of this junior golf business so I think it's important to be careful what you put out there about yourself. And I will tell my college players the exact same thing, it doesn't change or get any better and it's really only going to become more so as you get older and once you put things out there, they are out there. We didn't have this when I was a kid, thank goodness, but kids have so much more responsibility in terms of the things that could have a potential impact on their lives. I would just say that if your grandmother's not gonna be okay with it, then it probably doesn't need to be up there"*

### Some ways that social media can hurt you:

- NEVER post any bad language or inappropriate pictures. Just keep it clean!!
- Keep the pictures classy. Yes, a picture or two of you at the beach in a bathing suit is completely fine, but know where the line is with too much and too many.

- Posting your college decision before letting the other coaches know who were recruiting you. ALWAYS call and email those coaches before you post it on social media!
- Coaches aren't stupid, they know what red solo cups usually mean in pictures
- Be very cautious of who you allow to be your "friends" on social media. Even though you may not be posting bad messages, if your friends tag you in inappropriate messages that can influence a coach just as much.
- Keep your settings private and only allow people you know and trust to follow you and be friends with you.
- Make sure you don't complain, make excuses, or seem ungrateful after bad tournaments
- Don't share too much about your personal life. If it looks like your life is full of drama in high school, coaches will assume the same will happen in college

### **Some ways that social media can help you:**

- Many coaches and programs are required to maintain social media sites so take advantage of this as a way to learn more about the coach, the program, and the overall atmosphere.
- Use the information posted on a team's account as a way to have things to chat about when you speak or email the coach.
- Posting occasional pictures from your practice sessions and workouts can show a coach what you are doing on a daily basis. Just don't go overboard by posting everything you do.
- Posting pictures from your tournaments, especially when you play well, is a great way to let coaches know how you are doing.
- If you have some extracurricular activities, hobbies, or volunteer work that you are involved with be sure to post about that. It shows you are a well-rounded person.

These days social media can be a scary world for young kids so if you aren't comfortable using it or your parents don't want you to use it then don't feel pressured to. Yes, it can be a great tool to utilize during the recruiting process but it needs to be monitored and used appropriately. Keep in mind, as a prospective student-athlete, you are under a much bigger spotlight and radar than traditional students. Everything you do, every decision you make, every picture you take, every post you make, can all affect your future, not only as a college athlete but also as a future employee.

## **What about going to visit schools?**

### **Recruit PKB: Take Visits**

All steps of the recruiting process are necessary in order to successfully find the right college fit, however taking college visits is when the process really begins to take shape and you can actually see what the ultimate goal will look like. You must be assertive and take the initiative to try and set up visits early in the process. Visits will not only give you an opportunity to meet with a coach but they also help you begin to figure out what you want in a school and help to motivate you to work hard in order to reach the level it takes to play at those particular schools. Also the more comfortable you get with speaking to coaches, the more confident and prepared you will be on future visits.

It can be difficult for freshmen and sophomores to set up visits since coaches can't reply to emails or return phone calls, but with a little persistence you can make it happen. Try emailing and making phone calls to the coach, include your high school or swing coach's contact information (you could also use you're The First Tee chapter program director too). A coach is allowed to call them back and use them as a third party reference. Keep in mind, if a school is a far stretch from where your resume currently stands then it is highly unlikely a coach will go out of their way to try and arrange a visit. Be realistic when contacting coaches so you can maximize your time when taking visits. Check the team's schedule to make sure they aren't away at a tournament on the weekend that you plan to take a visit. Take advantage of days off from school to take visits. Be proactive and start early!

### **Some tips to keep in mind on the visit:**

- Leave your cell phone in the car. To keep you from even being tempted to check your phone during the visit it is best to just leave it in the car.
- Look the coach in the eye and firmly shake their hand when you walk into their office.
- Sit up straight in the chair. Don't slouch and slump.

- Be enthusiastic. Make sure the coach knows you are excited to be there.
- Ask questions! The worst thing you can do when a coach asks if you have any questions is to say “no”. Jot a few questions down on a notepad and take it in with you.
- If you haven’t been regularly communicating with the coach and/or they haven’t seen you play yet, don’t ask about scholarship money unless the coach brings it up. You can ask how many players they are recruiting for your graduation year and if you would be considered a recruited player, but avoid asking specific questions about scholarships until you have developed a relationship with the coach.
- Try to avoid looking at your parents when the coach asks you a question. Speak for yourself.
- Be gracious. Coaches are very busy so thank them for taking time out of their schedule to meet with you.
- Send a handwritten thank you note following the visit.

## What role do parents play in the college golf recruiting process?

### Recruit PKB: Parent Role in College Recruiting Parts 1 & 2

While this can be a very sensitive subject with many parents, it is an extremely vital part of the recruiting process. As many parents know, there isn’t a right or wrong way to parent a child. Every child learns differently, reacts differently and has a different path to reaching their goals. There are, however, a few things from a junior golf and college recruiting standpoint that can make a major difference in the success and enjoyment of the experience. Below are just a few tips to keep in mind as you strive to find the right balance between supporting and being overbearing.

- Continue to ask the junior golfer what they want out of their golf: While junior golfers are still young and need lots of guidance, always make sure it is about what they want out of golf and not what you want.
- Remind them of their decision to pursue a college golf scholarship: Let them know you are only addressing the issue because they said it was their goal and you want to help them achieve it.
- Help them set goals: Write down specific goals with them so that you can always go back and show them the commitment level they agreed upon.
- Teach them independence and time management: This is a major response from college coaches on what they look for with a player. While it is very difficult to sit back and watch them make mistakes, try to allow the players to be more independent and learn time management skills.
- Let them do the work for college recruiting: Remind them of what needs to be done but try not to do too much of it for them. Coaches will know when they come on visits or talk over the phone if they aren’t the ones emailing and doing the work.

### Quotes from college coaches

---

“As much as possible, let the juniors make decisions on how much they want to play and where. A junior golfer that is pushed too much can easily be counterproductive. It will be more fun for them if they are enjoying it...and they will likely stick with the game longer.” ~ Division I Women’s Coach

“We want players who have a voice. Those who have more maturity and less reliance on parents will have an easier time adjusting to college.” ~ Division I Women’s Coach

“Parents need to realize that not every kid is going to be a superstar, in fact, most often, their child will excel when they play a supportive role behind the scenes.” ~ Division I Women’s Assistant Coach

---

## What is a parent’s role during junior tournaments?

### Recruit PKB: Parent Role at Tournaments

A few red flags that coaches are looking for with parent behavior include:

- Hovering while the player is warming up or during post round practice
- Getting upset over bad shots or bad rounds
- Walking away while other players in the group are still hitting
- Conversing too much with your child on the golf course
- Over-excitement

A few positive behaviors that coaches like to see:

- Encouragement of the other players in the group
- Pat on the back after a bad hole/bad round
- Remaining neutral throughout the round
- Providing your child with snacks and water
- Keeping your distance as they warm up and practice

## Quotes from college coaches

---

“I watch parents as much as recruits to see how they interact and treat each other. I also watch to see how involved they are going to be in everything the recruit is doing. I don’t need a parent telling me how to coach their son or daughter.” ~ Division I Women’s Coach

“I watch parent behavior at tournaments and pay special attention to how involved they are at a visit. A parent that reacts negatively to how their son/daughter is playing and the parent that does all the talking during an interview is not helping their child’s chances of being successful in my eyes.” ~ Division I Women’s Coach

“Their relationship is very important. If a parent is doing all the coaching and hovers all the time, then that is a huge red flag to the coach.” ~ Division I Men’s Coach

---

Parents should keep in mind that you are under the radar as much as your child is while at tournaments. Some coaches will look past certain parent behaviors but some behaviors may cost your child an opportunity to play in college. College teams are very tight knit and coaches know that parent involvement may continue into their child’s college career. The coaches want to know they are getting recruits with parents who will allow them to do their job and not cause unnecessary stress on their players.

One of the first experiences a coach will have when recruiting a player is the interaction that they see between a parent and child at a junior golf tournament. Below are a few tips to ensure your role at a tournament creates a positive experience for both your child and a college coach.

## TIPS

- **Don’t hover when they are warming up**  
Try not to hover over your child while she or he is warming up to play. It is ok to watch them hit balls and to be there to assist them if they need it but don’t overdo it. It’s a red flag to a coach if a parent dictates everything their son or daughter does during their warm up. Let them have space to warm up and get ready on their own.
- **Help them with snacks and any extra gear but allow them to take care of their own stuff**  
As a player gets older and more mature, allow them to take care of their own stuff as much as possible. Carry their umbrella, snacks or extra gear but make sure you teach them some responsibility for keeping up with what they will need on the course. In college, a coach will help them in a similar way but they are going to expect the player to take care of the necessities on their own.
- **Limit any conversation on the course**  
Try to limit the conversation with your child on the course. From a rules standpoint this eliminates any question about giving advice, but also from a college coach standpoint this keeps them from questioning that as well. An encouraging comment or a positive pat on the back is always welcomed!
- **Never show emotions on bad shots—players see everything**



This is always a tough one for parents. It's extremely difficult to watch your child struggle and make mistakes on the golf course that you say to yourself "what was she thinking." But do your best to not show your emotions. You may not think they do, but your reactions will greatly influence your child's experience on the course. When asked, players always attest that they see everything their parents do while they are playing and take it to mean much more than you may realize. Your child isn't purposely trying to make those mistakes and wants to play their best, so just always keep that in mind when you catch yourself getting upset or reacting to a poor decision or bad shot. The last thing a parent should do is make the situation more difficult on a player.

- **Encourage the players to eat every 3–4 holes**

You can't force your child to eat and many times they will refuse to take the food simply because you are the one trying to encourage them to eat. However, try your best to remind the players of the importance of good nutrition on the golf course. Just do what you can to encourage them to eat every few holes. If they won't take the food then don't force it.

- **Always be positive**

No matter what happens, at the end of the day, you must keep a positive attitude. Always remember that it is just a game and your child is doing their best to perform and improve.

## Quotes from college coaches

---

"I watch parent behavior at tournaments and pay special attention to how involved they are at a visit. A parent that reacts negatively to how their son/daughter is playing and the parent that does all the talking during an interview is not helping their child's chances of being successful in my eyes." ~ Division I Women's Coach

"Their relationship is very important. If a parent is doing all the coaching, hovers all the time, then that is a huge red flag to the coach." ~ Division I Men's Coach

---

## What is a parent's role during campus visits?

### Recruit PKB: Parent Role on Visits

The first on-campus meeting with a college coach can make or break their decision to continue recruiting a player. In many cases, the behavior of a parent can have a serious impact on which direction the recruiting process will go from there. Below are a few tips for parents to be aware of when they are on visits with their son or daughter.

- **Allow your junior golfer to do all the talking**

I know this may be difficult when you have a junior golfer who is quiet or shy but they need to do the majority of the talking. Meeting with a college coach can be a very nerve racking experience for many young athletes. Help them prepare ahead of time with some questions to ask the coach as well as some questions the coach may ask in return. Have them interview with an adult who they aren't very familiar with as a test run.

- **Never speak for or answer for your junior golfer**

Every college coach will tell you that a red flag is a player who turns to their parents every time a question is asked. They want players who can speak for themselves and know what they want out of their college experience. Make sure you never answer for them. It may be difficult to bite your tongue but do what you can to let them answer all of the questions the way they want to.

- **Ask if the coach would like for you to stay for the interview**

Some coaches may want to only talk with the junior golfer during the interview portion. Just ask the coach if they want the parents there as well or not. Try to allow some time during the visit where the player and coach can spend some one-on-one time if possible.

- **Be humble**

Always be humble and appreciative of the time the coach is spending with you. Do your best not to brag or boast about your child too much. They know the type of player they are recruiting and what potential they have.

As parents, your job is to think your child is amazing, but make sure you keep it humble and understated during the visit. Too much may be a turnoff to a coach who feels the parents' expectations are too high and unrealistic.

- **Take a backseat**

Show the coach you are willing to let your child handle things on their own. They do want to hear from you as parents and get to know you as well, but it is all about your child taking control on visits. They need to see that the player can handle themselves away from parents and has the independence and maturity to play at the next level. If the coach feels the parents will have a hard time letting them coach, it will signal red flags.

## Quotes from college coaches

---

"I recruit players not parents. On a visit I want to hear the player speak and the parent listen and encourage their child. Too much of an overbearing parents is a huge turnoff for me when recruiting. I have stopped recruiting players because of their parents." ~ Division 2 Men's and Women's Coach

---

## What is a parent's role during the college decision making process?

### Recruit PKB: Parent Influence on the Player's Decision

Obviously the parent's will have a major influence on their child's college decision, but trying to help your child make the right decision for themselves can be a difficult task. Below are a few tips to help parents guide their child through the decision making process.



- **Review all of the positives and negatives for each school**

Help your child create a positives and negatives list for each school as they research, take visits, and communicate with coaches. Your role as a parent is to insure they put emphasis on the important factors within each of these lists and don't base their decision on the wrong factors. Help them to understand what each factor will mean for their college experience and for their future.

- **Be honest with your junior golfer about the financial aspect**

This can be a very sensitive subject for many families but do what you can to be honest with your child about the financial aspect of their decision. Many times a player doesn't understand the difference between the out of pocket costs of different scholarship offers. Without overwhelming them, be honest about the impact each decision may have from a financial perspective. The ultimate goal is to find the right fit and for the player to be happy but for many families the financial aspect will have a major impact on the final decision.

- **Be realistic**

This is always a tough part of the decision because every parent and player has high hopes for where their game can get once they get to college. Sometimes the number one recruit won't make the traveling line-up and the last recruit becomes the strongest player on the team. Nobody can predict what may happen once a player gets to college. Sometimes a player may benefit from being a bit of an underdog, and others may thrive more from being the best player. But be realistic about the chance that your child has to play. Keep in mind a player's scoring average will normally go up at least 2-3 strokes once they first get to college because the courses are tougher and the stakes are higher, so remember that when comparing to college scores. Sitting out the entire freshman year can really set a player behind both with confidence and development. Try to help your child not get wrapped up in the glitz and glamor of what the school and program offers and realistically consider their chances of playing and making an impact on the team.

- **Remind them of what their decision means for their future**

The decision to play (or not play) college golf is one that will greatly affect a young person's life. Being a college athlete, at any level, requires a tremendous amount of time, dedication and commitment, but the benefits for



their future are unmeasurable. Remind your child of what it will mean to be a college student-athlete and how that will affect their college experience in relation to being a non-athlete. Be honest with them about perks, but also the sacrifices that a student-athlete must make.

## Quotes from college coaches

---

“Also, the parents and students make decisions on how much scholarship is offered versus the right fit and where the student will be happy and improve.” ~ Division I Women’s Coach

---

## How do I make the right college decision?

### Recruit PKB: Making Your College Decision

It’s the moment every young golfer dreams about from the time they play their first tournament, well that and maybe making the winning putt to win The Masters or the US Women’s Open. It’s their day to announce to the world where they have officially committed to play college golf. They wear their future college colors, and while surrounded by their parents and coaches, they have their picture taken as they sign their National Letter of Intent (NLI).

Every young golfer should be thrilled and excited for this day in their junior golf career, it’s a huge accomplishment, but many get one step ahead of themselves and fail to take the decision making part serious enough to insure they find the right fit. They don’t weigh out all the pros and cons and put more emphasis on the less important parts of the decision, than the factors that will have the bigger impact on their college careers.

Unfortunately there isn’t an exact blueprint for a junior golfer to make their college decision. Each young golfer has their own preferences and reasons for what they want out of their college golf experience. Some want a big university, while others want a smaller environment, some want a competitive golf program, while others want a more laidback environment, some want to stay close to home, while others are ok with going farther away from home. This list can continue on and on, but the takeaway is that each junior golfer has to figure out what the most important factors are for their own happiness.

If you are nearing the end of your decision making process, hopefully that means you have already visited numerous universities, met with the coaches, asked lots of great questions and maintained communication throughout the process. If you want to insure you find the right fit, you must do your homework by asking the right questions and getting to know the coach and golf program as much as possible. You then need to figure out what it is that YOU want out of your college experience. Many times this can change once you get to college, sometimes even before then, but you have to do all that you can to weigh out the important factors and make the best decision you can for yourself.

Below are just a few areas to consider as you make your decision. As mentioned before, there isn’t an exact blueprint that every golfer can follow in order to make their decision and many times you may have to sacrifice a few of your ideal factors in order to put all of the pieces together into the best fit possible. But there are a few key areas that will have a huge impact on a golfer’s college experience no matter what level of golf they decide to play.



### Coach personality and philosophy

No matter where you play your college golf, the relationship you develop with your college coach is one that will have a huge impact on your college experience and the rest of your life. Do everything you can during the process to ask questions and get to know the coach. Remember you are trying to get to know them just as they are trying to get to know you. Don’t hesitate to call and talk to them as often as you can, ask them lots of questions, go watch them at a tournament to see how they interact with their players and ask the team members how they feel about the coach (keeping in mind this can be a tad biased depending on the player’s own experience). While you can’t pick a university specifically for the coach (the coach may leave before you even get there), you do need to make sure you have complete respect, share the same expectations, and feel comfortable with the coach you choose to play for or else it will be a long four or five years.

## Team atmosphere

You will probably spend more time with your teammates than you will anybody else at the university. You are going to be dealing with the same struggles, same schedule and same demands so you must see yourself fitting in with the team. This doesn't mean everyone on the team is going to be best friends and run in the same social circles, but you must be able to imagine yourself on the bus with the team for long drives to and from tournaments, eating dinner together, staying in the hotel together, getting your butts kicked at workouts together, going through hours of practice drills together, having those tough team meetings together, cheering each other on at tournaments and supporting each other through the ups and the downs. Golf teams are small, tight knit families so really take this into consideration when making your decision.

## Academic rigor

Many junior golfers are also great students in the classroom. For a majority of golfers, a big focus is on insuring they go to a good academic school over just playing college golf. This is certainly an area that is very dependent on the golfer's goals and aspirations with their life beyond college golf. I never advise for lowering standards with academic selectivity just to play college golf, but I do emphasize the importance of being a college athlete in the real world if you are able to find the right fit with both. My main piece of general advice is to keep in mind that if you struggle in high school to keep up good grades, while playing junior golf, then it will only be harder once you get to college. A very demanding golf program, plus a very demanding academic school can be difficult for even the best of students and the best of junior golfers, especially if you want to have an active social life. Don't be afraid to push yourself with high demands for yourself, but understand how difficult it will be to juggle even just 2 very demanding areas in college, much less all 3 areas (golf, academic and social).



## Distance from home

This was an area which played a big factor in my own decision, that looking back I have a slightly different perspective on. I grew up in a very small town, and while I was determined to escape the small town environment, I was plagued by the comfort of not going too far just yet. I was a popular kid in my high school (three sport athlete, salutatorian, homecoming court, etc.) but I was not the most out-going, independent, or the most mature of kids either. So I turned down several offers to visit great universities that were 4+ hours away because I was afraid to go that far away from home, not even giving myself the chance to step out of my comfort zone. And I definitely knew we wouldn't have the money to fly me home very often if I went flying distance away. I wasn't sure how I would adjust, knowing that I couldn't go home whenever I wanted or needed to. I wish I would have considered more options that were within a reasonable distance from home and given myself the chance to at least explore those possibilities. So my best advice on this area of your decision is to consider what is comfortable to you that will allow you to focus on school and golf, but not to be afraid to step just a bit farther from what you may consider your comfort zone. Once you get settled on campus you are going to make so many new friends and create a new life that being away from home won't even be that big of a deal after all.

## Size of school

This is certainly a factor that means more to some, than to others. I never really thought much about it when making my decision (shame on me, I know) but luckily my dream golf program, just happened to be a smaller university, with strong academics but still DI athletics so I got the right combination that fit me at that stage in my life. I did miss out on the big time athletic department with the crazy football



tailgates, loud basketball arena crowds and massive facilities, but at the end of the day it's probably not the environment I would have thrived in. I am a huge sports fan, but the big classrooms, easy distractions and intimidation factor of a big campus would have overwhelmed me. I understand when a junior golfer tells me they would rather go to their big state university, than to a small school just to play golf, but one thing to keep in mind is that you can always make that decision later on if you aren't happy (or go to a big university for grad school), but you can never go back and have the opportunity to play college golf once you give that up. So don't let size or a big time athletic department play too much of a factor in your decision, you will come to find out that you can make the most of your experience no matter the size of the campus, big or small. And big athletic departments come with higher demands, expectations and commitment than some junior golfers are willing to put in.

## Playing time

This is another area that can't always be a definite fact when making your decision, but it is an important factor to consider that can play a major role in your college golf experience.



Listen to what the coaches tell you about their thoughts of your playing time, especially the ones who have been in coaching for many years. They have seen all sorts of players with potential and what happens once they get to college. They know the signs, the important skills, and the areas of strengths and weaknesses to look for among players. Don't think they are telling you their opinion just because they don't want you on their team, they are just being honest.

This area of the decision making factor is one of the toughest and least favorite parts of my job. I never want to be the pessimist and tell a junior golfer that I don't think they will get much playing time at a particular school, I know what it was like to have big dreams and big goals, but the level of competition in college golf is so much tougher than junior golfers and parents can usually comprehend. It's OK to go into a program knowing you have to work hard to earn a playing spot, I chose that route over a program where I knew I would always be in the lineup. Fortunately for me it worked out in my favor and I was able to qualify for every tournament, but I see it more times that it happens the other way and players get very discouraged.

I have huge respect and admiration for the players who have the determination and will to work hard to improve and earn their spot, but many times it just doesn't end up being the case and they don't get enough playing time. This area of the decision making process is such a tough factor to predict but it is a huge factor to consider, so really dig deep and ask yourself about the reality of playing time and earning your spot on the team.

### **From a coach's perspective: What are some factors to help a junior golfer determine the right fit?**

---

"Do they like the school, the coach and the team? Does the school have the correct major for the student? It is important to establish a relationship with the coach and to know the students on the team. The student must be qualified academically. The student has to have a solid tournament record." ~ Division 1 Women's Golf Coach

"Does the school have my major field of study? How many players are on the team? Is the program set up to help me elevate my game from a practice environment?" ~ Division 1 Women's Golf Coach

"Learning style, class size, coaching staff, consistency and/or improvement in the golf program, coach's track record, and coach's past employment timeline. Also, take a look at the coach's NCAA ASR/GSR to see how the coach prepares his/her player's careers after college golf." ~ Division 2 Women's Golf Coach

"Does the school have the major that interests you and is the coach willing to accommodate that? Are you comfortable around the coach and the team? Will you have a good chance of being on the travel team?" ~ Division 2 Women's Golf Coach

---

## Here are some questions to ask yourself...

- What is important to you?
- What are your personal goals?
- What are your academic goals?
- What are your career goals?
- What is *first* on your list of priorities: traveling/playing many golf tournaments or academics?
- How does your scoring average compare to the players on the team currently?
- Do you like the coach's personality and the relationship he/she established with his/her players?
- Would you still be interested in attending the school if the coach left?
- How do you interact/fit in with the other players on the team?
- How far or how close do you want to be from home?
- How far or how close do you want to be from your personal swing coach?
- Do you want to be in a big school or small school?
- Does the school provide my major field of study?
- Will attending this school give me the right opportunities and direction after I graduate?

## Would you rather...

Be a big fish in a small pond...

- Make the travel team consistently and play most – if not – all tournaments
- Acquire leadership opportunities
- Allow more flexibility in day-to-day schedule
- Put a higher focus on academics and career path
- Balance golf, academics, and social life

Be a small fish in a big pond...

- Have a much bigger challenge of qualifying to play in tournaments
- Acquire opportunities to use great resources and improve your golf game
- Follow structured/rigorous practice schedule
- Put a higher focus on golf skills and playing career
- Enjoy and meet high expectations and demands
- Balance golf, academics and limited social life



The background is a dark red color with a faint, stylized map of the United States. The map is composed of thin, dark lines representing state boundaries and major roads. The text is white and positioned in the lower-left quadrant of the image.

# **Section 5**

## **Making Your Decision**



# Determining the Right Fit

There is no exact formula for making your decision on where you want to play college golf. However, you can increase your odds of making a “good decision” by doing your homework and asking all the right questions. The most important part is thinking about what you want to get out of the college golf experience. Consider the following items as you research schools and go through the college golf recruiting process:

## Academics

Women and men playing a sport in college are referred to as “student-athletes.” Notice the word order; “student” first and “athlete” second. Very few college golfers end up making a living on the professional tours, so make sure you are researching schools that will help you achieve your academic and career goals. Some schools actually prohibit student-athletes from choosing certain majors because of scheduling challenges. If you know you want to major in something specific, make sure you ask if you will be allowed to pursue that course of study before making any kind of commitment.

*\* Helpful hint: The Ping College Golf Guide ([www.collegegolf.com](http://www.collegegolf.com)) search tool will allow you to filter schools by available courses of study and academic standards. Choose a school that will help you achieve both your academic and athletic goals.*

## Personal Goals

Remember to think about what is important to YOU! It's important to ask your parents for advice, but ultimately you are responsible for making the decision. You are deciding the place and the people you are going to spend the next 4 years of your life with. What do you want to get out of it ... a great education, better golf scores, friends, memories? It's up to you, but remember to consider all the options!

## Athletics

Every school's athletic set-up is different, but make sure to consider the following. What type of academic support will I get from the school? Does the school's athletic department offer tutoring, academic advisors, study hall, etc. What are the team's practice facilities like? Does the team have its own practice facility? Does the university have its own golf course? Does the team have regular access to other practice facilities and courses? How far away from campus are the team practice facilities and course(s) and how will this affect your practice time and competitive goals? What about physical fitness? How regularly does the team work out? What are the fitness facilities like? Does the golf team work with a specialized trainer? These are important factors you will want to consider during your decision making process.

## Impact Players

College golf teams usually carry between 8 and 10 players on the team and only 5 travel to each tournament. Unfortunately, several players have to stay home while the rest of the team competes. This can be a challenging reality to face for many students making the transition from junior to college golf and it should be a key factor you consider. It's best to compare your scores against the top 3 or 4 players on the team you are researching. These individuals are likely traveling to a majority of tournaments, and you will need to play to a similar level in order to do the same. Ask any college golfer and they will tell you there is a major difference between “traveling” and just “being on the team.” Also keep in mind how many players are in each graduating class as this can really impact how much playing time you may get.

## Junior Golf Scores VS. College Golf Scores

With the previous point in mind...Is a score of 74 in a junior tournament comparable to a 74 in college tournament? Most college coaches believe that college tournaments are 2-3 shots more difficult each round than junior tournaments. Why is this? Courses are much longer. Players often play more than one round each day, so fatigue and fitness play much bigger factors. The challenges of balancing academics and athletics. Course set-ups are more difficult. College golf is a fall/spring sport and challenging weather is often a factor

## The Coach

This will be one of the most important people in your life for the next several years! Make sure to take your time learning and getting to know them better. If possible, go watch teams in action and pay attention to the “coach-player dynamics.” Ask yourself, “What would I do if the coach left the school?” Be sure to ask every player on the team what they think about the coach. Remember to take things said with a grain of salt, but always ask questions!

## **Other Players on the Team**

These could be the people you spend a majority of your time with for the next 4 years! Make sure you get to know them. Look them up on social media. Play 9 holes with them. Are they the type of people you want to become friends with? You can never tell for sure if you will fit in, but you can make an informed decision!

## **Walk On vs. Roster Spot**

A lot of college golf teams have “walk-on” tryouts but VERY few students successfully “walk-on” to a team. Walk-on tryouts are usually pressure packed and chaotic. If your goal is to play college golf and you can’t land a scholarship, do your homework and find a coach willing to give you a guaranteed “roster spot.” This ensures that you will be treated like a regular member of the team, you are guaranteed a place to play and practice and you may even have a chance to earn scholarship money at a later date depending on how you perform.



The background of the slide is a dark red color with a faint, stylized map of the United States. The map is composed of white lines representing state boundaries and major roads. The text "Section 6" and "Resources" is overlaid on the bottom left of the map.

# **Section 6**

## **Resources**

# Online Resources

## Go-to Team

Your local chapter: [www.thefirsttee.org](http://www.thefirsttee.org)

The First Tee home office: Ryan Wilson: [rwilson@thefirsttee.org](mailto:rwilson@thefirsttee.org) or 904.392.3218

Resource	Website	Description
ACT	<a href="http://www.act.org">www.act.org</a>	Find a test schedule and register to take the ACT.
American Junior Golf Association (AJGA)	<a href="http://www.ajga.org">www.ajga.org</a>	Top American junior golf tour. Also offers a points based entry map for ranked events not run by the AJGA in all 50 states. Through the ACE Grant, provides financial assistance to deserving players and their families to offset tournament expenses.
College Board	<a href="http://www.collegeboard.com">www.collegeboard.com</a>	Find a test schedule and register to take the SAT.
Golf Stat	<a href="http://www.golfstat.com">www.golfstat.com</a>	Official source of college golf scores and statistics. Offers the Prep Report which shows what scores you have to shoot to play at various programs.
Junior Golf Scoreboard	<a href="http://www.juniorgolfscoreboard.com">www.juniorgolfscoreboard.com</a>	Search for events and scoring, junior golf rankings, upload resumes, mental game resources, physical fitness resources, recruiting blog and additional resources.
National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)	<a href="http://www.ncaa.org">www.ncaa.org</a>	One of college athletics' governing bodies. Recruiting guidelines, student-athlete eligibility center.
National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA)	<a href="http://www.naia.org">www.naia.org</a>	Information for prospective student-athletes, eligibility center.
National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA)	<a href="http://www.njcaa.org">www.njcaa.org</a>	Information for prospective student-athletes.
Ping American College Golf Guide	<a href="http://www.collegegolf.com">www.collegegolf.com</a>	Research college golf programs, recruiting resources, score translator.
Recruit PKB & Brandi Jackson Golf	<a href="http://www.recruit.pkbgt.org">www.recruit.pkbgt.org</a> <a href="http://www.brandijacksongolf.com">www.brandijacksongolf.com</a>	Outstanding blog by college golf consultant Brandi Jackson, who works with the Peggy Kirk Bell Girls Golf Tour. The blog is updated regularly and covers both junior golf development and the recruiting process.
Titleist Performance Institute (TPI)	<a href="http://www.mytpi.com">www.mytpi.com</a>	Find resources on physical fitness and tournament preparation.
United States Golf Association (USGA)	<a href="http://www.usga.org">www.usga.org</a>	Not-for-profit governing body for the game of golf in the USA. Also conducts several prestigious championships for juniors, women and men all over the country.

National Collegiate Scouting Association ( <b>NCSA</b> ) or Be Recruited	<a href="http://www.ncsasports.org">www.ncsasports.org</a> , <a href="http://www.berecruited.com">www.berecruited.com</a>	Recruiting resource for student-athletes playing various sports. Students can create profiles to help organize personal information and golf results.
Free Application for Federal Student Aid or <b>FAFSA</b>	<a href="http://www.studentaid.ed.gov">www.studentaid.ed.gov</a>	Federal Student Aid program is a part of the U.S. Department of Education, is the largest provider of student financial aid in the nation. All college bound student-athletes should fill out this application on a yearly basis to determine how much financial assistance is available to them.

### Professionals (College Golf Consultants)

There are many professionals available that will help guide you through the college golf recruiting process. These individuals provide services such as help establishing a competitive golf game plan, an in-person evaluation of your golf game and communication with college coaches on your behalf. A potential challenge is that these services are often expensive. You can do a Google search for “college golf recruiting services” to learn more.

# What to Know about the NCAA and Where to go for Help

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) governs a huge portion of college athletics. Their mission is to ensure the well-being and lifelong success of college athletes. NCAA rules impact everything from recruiting procedures, the amount of competitions teams can participate in, weekly practice schedules and even the grades student-athletes must maintain in order to compete. Understanding NCAA recruiting and eligibility guidelines can seem like a scary undertaking, but don't let it intimidate you. The NCAA has outstanding online resources and you can always pick up the phone and call a representative who will be more than willing to answer your questions.

## NCAA Golf Recruiting Rules

Understanding the recruiting guidelines for golf can give you a competitive advantage over those who don't take the time to learn them. It can also help you spot a coach who may be intentionally or unintentionally breaking recruiting rules, which can help protect your future. To read the latest guidelines, visit [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org) and look for information about recruiting.

## NCAA Eligibility

Every year there are sad stories about young men and women who are recruited to play golf in college, but miss out on the opportunity to play because of ineligibility. Don't let this happen to you! Learn the eligibility requirements early that pertain to your goals. This will help you prepare to take all the necessary steps in order to be eligible when you graduate high school. Visit the NCAA Eligibility Center at: <http://www.ncaa.org/student-athletes/future/eligibility-center>

## Prospective Student-Athlete

Young people wanting to play golf in college should be aware of NCAA language that will apply to the recruiting process. One of these terms is "prospective student-athlete." According to the NCAA, a prospective student-athlete is any student who has started classes for the ninth grade. Becoming comfortable with terms like these (and others) will make the recruiting process easier and less intimidating.

## Contacting the NCAA

### National Office

The National Collegiate Athletic Association  
700 W. Washington Street  
P.O. Box 6222  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46206-6222  
Phone: (317) 917-6222  
Fax: (317) 917-6888

### Eligibility Center

For students and parents with eligibility questions:  
NCAA Eligibility Center  
(877) 262-1492 (toll free)  
(317) 223-0700



## What about NAIA and NJCAA Schools?

NAIA and NJCAA schools have different recruiting guidelines than NCAA schools. Visit their websites to learn more about what they are.

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

NJCAA [www.njcaa.org](http://www.njcaa.org)

# NCAA Recruiting Facts



## Division I

Enrolls the most students, manages the largest athletic budgets, generally sees the highest level of athletic competition, offers wide academic programs and provides the most athletic scholarships.

Approximately 176,000 student-athletes within 340+ colleges and universities

Approximately 56% of all student-athletes receive athletic aid

Average number of teams per school = 19

Average percentage of student body participation in sports = 4%

2014 Graduation Success Rate: 83%

Median Undergrad Enrollment: 9,200+

## Division II

Provides growth opportunities through academic achievement, high level athletic competition and community engagement. Many participants are first-generation college students.

Approximately 118,000 student-athletes within 300+ colleges and universities

Approximately 61% of all student-athletes receive athletic aid

Average number of teams per school = 15

Average percentage of student body participation in sports = 10%

2014 Graduation Success Rate: 71%

Median Undergrad Enrollment: 2,530+

## Division III

Provides an integrated environment that focuses on academic success while offering competitive athletics and meaningful non-athletic opportunities.

Approximately 187,000 student-athletes within 430+ colleges and universities

Approximately 82% of all student-athletes receive some form of academic grant or need based scholarship.

On average, students receive approximately \$17,000/year in institutional gift aids

Average number of teams per school = 18

Average percentage of student body participation in sports = 21%

2014 Graduation Success Rate: 87%

Median Undergrad Enrollment: 1,800+

While competing in college does require strong time management skills and some thoughtful planning with academic advisors, on average NCAA student-athletes graduate at a higher rate than the general student body. Fewer than 2% of all NCAA student-athletes go on to be professional athletes in their given sports. In reality, most student-athletes depend on academics to prepare them for life after college. Education is important! There are nearly half-a-million NCAA student-athletes, and most of them will go pro in something other than sports.

# Sample Personal Resume

*A full academic resume may be much longer than this sample shows*

## ADRIANNA WESTHAVEN

1515 Stanley Drive #62 - Hometown, KS 66202

adrianna.s.westhaven@gmail.com

(913) 555-1938

Graduation Year: 2020

### EDUCATION

Southside High School

Hometown, Kansas

Weighted Grade Point Average: 4.63

Unweighted Grade Point Average: 3.85 (Top 5% of Class)

### EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES & VOLUNTEERISM

Participation	Timeline	Hours/Week	Total	Responsibility/Accomplishment
Southside Junior Council	2017-present	5	100	Represent junior class in school activities
National Honor Society	2017-present	1	15	Secretary: take minutes at monthly meetings
Mu Alpha Theta	2017-present	3	75	Math Honor Society
Partners Club	2017-present	2	100	Lead Volunteer: provides leadership training and support for other high school students at monthly Special Olympics events.
Volunteer Coach	2017-present	3	200+	Help mentor younger students at The First Tee
Spanish Club	2017-present	2	25	Assist in planning and executing multi-cultural events
Earth Club	2016-present	1	25	Educate other students on the importance of recycling
LPGA/USGA Girls Golf	2016-present	2	55	Play golf and mentor younger girls
Southside Girls Golf Team	2016-present	15	500+	Varsity Golf, Team Captain
Southside Volleyball Team	2016	15	250+	Junior Varsity
Pure Heart Girls	2016-present	3	60	Host prayer and support events to combat peer pressure of young girls
Student Council	2016-2016	6	120	Freshman Class President: organized monthly events and represent the student body.
The Rift	2016-present	2	55	Junior Counselor at high school church youth camp

### AWARDS & RECOGNITION

2014 The First Tee Outstanding Student Leadership Summit, Dallas, Texas, March 11–14, 2015

2014-2015 All Kansas Preps- Girls Golf Team

2014 Nature Valley First Tee Open at Pebble Beach

Coca-Cola Champions Challenge Winner at Pebble Beach

The First Tee Life Skills & Leadership Academy, August 10, 2012

# Sample Junior Golf Resume

*A full competitive golf resume will likely be much longer than this sample shows*

**Name:** Allison Rodriguez

**Age:** 17

**Graduation Year (Class of):** 2018

**Address:** 5555 Knollwood Street, Dallas, TX 24457

**Phone #:** (888) 123-4567

**Email:** num1golfer@gmail.com

**Handicap:** 2.4

**High School:** Valley View Prep High School

**High School Golf Coach:** Jennifer Miller

**Swing Instructor:** Andre Martinez, PGA

**Home Course:** City View Municipal Golf course

DATE	TOURNAMENT NAME & GOLF COURSE	ROUND- BY-ROUND & TOTAL SCORES	FINISH (Place)	# OF PLAYERS IN FIELD	YARDAGE	EVENT DESCRIPTION (E.G. Regional, National, High School)
March 27– 28, 2017	Future Champions Golf 6 <sup>th</sup> Annual FCG Texas Championship – Circle of Champions - Trinity Forest Golf Club	76-74/150	3 <sup>rd</sup>	37	6108 yards	State
March 9– 10, 2017	Texas Jr. Golf Tour – GC of Dallas Jr. Championship - Walnut Creek GC	75-73/148	1 <sup>st</sup>	42	6000 yards	State
February 16–17, 2017	Legends Jr. Tour, Collegiate Preview – Hurricane Creek	81-79/160	3 <sup>rd</sup>	11	5668 yards	Regional
November 8–9, 2016	Arkansas Sate 7A Girls Championship – Pleasant Valley CC	74-79/153	5 <sup>th</sup>	62	5984 yards	State
October 16, 2016	South Central PGA Players Tour #6 – Indian Springs CC	81	T 3 <sup>rd</sup>	21	5888 yards	Local
August 21– 23, 2016	Fianna Hills Junior Stroke Play Championship – Fianna Hill CC	73-80- 80/233	12 <sup>th</sup>	36	5844 yards	Regional
July 9–10, 2016	Genesis Shootout – Fair Oaks Ranch CC	82-81/163	18 <sup>th</sup>	39	5999 yards	Regional
June 6–7, 2016	AJGA Stacey Lewis Junior Open – Lost Springs CC	83-71/154	9 <sup>th</sup>	56	5240 yards	National
May 22–23, 2016	St. Louis Junior – Missouri Bluffs CC	85-75/160	10 <sup>th</sup>	25	5544 yards	State
April 12– 13, 2016	Legends Collegiate Preview – Ridgewood CC	87-84/171	23 <sup>rd</sup>	31	5987 yards	National



# Sample Introduction Letter to Coaches

Dear Coach Smith,

My name is Jalen Anderson and I am very interested in attending Flagler University as both a student and as a member of your golf team. I am a rising junior at West Forsyth High School in Winston-Salem, North Carolina and will be graduating in June of 2017. I have earned a 3.00 unweighted GPA (4.00 weighted GPA) and I am currently ranked 91<sup>st</sup> in my class of 520 students. My goal is to attend a college that offers strong academic programs, as well as a competitive golf team in which I may contribute to and continue to develop my golf game. Your school seems like a great match for me and I believe it would allow me to accomplish both of these goals.

I believe I bring a lot to the table and will contribute to the success of your team. I am a highly motivated, hardworking, competitive and intelligent golfer. I am constantly learning and evolving every time I play and practice. I work hard on and off the course and I want to be surrounded by a group of individuals motivating each other to do the same.

I have played golf since I was 9 years old and started competitive golf about 4 years ago. I have been on my high school golf team since my freshman year and have been a top player both years. During my freshman year, I led my team to the state finals, and advanced to the regional finals this year. I have played in various junior tournaments as listed in my golf resume. I'm not sure what your recruiting schedule is like, but I would love to have you watch me play. My tournament schedule for the summer is as follows:

- June 11-12: CGA Carolinas Junior Championship Qualifier
- June 28-29: TYGA High Point Open
- July 13-15: Dogwood Championship
- August 1-3: AJGA Under Armour/Scott Stallings Championship

I plan on adding few more tournaments to my summer schedule and will notify you when I do. I will be sure to keep you updated on my results and what I am learning about myself and my golf game along the way. You can also [CLICK HERE](#) to view my YouTube channel and see my most recent swing videos.

I would appreciate it if you would send me information on both your school and the golf program. Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

*Jalen Anderson*

Jalen Anderson

---

## Tips to Remember

- Personalize the greeting of each letter to the coach (ex: Dear Coach Miller)
- Let the coach know you have done your research and tell them specifically why you are interested in attending their school.
- Tell the coach why you would make a great addition to their team.
- Include your summer schedule and invite the coach to come watch you play.
- If you can include hyperlinks to your golf resume, academic resume, swing video, recruiting profile, etc.
- Propose the next step by asking if the coach needs more information or if they would be willing to send you more information.
- Tell the coach "thank you" for their time.
- Do your best to use proper grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Have 2 or 3 people proofread your letter.
- Parents should NEVER send an introduction letter/email on your behalf.

# Swing Video Instructions

## Creating a High Quality Swing Video

Swing videos are a great way to enhance your communication with college coaches. Coaches have limited time and resources to recruit so a strong video accompanying a solid resume and tournament record can go a long way to improve your chances of being recruited. While a video by itself can't replace the other essential recruiting tools, it can help generate extra interest. Consider the following tips when you are creating your swing video.

### What you need:

1. iPhone or smart phone
2. Video camera
3. Basic video editing software (this usually comes standard on most laptops/smartphones)

### Include the following:

- Short introduction stating name, city, state, and high school graduation class
- Include something unique about yourself and why you would make a positive contribution to a team (make this quick...less than 20 seconds)
- 1 or 2 full swings from the “down the line” viewpoint with each of the following clubs
  - Regular short iron/wedge
  - Knock down or low trajectory short iron/wedge
  - Regular mid/long iron
  - Knock down or low trajectory mid/long iron
  - Driver
- 1 or 2 full swings from the “face on” viewpoint
  - Regular short iron/wedge
  - Knock down or low trajectory short iron/wedge
  - Regular mid/long iron
  - Knock down or low trajectory mid/long iron
  - Driver
- 4 or 5 chip/pitch shots from both “face on” and “down the line” viewpoints.
- 8 to 10 putts from varying distances (5' to 30') and from both “face on” and “down the line” viewpoints.

### Thoughts to remember:

- Position the camera in the correct spots
  - “down the line” - directly behind player and in line with the ball and target
  - “face on” - directly facing the player's chest and in line with the ball
- Make sure that footage plays at regular speed. Do not slow-down or speed-up swings.
- Be sure to dress for success. Make sure your clothes are appropriate, clean and wrinkle free.
- Try to minimize background noise coming from cars, people, planes, etc.
- When editing your swing video avoid the following: distracting music, swing lesson voiceover, swing position drawing lines, special effects, etc.

Once you complete your swing video, upload it to a free video site like YouTube or Vimeo. Once this is complete you can attach keep the hyperlink on file and copy/paste it in all your coach communication emails. This allows coaches to view your swing in one smooth and simple process.

Budget Friendly Tip: Swing videos are a great way for young people with limited financial resources to extend their recruiting reach. With modern technology, a high quality swing video can be put together for little to no cost and sent to coaches all around the country. Keep this in mind as you are developing your game. A video will not substitute playing and finishing well in tournaments, but it will help your dollars and your reach extend farther.

# Sample Meal-plan for Competitive Golfers

This information can be found at [www.coreperformance.com](http://www.coreperformance.com)

## **Breakfast: 6:30am**

Fueling up about two hours prior to playing provides long-lasting energy.

*What to eat:* Two slices of high-fiber whole wheat toast with two tablespoons of natural almond butter; two scrambled omega-3 eggs with sautéed peppers and onions; and an orange.

*What to drink:* Water

## **Snack: 7:45am**

A small snack and more water ensures that you're fully hydrated and ready to get your round underway.

*What to eat:* A handful of walnuts and an apple.

*What to drink:* Water

## **Start play: 8:00am**

Holes 4–16: Refuel every four holes to help prevent your energy levels from crashing during the round.

*Snack: Hole 4: What to eat:* One slice of bread with one tablespoon of peanut butter and one tablespoon of all-fruit strawberry jelly. *What to drink:* Water and/or G2 (low-calorie Gatorade). On extremely hot days or if you're sweating profusely, G2 will help you stay cool and hydrated.

*Snack: Hole 8: What to eat:* An energy bar. *What to drink:* Water and/or G2.

*Snack: Hole 12: What to eat:* One slice of bread with one tablespoon peanut butter and one tablespoon all-fruit strawberry jelly. *What to drink:* Water and/or G2.

## **Snack: Hole 16**

*What to eat:* One and a half ounces of lean beef jerky and a small box of raisins.

*What to drink:* Water and/or G2.

## **Lunch: 12:30pm**

Refuel quickly after your game with a meal high in carbohydrates, protein, fluids and antioxidants to help your body recover from the round.

*What to eat:* One whole wheat wrap with 3 oz lean turkey breast, spinach salad with olive oil and one watermelon wedge.

*What to drink:* Water

## **Snack: 3:30pm**

Your post-game meal isn't the end of your body's recovery process. Continue to eat and drink consistently throughout the day to ensure a full recovery.

*What to eat:* An apple and a handful of walnuts.

*What to drink:* Water

## **Dinner: 6:30pm**

Prepare a recovery dinner full of healthy fats, carbs and veggies.

*What to eat:* Three ounces of salmon, one cup of brown rice, and two cups of asparagus cooked with olive oil.

*What to drink:* Water

## **Snack: 9:30pm**

Help maintain and build lean body mass overnight by ending the day with a protein-packed snack.

*What to eat:* Low-fat cottage cheese, a peach, and a handful of raw pecans.

*What to drink:* Water

**Check out these links for more great resources on student-athlete nutrition!**

- [Eating Frequency for the Student-Athlete](#)
- [Tulane University Athletics Nutrition Manual](#)

# Sample College Practice Plans



## Southern Methodist University Mustangs

### Women's Golf Team Practice Example

#### Stuff to Improve:

- Our Par 5 Scoring was poor. We were over par as a team and gave up 10 shots to Middle Tennessee and 8 shots to TCU on par 5's. We need to play better strategic golf, improve our wedges and improve our putting from 15' and in. We also need to weigh risk and reward better by assessing the size of our targets and hitting into the big areas to avoid penalty shots. On par 5's, we counted 9 bogies and 3 doubles.
- We lead the tournament in birdies, but gave up a lot of shots when failing to make par. That means we are taking advantage of our opportunities well when we hit the greens, but not chipping and pitching as well as we should when we miss the greens.
- Finally, we want our attitudes to be confident, loose, focused and positive no matter what the circumstances. Results don't matter more in the third round. The shot you hit after a poor shot doesn't have to be perfect. Missing a putt means add one, not the end of the world. The answer to these things is to keep yourselves in check for patience, acceptance, staying positive and staying in the moment. I had more than a few conversations about what had happened in the past or wondering how we were doing, which made me think you were thinking results in that last round. Do your best on every shot. Look to pump up your teammates around the course at every opportunity. Carry the best attitudes of any team on the golf course.

**Thursday:** Get with David and me for individual feedback and plan to spend time with us on Thursday morning to work on specific things we saw that can be improved.

**Wedges:** Hit 10 balls from 30, 40, 50, 60 and 70 yards or you can choose the 5's. If you miss the green, add 5 balls. If you hit it within the flagstick, take 2 balls off your pile. Pick up after each set of balls. If you weren't pleased with a yardage, repeat it and make an adjustment. Either take more club and smaller swings, lower your trajectory or change your set up. We need to be great within 100 yards and this is a good drill for sharpening that skill. You may take up to 40 minutes on wedges today.

**Putting:** Please do Casey's Drill on 3 holes on the front green. Go through your routine, visualize the putt in real time so you pay attention to the speed chosen and match it to the situation and slope. You may spend 20 minutes on this drill.

**Mustang Challenge:** Put 5 tees down around the hole at 10 feet for each tee. Putt from each tee. When you make a putt, move the tee back one putter length. When you have moved a tee twice, pick it up when you make the 3rd putt. Play for no more than 20 minutes.

Play a game of Drawback with a teammate. Play 9 holes. If either of you finish over par for that 9, you both must play another 9. Continue with this challenge. Play for no more than 20 minutes.

I've scheduled 100 minutes, but you will probably gain at least five or 10 minutes somewhere along the line. If it is over our agreed 90 minutes split, it's ok, you need it. :-)

## Workouts: 5:30 PM

Qualifying is two rounds this week playing from the very back tees. I want to put pressure on your management skills, your wedges and your short game. There will be six players for one spot. Lindsey earned an exemption for the fall semester with her win. Katie earned an exemption for the Match Play Challenge with her finish in the top 10% of the field. Congrats to them!

I will have two picks and will consider the two qualifying rounds as well as the tournament rounds played. Everyone, whether exempt or not will play at least one of the qualifying rounds.

**For more practice plans like this one visit SMU Head Coach Jeanne Sutherland's blog at: <http://12monthsofgolfinvail.blogspot.com/>**



## University of North Carolina Tar Heels Men's Golf Team Sample Practice Program

### Putting Program

#### Objectives:

- To be the "Best putting team in the country"
- Help us reach our goals (both team and individual)

#### General Information:

- Incorporate your putting routine into your putting practice to include the following:
  - Find a generally level putt and measure out your distance for the day
  - Go through your routine. Aim putter; focus on spot in the back of the cup (more specific target than hole)
  - Return eyes to ball and start stroke immediately:
    - No time for mechanical thinking or negative thinking
    - You must trust your stroke and execute at the subconscious or automatic level
  - You are allowed three restarts each day to fulfill the daily requirement
  - Putt until you miss and record total made in a row each day
  - You must successfully complete each step in Level I-III for two consecutive days before you move on. You must then successfully complete each step in Level IV for three days in a row.

## Daily Minimum Requirement

### **LEVEL I** **3.5 Feet** **(2 days)**

10  
15  
20  
25  
30  
35  
40  
45

### **LEVEL II** **4.0 Feet** **(2 days)**

10  
15  
20  
25  
30  
35  
40

### **LEVEL III** **4.5 Feet** **(2 days)**

10  
15  
20  
25  
30  
34

### **LEVEL IV** **5.0 Feet** **(3 days)**

10  
15  
20  
25  
CONGRATULATIONS!

- After completing your level practice each day, then complete a putting clock rotation. 12 putts from 10 feet and record your success rate daily.
- Don't forget a few long putts for touch and feel.
- If you are successful each day, the program can be completed in 54 days.
- You will only get out of this program what you put into it. Attention to detail and determination to maintain your focus on why we are doing this. Honest recording of results so we can gauge improvement.
- Continue daily requirements at tournaments sties as well as at home. You take one day off per week.
- Congratulations! You are on your way to being the best putting team in the country!

## Practice Assignment

### **1. Around the World**

Pick a hole and place 8 balls in a circle around the hole, each ball being a 4 foot putt. Complete "Around the World" (must make all 8 balls in a row). If you miss a putt, then the next ball you hit will be the first ball for your next attempt. For ever miss, you must complete another "Around the World" successfully.

### **2. Make It**

From the "tee markers" hit a chip to the designated hole. It will be a simple bump-and-run from about 25–30 feet. Hit this chip until you make it. Once you make it, move on to the next assignment. However, if you hit a chip that does not go in the hole and is not within the blue ribbon, then you now have to make an additional chip. This continues on throughout the entire drill. So, if you hit 4 chips that are not within the blue ribbon, then you now have to make 4 chips to complete the drill.

### **3. Shape It Competition**

After you get loose with your warm up, get a partner on the range. Alternate choosing specific shots to hit (both trajectory and shape) and be sure to pick targets while selecting the shots. Award a point to the guy who executes each shot the best. The first one to 20 points wins. Change clubs for every shot and make sure you use every club in your bag. Be creative and fun with the shots. Shots to choose from include:

- a. Where wedges land
- b. Where wedges stop
- c. High, medium and low fades
- d. High, medium and low draws
- e. High, medium and low straight shots
- f. Pick a starting point and see who can hook it the most
- g. Pick a starting point and see who can slice it the most
- h. Pick a target 100 yards away and see who can land a 6 iron closest to it
- i. Etc.

## Practice Assignment

### Luke Donald Drill

Hit 4 putts from 4 feet, the 4 putts from 6 feet, the 4 putts from 8 feet, then 4 putts from 10 feet. Then you can reverse it and go 10 feet, 8 feet, 6 feet, and 4 feet. We will do this every day this week. Perfect score is 32.

### Brand Snedeker Drill

Pick a hole and set up tees at 12:00, 3:00, 6:00 and 9:00 at 3 feet, 4 feet, and 5 feet. Putt until you make all 12 putts. Start over at the 3 footers if you miss at any point in the drill.

### Wedge Practice

Hit from 70, 90, and 110 yards from the range to the target green. Hit shots until you have landed 5 balls within 2 feet of the flag. Hit from 40 yards on the new chipping green until you make one. If you don't make before you have to leave you can keep doing it tomorrow.

After short game practice feel free to work on your full swing.

## UNC Golf Skill Tests

Name:

Date:					
Putting					
3 feet # out of 10					
5 feet # out of 10					
8 feet # out of 10					
10 feet # out of 10					
20 feet # out of 10					
Chip In - # of attempts					
Hit each target 5 times					
40 yards – record # of attempts					
60 yards – record # of attempts					
Driving – hit 14 FWs with 3 clubs					
Driver # of attempts					
3 Wood # of attempts					
Hybrid # of attempts					

## Wedge Competition

Use the Titleist shag balls for this. There are three pins, with target circles around each pin. The pins are located at 40, 60, and 80 yards. You will be paired against another team member and will have to rotate hitting shots at the 40 yard target, the 60, then the 80, alternating shots between your opponent.



Use the scorecard provided to keep track of which targets you hit and how many targets you hit. It only counts if your ball stays inside the circle. For example, if Andrew is playing Scott, Andrew hits first to the 40 yard target and his ball comes to rest outside the circle, he doesn't get a point. Then Scott hits a shot to the 40 yard target and the ball stays inside the circle, he marks down a point. They move on to the 60 yard target and both keep their ball inside the circle, then they both mark down a point...and so on.

Each player will hit 10 shots to each target. The player in the match with the most points wins the match and moves on to the next match. However, out of all the winners, the guy with the lowest amount of points is also knocked out, leaving just four guys in the semi-finals. The winners of the semi's move on to the finals.

Hand in your scorecards when you're finished (we'll leave extras in the locker room for the guys that move on to the semi-finals and finals).

## **Practice Assignment**

Once you are done with your fitting, the recommendation is to go play on the course. As of 11:30am, the tee sheet was wide open after 2:10pm. Call the shop, make sure the tee is open and go play.

If you are not playing, your practice assignment is below...

### **Putting Ladder:**

Find a relatively straight putt and put tees in the ground at 3ft, 4ft, 5ft, etc. all the way to 12ft. Make the 3-footer, step back, make the 4footer, step back, make the 5footer, and so on. The drill is complete once you make all the putts in a row from the 3ft tee to the 12ft tee (10 putts total).

Once you finish the straight putt, pick a different hole and find a putt that breaks from left to right. Repeat the steps above.

Once you finish the left to right putt, pick a different hole and find a right to left putt. Repeat the steps above.

### **Hole A Bunker Shot**

I think this one is self-explanatory, but for the slow one, get in a bunker and hit bunker shots until you make one in your intended target/hole. Roll each ball into the bunker. Do not place it. Re-rake the sand in between each shot.

### **Shot Shaping**

On the range, pick a target and hit a draw that does not finish left of the target. On the next shot, to the same target, hit a fade that does not finish right of the target. Do this three times (6 shots total) before moving on to the next club. You should always be alternating between a draw and a fade (don't hit 3 draws, then 3 fades). Do this with all your irons, hybrids, fairway woods, and driver.

# College Golf Recruiting Checklist

Use this checklist to track your progress through the college golf recruiting process.

Determine your goals	
Maintain a strong academic record	
Play as many junior golf events as possible	
Educate yourself on the recruiting process	
Learn about NCAA recruiting rules	
Have an expert evaluate your game	
Build and maintain your junior golf resume	
Practice like a college golfer	
Research schools you may want to contact	
Write a strong introduction letter	
Make a quality swing video	
Contact at least 50–75 schools	
Schedule and take unofficial visits	
Continuously communicate with coaches	
Ask lots of questions	
Find the best option for you	
Make a decision	

# Glossary

**ACT/SAT:** Standardized tests used by colleges for admissions purposes. Students must meet minimum requirements for these tests for the NCAA Eligibility Center and to meet individual college requirements.

**Admissions Contact:** Postcard, letter, email, package, and/or phone call directly from a college admissions department.

**AP or Advanced Placement:** Advanced placement classes offered by a high school. College-level classes. Placement of a college freshman in an advanced class based on work completed in high school. Most often colleges and universities use the College Board's Advanced Placement Tests for advanced placement. Advanced placement may be given with or without credit hours.

**Application Waiver:** A coach's waiver of the fee for applying to an institution

**Coach Contact:** Questionnaire, camp brochure, letter, email, phone call, or text message directly from a member of the coaching staff

**Combine:** Special events designed to showcase a student's golf skills in a variety of different ways. These may include skills challenges/and or Trackman exercises.

**Contact:** An exchange of information between a coaching staff or admissions department and a prospective student-athlete, Contacts include camp brochures, letters, questionnaires, emails, phone calls, and tape requests.

**Contact Period:** The period when a coach may have in person contact with a student or his/her parents on or off college campus. The coach may watch the student compete or visit the high school.

**Core Courses:** High school classes required by the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse. These include English, Math, Natural/Physical Science, Social Science, Foreign Language, Religion, or Philosophy. Refer to the NCAA Eligibility Center regulations.

**Cost of Attendance:** The total cost of attending a school, the Cost of Attendance (COA) is an important factor in determining a student's financial aid needs.

**Dead Period:** Periods of time during which it is not permissible for a coach to make in-person recruiting contacts or evaluating on-or off-campus or permit official or unofficial visits

**Early Action:** Nonbinding plan that requires an athlete to submit his or her application in early fall (usually by November 1<sup>st</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup>).The college lets the student know whether he or she is accepted by early January, but the student has the right to wait until May 1 before responding. This gives a student-athlete time to compare colleges, including financial aid offers, before making a decision.

**Early Decision:** A binding agreement whereby a student-athlete accepts an offer prior to National Letter of Intent Day. A student can apply Early Decision to only one college.

**Expected Family Contribution:** The Expected Family Contribution (EFC) is the amount a family can be expected to contribute toward a student's college costs. Financial aid administrators determine need for federal student aid by subtracting the EFC from the student's cost of attendance (COA). The EFC formula is used to determine the EFC and ultimately determine the need for aid from the following types of federal student financial assistance: Federal Pell Grants, subsidized Stafford Loans and assistance from the "campus based" programs—Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG), Federal Perkins Loans, and Federal Work-Study (FWS)

**Evaluation Period:** The period of time during which a college coach may watch students compete or visit the high school. There is no in-person contact away from the college campus allowed during this time. The coach may call and write during this time.

**Free Application for Financial Student Aid:** The Free Application for Financial Student Aid (FAFSA) is a form required by the government for application to any federal education aid program. The FAFSA is used to determine the expected family contribution (EFC) based on family financial information. A FAFSA is used to determine the specific Federal Student Aid programs that can contribute to a student's total financial aid package and in what proportions.

**Financial Aid/Scholarship:** Money received from a college or another source, such as outside loans or grants. This may be athletic, academic, merit or need-based aid.

**FWS/Work Study:** Provides jobs to undergraduate and graduate students, allowing them to earn money to pay education expenses.

**GATE or Guaranteed Access to Education:** Guaranteed Access to Education (GATE) is a nonprofit private loan program offered through participating institutions in conjunction with Bank of America, Bank of Boston and the National Collegiate Trust (NCT). There is a minimal credit check and colleges can recommend whatever loan amount they'd like the student to receive. The interest rate is also rather low. Students and parents should call 1-617-639-2000 for more information about the program (in New York, 1-212-551-3650).

**GPA or Grade-Point Average:** The NCAA Eligibility Center only uses core courses to calculate this #. This should be cumulative over the entire high school academic career.

**HBCU or Historically Black Colleges and Universities:** Institutions of higher education in the United States that were established before 1964 with the intention of serving the black community, yet they have always allowed admission to students of all races. Many HBCUs have women's and men's golf programs.

**NAIA or National Association for Intercollegiate Athletics:** The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) is a separate association of colleges who compete in intercollegiate athletics. The NAIA launched the champions of character program in 2000, an educational outreach initiative which emphasizes the tenets of character and integrity, not only for NAIA college students, but for younger students, coaches and parents in our communities.

**NCAA or National Collegiate Athletic Association:** National Collegiate Athletic Association is the athletics governing body for more than 1,280 colleges, universities, conferences and organizations. Their goal is to govern competition in a fair, safe, inclusive and sportsmanlike manner. The official Web site is [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org).

**NCAA Division I:** Among the 3 NCAA divisions, Division I schools generally have the biggest student bodies, manage the largest athletics budgets and offer the most generous # of scholarships. [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org).

**NCAA Division II:** A collection of colleges and universities that provided thousands of student-athletes the opportunity to compete at a high level of scholarship athletics while excelling in the classroom and fully engaging in the broader campus experience. Division II schools do provide athletic scholarships, but there are less athletic scholarships available than compared with most Division I schools. [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org).

**NCAA Division III:** The Division III experience offers participation in a competitive athletic environment that pushes student-athletes to excel on the field and build upon their potential by tackling new challenges across campus. Division III schools DO NOT provide athletic scholarships. [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org).

**NCAA Eligibility Center:** The organization responsible for certifying the academic eligibility for practice, competition, and financial aid of all prospective student-athletes for Division I and Division II.

**NCAA Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete:** An important reference book created by the NCAA for student-athletes interested in competing on college sports. This guide leads the student-athlete through eligibility, amateurism, registration with the NCAA Eligibility Center, financial aid, and recruiting rules. It is available at the NCAA Web site [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org).

**NJCAA or National Junior College Athletic Association:** Seeks to promote and foster two year college athletics. Athletic Scholarships are available. [www.njcaa.org](http://www.njcaa.org).

**NLI or National Letter of Intent:** A legal, binding contract in which a student agrees to attend a college for one academic year. In return, a college agrees to provide the student with athletics related financial aid for one year

**Non-Scholarship Athlete:** A student-athlete who has not been awarded any athletic scholarship money but is a member of the team.

**Prospective Student-Athlete:** According to the NCAA, a prospective student-athlete is any student who has started classes for the ninth grade.

**Official Visit:** Visit to a college campus by a student and/or parent paid for by the college. An official visit may include things such as meeting team members, spending the night in a dorm room, attending a sporting event, touring the athletic facilities, meeting with the coach, etc.

**Quiet Period:** A period of time during which a coach cannot have in-person contact with a student or his/her parents off of the college campus. The coach cannot evaluate a student during this time, but can write or telephone during quiet periods.

**Recruiting Contact:** Face to face interaction between a coach and a student-athlete or his/her parents away from the college campus, including high school competitions.

**Recruiting Guidelines:** Restrictions set by the NCAA, NAIA and NJCAA about when and how a college coach can communicate with a student-athlete

**Recruiting Materials:** Information sent by a member of a coaching staff to a student-athlete. These include camp brochures, questionnaires and letters.

**Red Shirt:** A student who does not compete in any competition during a full academic year.

**Regular Admissions:** The process in which a student applies to a college by a midwinter deadline, receives word from the college in early April, and makes a decision and notifies colleges by May 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Revenue Sports:** College sports that bring revenue to the school. These most often include men's football and basketball, and women's basketball, tennis, gymnastics, and volleyball.

**Rolling Admissions:** The process in which a student applies and receives an admission decision within two to six weeks. Applications are accepted until the incoming freshman class is filled. Most public universities and many private colleges use this timeline.

**SAR or Student Aid Report:** The document received after the FAFSA is processed listing all of the answers to the FAFSA. A parent should review these answers carefully to make sure they are correct.

**Student-athlete:** A high school student who is recruited to attend a particular college to play on one of its athletic teams or a student who reports for practice at a college. Your child becomes a college bound student-athlete the day he or she enters high school, is not sooner. Men's basketball recruiting begins a student's seventh-grade year.

**Title IX:** Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 specifying that, "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be exalted from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

**Unofficial Visit:** Any visit to a college campus paid for by a student and/or parents. The only expense a student may receive is three complementary admissions to a home contest.

**Verbal Commitment:** A student verbally indicating that he/she plans to attend a college of university and play college sports. A verbal commitment is not binding, although it is a generally accepted form of commitment.

**Walk-on:** A student who does not receive an athletic scholarship, but who is a member of the team.

# References

Check out these great resources which were used as references when assembling the College Golf Road Map.

1. <http://www.golf.org.au/collegegolf>
2. <http://recruit.pkbgt.org/>
3. [www.brandijacksongolf.com](http://www.brandijacksongolf.com)
4. <http://www.juniorgolfscoreboard.com/>
5. <http://www.coreperformance.com/>
6. <http://www.roadtocollegegolf.com/>
7. <http://12monthsofgolfinvail.blogspot.com/>
8. [www.aspenprojectplay.org](http://www.aspenprojectplay.org)
9. <https://sites.ed.gov/whhbcu/>