

# College Information

## **There is a college swim team for every level of swimmer.**

- Be sure to critically think about how swimming in college can fit with your college academic plan - plan academics first then see how swimming fits in - Look at academic program then follow with swim program.
- College swimming is great, but it comes down to academics first; student athletes – workload is hard.
- Rigorous academic programs won't allow enough time to be in D1/2 swim programs so coaches won't take you – swim club instead if your academic program doesn't fit with super demanding swimming program.
- Many programs – a lot to choose from and something to suit everyone who wants to put in the work and swim.
- A lot of variation in offerings – some schools may have girls not boys or the reverse.
- Times are superfast and dropping.
- Only about 10% of swimmers swim at college any level (club through D1).
- Men's teams average 20 swimmers; Women's teams average 30 swimmers
- If you want to swim but aren't really interested in college, don't view going to college as a must to keep swimming – other paths and can still swim year-round.

## *Types of colleges*

### **Division 1- “The big division”**

- Minimums – sectional finals or above, preferably NCSA Junior Nationals
- Mid-Major (CAA, AAC, WAC) vs. Big Five (ACC, SEC, Big 10, Big 12, Pac 12)
- Separate National Championships, sometimes separate conference champs
- How does Ivy league compare?
  - Competing against Ivys only so a little different
  - Ivys can go to NCAA championships which is outside conference if qualify

### **Division 2 – “Growing division”**

- Minimums – sectional level or above, although girls can be slightly slower
- Can be state or private schools, and usually range dramatically in size
- Combined National Championships, includes the 1000 free

### **Division 3 – “No athletic scholarships”**

- Minimums – Zone level swimmers, sectional and above will get an extra look
- Usually smaller liberal arts, academic schools with limited athletic budgets, but not always
- Combined National Championships, with cuts usually falling near D1 B standards

### **NAIA – “Division 2 – Version 2.0”**

- Wide range of ability – great for the late bloomer with some State cuts
- Looser academic requirements than the NCAA
- Separate Eligibility Center -Combined championships – usually cuts around the faster Sectional standard

### **NJCAA – “Training Wheels”**

- Also a great first step for late bloomers or swimmers with academic issues
- 2-year degree program allows for easy transition into NCAA programs
- Combined championships – relatively easy time standards for participation

### **Club Swim Teams – “Fun swimming”**

- Great for any level of swimmer as well as any commitment level
- No recruiting needed, just contact the club president, similar to Masters
- Yearly championship, occasionally some training trips

DI and DII schools can offer scholarships (but do not count on receiving one) while DIII cannot, but could be grant money available. Have an idea of the price of the school - if it is an expensive school with no scholarships and not much financial aid, and you don't want to get too deep into debt, then you may want to look elsewhere.

You can use swimming as a tool to help you get into a school that would normally be above your academic standard, but consider if this will be manageable for you academically. The coach can help you get into the school in many places, even if the school is not a scholarship school. A college coach can't work miracles, but most of them can help – a good question to ask when meeting with a coach is: how does the admission process work for student athletes? Sometimes, the coach can do very little, sometimes they can do a whole lot, it depends on the school.

### **Things to consider when deciding what schools to put on your list:**

- The majors/other academic programs the schools offers
- Strength of the swimming program and where you'll fit see (see below)
- Level of university (D I, II, or III)
- Men's and women's teams and their interaction
- Size of school
- Setting (urban/suburban/rural)
- Distance from home; area of country/world
- Climate

### **How to decide as a sophomore where you will fit on a college team?**

- 1) NCAA Results
- 2) Conference Results
- 3) Top Times Lists – individual colleges – if not top 7 in 3-5 events, it's not a fit (No one trick ponies in NCAA – the more events you can swim fast in, the better (SCY, SCM, LCM) – can help team win – need at least 3 events in which you could help the team score points.)
- 4) Rosters – where are swimmers from? Local/foreign/out-of-state
- 5) Academics – does the school offer what you are interested in?

Look at 20-25 Schools and narrow it down to 8-10 schools to continue communication and pursue visits:

- 1-2 schools should be local/nearby – ask for unofficial trips
- 3-6 schools should be schools where the athlete can contribute asap
- 1-3 schools should be schools that may be more of an “athletic” decision for future performance goals.

**Things you should be doing:**

- Remove anything you don’t want a coach to see on all of your social media accounts – think about what kind of student athlete they’re going to want and remove anything questionable.
- Follow swimming world magazine, Swim Swam.
- Really think about if you want to swim D1-3 or maybe club with regard to your academics.
- Make sure you’re swimming hard with CBST even in summer (balance with summer club) – does it make sense to take time away from USAS training given your goals? HS districts and states are also important (duals don’t mean a lot) – they show up in your USAS times list – college coaches want to see that you did well in HS as college is another level but it’s similar to HS (team dynamics).
- Go onto the team site for the schools that you are interested in attending and fill out their recruiting questionnaire. This is very important as this is the way that programs generate their initial list of recruiting candidates.
- Create a swim resume:
  - Make a spread sheet or download with your best times by event starting with Freshman year (possibly even 8<sup>th</sup> grade) to present, including SCY and LCM times.
  - Describe yourself in a short paragraph, talking about your swimming right now, your favorite events, what you hope to get out of swimming in college, your work habits, your height, and anything you may want to share.
  - You could even include a photo to make it more personal.
  - Place a few of your swims on YouTube, and a link on your resume, or better yet simply attach these videos to the email.
  - List CBST head coach contact info as well as possibly your high school coach’s info.
  - Send it to the college coach after you have filled out their recruiting questionnaire.
  - When sending it to a college coach – make sure your best times are in the email. Make times very easy to find.
  - Include academic information, current transcripts and/or test scores are typically needed on file for most D1 schools to offer official visits.
- Create a Swim Cloud paid account (plus) – you should have account but plus vs. not probably doesn’t matter – like LinkedIn.
  - Shows progression of swimmer
  - Make a profile – maybe can add videos of races; list camps you’ve attended.
- Swimmers should reach out to coaches early – After June 15<sup>th</sup> in sophomore year (I’m interested in your program and school, and this is who I am; coaches will not reach out to

- you if you don't reach out to them first. It's an exciting time but it comes with a lot of stress – making contact sooner is better – it will help manage stress.
- Contact should be from swimmer's self – NOT parent – don't write it for them and they need to use an email address that they check
  - 1<sup>st</sup> communication would likely be an email to them then they'll start looking at your SwimCloud.
  - Make individual meetings for 10<sup>th</sup> graders over the summer with Geoff (Geoff, parents, swimmer)
    - Geoff will redirect swimmers if they come to him and have unrealistic expectations - he'll be honest, and the swimmer can take his info as a factor among everything else you learn about a school and program.
  - Should tell Geoff before you reach out to a school. If forget to do ahead of time, tell afterward. They can contact Geoff so make sure he knows about any schools you're really interested in. Include coaches name and contact info if it's a place you're really serious about.
  - College recruiting sites or companies: **Do not pay for these**. They are not necessary and cost a great deal of money.

## **Trips & Recruiting**

Rules around recruiting have been updated:

- NIL (Name-Image-Likeness) rules have impact on recruiting rules: The NCAA NIL rules do not override state, college/university or conference specific NIL rules. This means student-athletes need to review the NIL rules in the state where their school is located and check with their athletic department for any school and conference-specific rules to understand what limitations they will have on their NIL.
- Unofficial visit- This is when you set up a campus tour on your own and visit the school. You should contact the coach prior to your visit and see if you can arrange a meeting during your visit. There is no limit to the number of unofficial visits you can take.
- Official visit- This is where the coach invites you to visit the school over the course of two days. You meet the team, spend the night with a team member, possibly watch a practice, and many times attend some form of school activity.
  - Can start Aug 1<sup>st</sup> of Junior year – try to aim for middle of week so can see multiple days of a week (load is a lot and it's good to see how athletes are handling it)
  - Beginning July 1, 2023, **recruits will no longer have a limit on the number of official visits they can make to NCAA D1 schools**. Previously, recruits were only allowed to visit five D1 schools. This means D1 recruits can now explore more schools before making their commitment decision.
  - Recruits are, however, still limited to only one official visit per school. The only exception is if there's a head coaching staff change; only then could an athlete revisit the same D1 school.
  - Plan and use them judiciously – don't let the first time you go to a particular university be your official visit – use unofficial visits as way to pare your list down; reach out to 15-20 and hopefully you'll get 2-5 who invite you to visit.

- How much a university can pay for the visit depends on the Division and the school. At most, a D1 school can pay for all expenses including travel to and from campus.
- College Coaches want to hear from recruits not mom and dad. During visits, the athlete should be doing most of the talking; college coaches gauge how interested the recruit is in their school.

#### Preparing for trips:

- NCAA Eligibility Center (new name for NCAA clearinghouse)– make sure to have your athletes enroll/make profile and get transcripts and test scores sent there at the conclusion of their Junior Year. It costs something like \$120. \*\*
  - Only create if actually in contact with coaches. (Do not create it to make contact with coaches - this is not what it's for so it will be a waste of money.)
  - D1 and D2 only – all D1 & D2 have to register to play NCAA college sports or receive scholarships
  - Does not help you get discovered or recruited
  - Only register if currently being recruited by D1 or D2
  - Could do eligibility and find out not eligible for a certain school (academically) 2.3 on average overall in core courses.
  - Shift toward academics (don't need to be 4.0 – just bumping it up to put more emphasis)
  - Must graduate from HS
  - Standardized test scores required on a school-by-school basis for eligibility and admissions purposes; for schools that do require, it's a combo scale (SAT+GPA)
- Standardized Tests – to take trips, athletes must have standardized tests on file – PSAT, PLAN, ACT, SAT are all acceptable tests for taking trips. They will need to have ACT or SAT for enrollment \*\*
- Communication with High Schools – make sure the school understands the recruiting process – communicate with teachers and administrators prior to trip for homework & tests.
- Workouts – coaches cannot run workouts for your athletes but can make pool time available if they know in advance. Plan for 1.5 hr.

\*\*These two things should be initiated at the beginning of the junior year, but they MUST be done prior to trips\*\*

#### Timing of college visits:

- Jr and Sr years; don't do them all Jr – may want to save for Sr.
- Exact timing depends on your progression as a swimmer – if you think you have potential to really improve Sr year definitely save some.
- Don't get in then slack off – could lose spot – keep showing results (or you'll be behind) – college coaches want to see that you're working and serious about swimming.
- Don't use up a visit at that school without your academic program.
- Some colleges no longer looking at standardized tests – don't waste time on exams if they won't help you; keep your academics up – you need to be able to keep up with the academic work at a rigorous college while spending a lot of time swimming.

#### Summer swim camps:

- Important – it's a chance for coaches to get eyes on you.
- If going, reach out to coach to let them know you're coming.
- Ask them about it then let them know you're coming and look forward to meeting them – don't spam them – maybe lifetime best or districts – not report about each meet.
- Show you're eager and progressing.
- Multiple college coaches may be at a clinic at a particular college.

Making your decision: Teams overextend offers and then it's 1<sup>st</sup> come/1<sup>st</sup> served – so, how fast do you have to respond to have a spot?

- Do plan to be quick but it's not as if they give offers 20 for 2 spots – more like 5 offers for 2 spots
- Not full ride for swimming (cover some of tuition) and not all swimmers get scholarships maybe 9 per men's team in D1 and fewer in D2, none in D3
- Other ways to get money – ask for good student scholarships

#### **Summer training when you're a college swimmer depends on the school.**

- Some swimmers practice with a year-round team (like CBST) if the team can meet the training standard they need. We do have college swimmers (both former CBST swimmers and swimmers not previously on CBST) training with us over the summer.
- Some swimmers find another program (USAS) to meet needs.
- Some swimmers swim with club program at their school if it's right level for their needs.

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