



Developing Golf's
Next Generation

The Recruiting Rundown

High School Freshmen, Issue 1

Preparation Phase

Starts when a student-athlete begins attending classes in 9th grade and lasts until May 1 of his/her sophomore year.

Freshmen

- Begin PSA Process
 - Begin unofficial visits
 - Attend college tournaments
- ### Sophomores
- Continue unofficial visits
 - Develop preliminary "best fit" schools
 - Respond to questionnaires

Action Phase

Includes the critical 18-month window which lasts from May 1 of a student-athlete's sophomore year until Nov. 1 of his/her senior year.

Juniors

- E-mail summer results and progress report to coaches prior to Sept. 1.
- Schedule SAT/ACT
- Continue unofficial visits
- Attend college tournaments
- Send SAT/ACT scores to coaches
- Register with NCAA Eligibility Center

Transition Phase

Includes the time from when a student athlete signs a National Letter of Intent (or commits to a school) until the time they matriculate in college.

Seniors

- Send final HS transcripts to NCAA Eligibility Center
- Complete Amateurism Certification process

About the Authors

John Brooks is the former Head Coach of the University of North Florida and founder of Red Numbers Golf (www.rednumbersgolf.com)

Ted Gleason is the former Head Coach of the University of Southern California and founder of Road to College Golf (www.roadtocollegegolf.com)

Nicky Goetze is a three-time All-American from Clemson University and served as the head coach at four Division I schools including Mississippi State and Florida State (nickygoetze.com)

The Preparation Phase: An early start

As you begin 9th grade, it is important to understand that you are not only starting your high school career, but are also now an official **prospective student-athlete** according to NCAA recruiting rules. As a high school freshman, you are permitted and encouraged to do several things during this initial phase of the recruiting process.

First, you should attempt to visit as many college campuses as possible. While traveling to junior golf tournaments or visiting friends and family, make sure you always include at least one campus visit and tour. These **unofficial campus visits** will prove to be quite beneficial to you throughout the college placement process and will enable you to target schools and golf programs that are potential "best fit" situations. During unofficial visits, college coaches are allowed to meet and speak with prospects and their parents. These meetings, which should always be scheduled in advance, will serve to help prospects learn more about college golf in general and better understand the specific details of each program.

Prospects are allowed to make telephone calls to college coaches at anytime. To arrange a meeting during an unofficial visit, prospects are encouraged to call coaches at least one week in advance to introduce themselves and to request an on-campus meeting (30 minutes is recommended). Keep in mind that Division I coaches are not allowed to initiate calls to prospects (this includes returning voicemails) until July 1st at the conclusion of a prospect's junior year in high school (June 15th prior to junior year for Division II). If a coach is unavailable when you first call, keep trying

and do not leave messages. Most coaches are in their offices from 8 a.m. to noon during the week, unless they are traveling to a tournament or on a recruiting trip.

The second thing you are encouraged to do as a high school freshman is attend at least three college golf tournaments. To view a comprehensive college golf tournament schedule, visit www.golfstat.com. College tournaments are held during the fall (September-November) and during the spring (February-May). Admission is free and spectators are welcome. Watching college golf teams in action is an excellent way for prospects to begin formulating ideas about which schools and golf teams they would like to be a part of during their collegiate career. While attending these events, make sure you pay attention to the different coaching styles as well as the quality of play relative to golf course difficulty (yardage, hole locations, rough height, weather, etc.).

Finally, keep in mind that your academic performance is now extremely important and the courses you take from 9th grade forward will be used to determine whether or not you satisfy the **NCAA Eligibility Center** initial-eligibility requirements. During your junior year in high school, you will need to register with the NCAA Eligibility Center to monitor your academic progress and to ensure that you are satisfying these requirements.

Good luck with the start of your high school career!

"Keep in mind that your academic performance is now extremely important."

Key Terms

Prospective student-athlete (PSA) - A student-athlete becomes a prospective student-athlete when he/she starts ninth-grade classes.

Unofficial visit - An unofficial visit is a visit made at the PSA's own expense. There is no limit to the number of unofficial visits a PSA can make.

NCAA Eligibility Center - Minimum academic requirements are set by the NCAA to participate in Division I and II athletics. As a freshman, you should verify with your high school guidance counselor that you are on track to meet these requirements.

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The Recruiting Rundown

High School Freshmen, Issue 2

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The Preparation Phase: An early start

As you approach the holidays and mid-point in your freshman year, it is important to remember that you are officially a prospective student-athlete (PSA) as defined by the NCAA. Your status as a PSA was triggered once you began classes for the 9th grade. During this initial phase of the recruiting process, there are numerous points of focus that you are encouraged to understand and take action on.

First, be sure to make academics a priority as the NCAA begins to track your academic course load beginning with your freshman year in high school. The classes (**core courses**) you take between 9th and 12th grade will be used to determine whether or not you satisfy the NCAA initial-eligibility requirements. During your junior year in high school, you will need to register with the NCAA Eligibility Center, www.eligibilitycenter.org, to ensure that you are satisfying the necessary requirements and to monitor your academic progress. To better familiarize yourself with the NCAA rules and Eligibility Center, please refer to the NCAA Guide for the College Bound Student Athlete, which is available on the aforementioned website.

As a high school freshman it is beneficial to visit as many college campuses as possible. These unofficial visits can be made anytime you are traveling to visit family and friends or while at a junior tournament. During unofficial visits, which should always be scheduled in advance, college coaches are allowed to meet and speak with prospects and their parents. Additionally, you can tour their practice facilities, meet team

members and academic counselors. These unofficial visits are essential and will allow you to determine the most important criteria as you navigate the college placement process and formulate your potential "best fit" list of colleges.

Finally, as a high school freshman you are encouraged to attend several college golf tournaments. Watching college golf teams in action is an excellent way for prospects to begin formulating ideas about which schools and golf teams they would like to be a part of during their collegiate career. While attending these events, make sure you pay attention to the different coaching styles as well as the quality of play relative to the difficulty of the golf course (yardage, hole locations, rough height, weather, etc.). Admission is free and spectators are welcome. To view a comprehensive college golf tournament schedule, visit www.golfstat.com, or go to your local university's athletic website to view that program's tournament schedule.

Developing a list of best-fit colleges is a process. This process requires you to be proactive, research schools and programs, participate in a variety of golfing experiences at the junior level and maintain a quality academic profile. The time to start is now, and to be successful, you must have a love for the game and a passion to excel when opportunities arise. Enjoy the journey!

"Determining a best-fit college is a process...The time to start this process is now."

Key Terms

Core Course - An academic course that receives high school graduation credit in one or a combination of these areas: English, mathematics, natural/physical science, social science, foreign language, nondoctrinal/comparative religion or philosophy. A core course also must be considered four-year college preparatory; taught at or above your high school's regular academic level; Algebra I or higher in the math area; and taught by a qualified instructor. To confirm if you are taking core courses approved by the NCAA, visit www.eligibilitycenter.org.

PING American College Golf Guide (www.collegegolf.com) - Contains valuable information on all four-year and two-year men's and women's college golf programs in the United States. All AJGA members receive complimentary access to the site with their AJGA membership, courtesy of PING. Contact the AJGA Player Services department (877-373-2542) if you have not received your login information.

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The Recruiting Rundown

High School Freshmen, Issue 3

Preparation Phase

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Sophomores

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- Respond to questionnaires

Action Phase

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The Preparation Phase: An early start

As your first year of high school draws to a close, begin thinking about how you can further engage yourself in the recruiting process. Although college golf may seem in the distant future, a proactive approach will position you to efficiently navigate the college placement process. During the Preparation Phase, there are some key action items to focus on.

It will be beneficial for you to visit college campuses this summer while you are traveling to various tournaments or on a family vacation. These campus visits (unofficial visits) can be made at anytime and will enable you to target schools and golf programs that are potential "best fit" situations. Unofficial visits are essential and one of the most important action items throughout the college placement process. You and your parents are permitted to meet with college coaches on their respective campuses. These visits are invaluable in educating you on the various college atmospheres, how college golf programs are structured and the academic and golf expectations coaches have for Prospective Student-Athletes. These meetings should be scheduled in advance (30 minutes is recommended) and must be arranged by the prospect as DI coaches are not allowed to initiate and/or correspond via e-mail (except to send an athletic questionnaire) with you until September 1 of your junior year (June 15th prior to junior year for Division II). Prior to contacting any coach, research the school and golf program thoroughly to ensure it is a potential "best fit" school for you. Consider your current academic and golf achievements and be realistic when making this assessment.

Spend time learning about college golf by reviewing the PING American College Golf Guide (www.collegegolf.com). This interactive website

allows you to search for college golf programs by selecting specific criteria such as location, student population, average SAT/ACT score, division, and academic majors offered. This site also provides a golf and academic profile on each school as well as tournament results from the current and previous seasons. Additionally, use www.golfstat.com as a resource to follow college golf results online. While it would be best to attend a college tournament(s) in person, the next best option would be to follow the event "live." These websites are great resources to learn more about the college golf world and how programs differ on a competitive basis.

As a rising sophomore, it is important for you to compete in regional and national tournaments this summer. Competing in these events is an integral part of the recruiting process as it (a) allows you to gain tournament experience, (b) builds your golf resume and (c) helps identify more clearly your level of interest in playing competitive golf at the college level. When selecting your tournament schedule, make sure to target a combination of events that is aligned with your college golf aspirations.

Finally, continue to focus on academics as a top priority throughout your high school career. College coaches place a strong emphasis on scholastic achievement when evaluating prospects and realize your success as a college student-athlete will be determined by your ability to manage both golf and academics. Establishing sound study habits and achieving academic success throughout high school will demonstrate that you have your priorities in order. Have fun this summer!

"Unofficial visits are essential and one of the most important action items throughout the college placement process."

Key Terms

Golfstat (www.golfstat.com) - The official source for college golf scores, schedules and statistics and a great tool for juniors to learn more about college golf teams.

Prospective student-athlete (PSA) - A student-athlete becomes a prospective student-athlete when he/she starts ninth-grade classes.

PING American College Golf Guide (www.collegegolf.com) - Contains valuable information on all four-year and two-year men's and women's college golf programs in the United States. All AJGA members receive complimentary access to the site with their AJGA membership, courtesy of PING. Contact the AJGA Player Services department (770-868-4200) if you have not received your login information.

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High School Freshman, Issue 4

Preparation Phase

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Freshmen

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- ### Sophomores
- Continue unofficial visits
 - Develop preliminary "best fit" schools
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Action Phase

Includes the critical 18-month window which lasts from May 1 of a student-athlete's sophomore year until Nov. 1 of his/her senior year.

Juniors

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- Register with NCAA Eligibility Center

Transition Phase

Includes the time from when a student athlete signs a National Letter of Intent (or commits to a school) until the time they matriculate in college.

Seniors

- Send final HS transcripts to NCAA Eligibility Center
- Complete Amateurism Certification process

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The Preparation Phase: Planning a Course of Action

With your summer tournament schedule in full swing now and the beginning of your sophomore year just around the corner, you are well within the Preparation Phase of the recruiting process. Now is a perfect opportunity for you to further engage yourself in the college placement process. At this time, college coaches are very limited in how they can communicate with you through written and phone correspondence as well as face-to-face contact. However, there are a few key action items that will give you a head start in identifying your best-fit college.

Playing in multi-day tournaments should remain a top priority for you. Results from these tournaments will help you establish a ranking on the **Junior Golf Scoreboard** and will be useful as college coaches begin to evaluate you as a prospective student-athlete. Competing in local, regional and national tournaments will allow you to (a) build your tournament experience and resume, (b) grow your competitive confidence, and (c) identify areas in your game that you need to focus on moving forward. There are numerous tours and events to choose from when formulating your tournament schedule. Refer to the AJGA Performance Based Entry (PBE) Map to identify AJGA-recognized events that are in relative proximity to your home and/or potential colleges you are interested in visiting. Competing in four multi-day tournaments within a 52-week period will help you establish a Junior Golf Scoreboard ranking. As you develop your schedule, ensure that each event you select to play in aligns well with your abilities and matches your competitive ambitions. At the end of the day, tournaments at all levels of competition offer an opportunity for players to learn more about their game and themselves. Throughout the recruiting process, college coaches will evaluate prospects based on a number of criteria and playing a competitive tournament schedule will help a prospect garner the attention of these coaches.

As a rising sophomore, the long-term goal of this process is to identify a best-fit college that matches

your golf and academic ambitions. Getting started early and remaining proactive at all times will allow you to ultimately make a well-informed, sound college placement decision. Making **unofficial visits** to college campuses is a critical step towards establishing your college criteria. During these visits you will gain a sense of how school size, location and environment influence your preferences. Prior to visiting any school it is beneficial to research a school's golf program on the PING American College Golf Guide (www.collegegolf.com). This site profiles every college golf program (Division I, II, III, NAIA & Junior Colleges) in the country. Using the Internet to build your foundation of college golf knowledge is strongly recommended. Reviewing the athletic websites of schools that interest you as well as checking the college rankings and results found on Golfstat (www.golfstat.com) are beneficial strategies that will help you better understand the academic and golf standards of a school/golf program. Be sure to research and visit schools now to best prepare yourself to enter the Action Phase of the recruiting process next spring.

As your sophomore year approaches, evaluate your freshman-year academic accomplishments to ensure you are on the right track and you have a clear plan to succeed academically for the remainder of your high school career. Your academic profile (SAT/ACT, GPA, core courses) will play a significant role in determining your "best-fit" list of schools. If you struggled academically during your freshman year, you still have time to demonstrate an upward trend in your academic profile for the next three years. The **NCAA Eligibility Center** (www.eligibilitycenter.org) tracks your academic progress throughout high school and will ultimately determine if you are eligible to compete as a college freshman at an NCAA Division I or II school. The *NCAA Guide for College Bound Student-Athletes* is a wonderful resource to ensure you are on the correct academic path. Download this useful guide at www.eligibilitycenter.com and learn more about the key NCAA recruiting rules you will encounter as you proactively navigate the college placement process.

Key Terms

Junior Golf Scoreboard - Resource for parents, players and coaches - www.juniorgolfscoreboard.com

NCAA Eligibility Center - Certifies the academic and amateur credentials of all students who want to play sports at an NCAA Division I or II school. In order to practice, play and receive an athletic scholarship, students need to meet certain academic benchmarks. An additional certification process exists to make sure the student is still an amateur, which is necessary in order for the student to compete.

Unofficial Visits - An unlimited number of visits to college campuses that a prospective student-athlete makes at his or her own expense.

NCAA Guide for College Bound Student-Athletes - A useful guide to learn more about key NCAA recruiting rules as you proactively navigate the college placement process and progress from being a high school athlete to a student-athlete in college.

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High School Sophomores, Issue 1

Preparation Phase

Starts when a student-athlete begins attending classes in 9th grade and lasts until May 1 of his/her sophomore year.

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Sophomores

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Action Phase

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The Preparation Phase: Planning a Course of Action

As you begin 10th grade, you are now a high school sophomore with a year's experience as a prospective student-athlete. It remains important for you to (a) factor in unofficial campus visits as often as possible when traveling, (b) attend college golf tournaments at least three times during the academic year, and (c) remain focused on academic performance while realizing that all core courses taken from 9th grade forward will be used to determine whether or not you satisfy the NCAA Eligibility Center initial-eligibility requirements. If you continue to do these three very important things, you will be well ahead of other sophomores in the college placement process.

Many sophomores will be sent general **questionnaires** from college golf programs asking them to provide some very important information that a coach will use to evaluate prospects and make initial recruiting decisions. If you receive one of these questionnaires during your sophomore year, make sure you complete and return it as soon as possible. If a prospect fails to return a completed questionnaire or takes an exorbitant amount of time to do so, coaches will assume the prospect is not very interested in that school or team. Also pay attention to the questions that are asked. It is better to list the top-five criteria that will play a key role for you in selecting a college to attend versus trying to list your top-five colleges. Coaches will also ask sophomores for their academic information and a list of their

key references (instructors, coaches, recruiting advisors, etc.).

Keep in mind that prospects are allowed to make telephone calls to college coaches at anytime. It is a very good idea for prospects to call a few coaches to introduce themselves and to learn more about that coach's golf program. Remember that Division I coaches are not allowed to initiate calls to prospects (this includes returning voicemails) until July 1st at the conclusion of a prospect's junior year in high school (June 15th prior to junior year for Division II). If a coach is unavailable when you first call, keep trying and do not leave messages. Most coaches are in their offices between 8 a.m. and noon during the week, unless they are traveling to a tournament or on a recruiting trip.

Finally, this is a very good time to create a preliminary "best fit" list of schools. While this may only be an educated guess at this time, it is at least a place to start. Consider both your golf and academic resumes while trying to project how much progress you will make in these two key areas during the final two years of your high school career. Your list of "best fit" schools will certainly evolve throughout this process.

Good luck with your sophomore year!

"If you receive a questionnaire during your sophomore year, make sure you complete and return it as soon as possible."

Key Terms

July 1st – The date at the conclusion of a prospect's *junior year* of high school on which *Division I* coaches may begin calling prospects. Note that *Division II* coaches may begin calling prospects on **June 15th** at the conclusion of their *junior year* of high school.

Questionnaire – Sent from a college golf program to a prospect to learn more about them.

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The Preparation Phase: Planning a Course of Action

As you approach the holidays and mid-point in your sophomore year, it is very important to make sure you are staying focused on the college recruiting process. Although coaches are not allowed to contact you yet and attending college seems far off in the future, there are a few very important things that you can take care of at this time.

1. Try to visit at least three or four college campuses (unofficial visits) before you complete your sophomore year and if possible, meet with the golf coach for 20-30 minutes to learn more about their golf program and recruiting needs for your graduation class. **This is the most important thing you can do at this time in the recruiting process.**

2. Visit **Golfstat** (www.golfstat.com) to review the list of upcoming spring college golf tournaments. Plan to attend at least two or three of these to learn more about what it takes to succeed at the next level. You should watch how the coaches work with their players during competition and also pay attention to other general aspects of college golf. Seeing college events first-hand is a key exercise that will help you formulate ideas as to which golf program you would like to play for.

3. Begin to formulate an academic and golf resume. Toward the conclusion of your sophomore year, you will need to send this document to coaches along with an introductory letter, your upcoming tournament schedule and a golf swing/short game video. Two excellent places to create and post resumes for coaches to review online are at www.ajga.org and www.juniorgolfscoreboard.com. The Junior Golf Scoreboard now offers a golf and academic resume service that allows recruits to create a resume online that can be updated easily and attached to e-mails when communicating with coaches.

4. Now is an excellent time to review your support team to make sure you have the right people helping you work toward your goal to play college golf. Do you have a swing/short game instructor who

understands what is necessary to compete at the next level? Do they spend time watching you play golf (preferably in competition) and are they readily available to work with you? Do you have access to a golf fitness trainer (especially someone who is TPI certified) and do you spend at least one day per week working with them? Do you have access to an expert club fitter who can assess your equipment needs at least once per year? Are you working with someone to constantly improve your mental toughness? Most accomplished players have support teams in place to address each of these key areas.

5. Spend time doing research on the **PING American College Golf Guide** (www.collegegolf.com) to develop a preliminary "best fit" list of schools and golf programs. Consider academic requirements, student population, cost to attend, golf team ranking, team roster, realistic opportunity to play and coach's background and resume.

6. Continue to practice and compete as often as possible. This can be difficult for players who live in cold-weather climates. When possible, travel south during the winter to work on your game and possibly participate in tournaments. There are a number of tours that offer competition during the academic year and many of these tours have been granted AJGA Performance Based Entry status. Visit www.ajga.org for a comprehensive listing of tournaments that may suit your schedule.

This is a great time to get ahead with college research and the recruiting process in general. Although it may seem early, the fall signing date for your class is less than two years away! Remember to always do your best in school and continue to have fun playing and practicing. The recruiting process can be complex and sometimes stressful if you haven't taken a proactive approach. Now is the time to get involved, embrace the process and create opportunities for your future as a collegiate student-athlete.

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High School Sophomores, Issue 3

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The Action Phase: Planning a Course of Action

As the end of your sophomore year approaches, the critical 18-month window, or the **Action Phase**, of the recruiting process begins. This window lasts from May of your sophomore year until November of your senior year. This is an exciting time and the perfect opportunity to take control of the recruiting process. Although Division I coaches cannot e-mail you (with the exception of an athletic questionnaire) prior to September 1 of your junior year (June 15th prior to junior year for Division II), taking a proactive approach will greatly enhance your ability to identify your "best fit" school. Following are several key action items that will help you "jump-start" the college placement process.

1. Continue to make your academics a priority by finishing this semester strong. The core courses you take between 9th and 12th grade (and corresponding GPA) will determine whether or not you satisfy the NCAA initial-eligibility requirements. Additionally, your academic GPA will be one of many factors throughout this process that determines which schools are potential "best fits" for you. The NCAA Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete is a great resource to learn more about NCAA rules and the NCAA Eligibility Center requirements. This can be viewed at www.eligibilitycenter.org.

2. Develop and/or revise your preliminary "best fit" list of schools by utilizing the PING American College Golf Guide (www.collegegolf.com). You should also review each prospective school's academic and athletic websites to further evaluate their academic and golf standards. These exercises will greatly benefit you as you develop an initial "best fit" list of schools. Consider a school's location, student enrollment, cost to attend, academic requirements, available majors, opportunity to compete on the traveling team (top 5 players), coach's background and golf ranking.

3. Formulate your tournament schedule for the summer. Playing in regional and national tournaments is the truest way to measure your game and the best vehicle to demonstrate your abilities to college coaches. Review the AJGA Performance Based Entry (PBE) Exemption Table and the AJGA PBE Tournament Map to identify the events that meet your competitive goals. Additionally, a comprehensive list of all local and regional events in your state can be viewed at www.njgs.com.

4. Educate yourself on the various competitive levels of college golf by attending an actual college tournament(s). This allows you to see first hand the

competitive atmosphere of college golf, how coaches interact with players during a tournament and what is required to be a successful collegiate player.

5. Update your golf and academic resume. Both the AJGA (www.ajga.org) and the Junior Golf Scoreboard (www.njgs.com) offer a golf and academic resume service online. The Junior Golf Scoreboard's resume offers an automatic update feature and can be attached to e-mails when contacting coaches. An introductory letter, your updated tournament schedule and a golf swing/short game video should also be prepared to forward to coaches in the next few months.

"Remember, NCAA rules allow you as a prospective student-athlete to call or e-mail a coach at anytime."

6. Consistent work with your support team is also critical to your continued development. Ensure you have a team of professionals that understand your college goals and ambitions. Proper guidance/ instruction in the areas of full swing, short game, mental strategies, fitness and club fitting will allow you to maximize your golf development.

7. Continue making visits to college campuses. These unofficial visits can be taken at anytime and can be scheduled while you travel to tournaments this summer. If possible, schedule time to meet with the golf coach to learn more about their program, university and their recruiting plans for your graduation class. Remember, NCAA rules allow you as a prospective student-athlete to call or e-mail a coach at anytime. However, as stated previously, a coach cannot respond via e-mail until September 1 of your junior year and cannot return or initiate a call (Division I coaches) until July 1 after your junior year. Coaches at DII colleges cannot return or initiate a call until June 15 prior to your junior year. If you do not reach them on your initial attempt, keep trying. Remember, Division III coaches can initiate or return a call at anytime.

As you compete this summer realize that each tournament experience is an opportunity to learn more about your game and better position yourself in the recruiting process. Be proactive in educating yourself on college golf, updating your resume, evaluating your preliminary list of schools and enjoying the journey of competing and working on your game. Taking action on these items now will allow you to efficiently navigate the recruiting process.

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The Recruiting Rundown

High School Sophomores, Issue 4

Preparation Phase

Starts when a student-athlete begins attending classes in 9th grade and lasts until May 1 of his/her sophomore year.

Freshmen

- Begin PSA Process
 - Begin unofficial visits
 - Attend college tournaments
- ### Sophomores
- Continue unofficial visits
 - Develop preliminary "best fit" schools
 - Respond to questionnaires

Action Phase

Includes the critical 18-month window which lasts from May 1 of a student-athlete's sophomore year until Nov. 1 of his/her senior year.

Juniors

- E-mail summer results and progress report to coaches prior to Sept. 1.
- Schedule SAT/ACT
- Continue unofficial visits
- Attend college tournaments
- Send SAT/ACT scores to coaches
- Register with NCAA Eligibility Center

Transition Phase

Includes the time from when a student athlete signs a National Letter of Intent (or commits to a school) until the time they matriculate in college.

Seniors

- Send final HS transcripts to NCAA Eligibility Center
- Complete Amateurism Certification process

About the Authors

John Brooks is the former Head Coach of the University of North Florida and founder of Red Numbers Golf (www.rednumbersgolf.com)

Ted Gleason is the former Head Coach of the University of Southern California and founder of Road to College Golf (www.roadtocollegegolf.com)

Nicky Goetze is a three-time All-American from Clemson University and served as the head coach at four Division I schools including Mississippi State and Florida State (nickygoetze.com)

The Action Phase: Put a Plan into Action

As a rising junior you are now in the Action Phase of the recruiting process. Your academic and competitive results from now until you sign a National Letter of Intent or commit to a college/golf program will greatly influence your potential college opportunities. Taking a proactive approach and understanding the key action items will allow you to more effectively manage this process and formulate an appropriate "best-fit" list of schools. As you complete your summer tournament schedule and plan for your upcoming junior year of high school, the following should be considered.

1. Evaluate your tournament results to date and make an honest assessment of each area of your golf game: full swing, fitness level, short game, mental strategies, and club fitting. Communicate this assessment to your support team so they can properly guide your continued development as a junior golfer and establish a game plan that will ensure your continued improvement through the fall and winter months.

2. After evaluating your summer results, revise and/or develop your preliminary "best-fit" list of schools. Continually research schools and golf programs on the PING American College Golf Guide website (www.collegegolf.com) to maintain a current list of schools that match your abilities (both golf and academic) as well as your long-term college ambitions. Consider academic requirements, tournament schedule, location, opportunity to compete on the travel team (top 5 players), cost to attend and majors offered. Also helpful is visiting a school's athletic website and researching the coach's bio, team roster/stats, number of players graduating prior to your freshman year and practice facilities. Once this preliminary "best fit" list of schools is refined you can forward coaches on this list an introductory letter, your resume, upcoming tournament schedule and a golf swing swing/short game video. It is worth noting that your SAT/ACT exam and junior year course load will influence your list of target schools which should be re-evaluated throughout your junior year. Please also keep in mind that Division I coaches cannot reply (with the exception of an athletic questionnaire) to your e-mail until September 1 of your junior year (June 15th prior to your junior year for Division II) although you are permitted to e-mail coaches at anytime.

3. Unofficial visits to college campuses are essential during the Action Phase of the recruiting process. A Prospective Student-Athlete (PSA) is permitted to visit a college campus at anytime and an unlimited number of times at their own expense. Although Division I coaches cannot return your telephone call until July 1st at the conclusion of your junior year (June 15th prior to your junior year for Division II), you can call a coach anytime to arrange such a visit. A 30-minute campus meeting will suffice and during this time you

will become educated on the coach's academic and golf expectations, how the golf program is structured and their recruiting needs for your graduation class. These meetings will additionally allow you to gain a feel for the various college campuses and environments. Unofficial visits will assist you in formulating your college criteria and effectively determining your preliminary "best-fit" list of schools.

4. Consider which SAT/ACT test date(s) you will choose in the upcoming school year. Once you get back to school this fall you should work with your high school counselor to formulate the best action plan. The SAT/ACT exams, along with your academic GPA, will determine your academic profile and will be used by coaches to evaluate you as a prospective student-athlete at their university. Allocating ample time and resources (SAT prep course, tutor, etc.) to prepare and ready yourself for the exam is highly recommended. Success in the classroom and on your SAT/ACT tests will ensure you satisfy the requirements of the NCAA Eligibility Center (www.eligibilitycenter.org). This success will also allow you to maximize your college opportunities. To learn more about the NCAA Eligibility Center, the organization that certifies academic and amateur credentials of all potential Division I and II college-bound student-athletes, download a copy of the NCAA's Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete at www.eligibilitycenter.org and reference it periodically throughout this process.

5. Begin thinking about your tournament schedule for the upcoming fall season. Playing in regional and/or national events (one per month during the school year) is a great way to keep your game sharp while also balancing your academic responsibilities. This balance between academics and golf should always be a top priority for junior golfers who aspire to compete at the collegiate level. Participating in tournaments in other regions of the country allows you to visit and compare various schools on your preliminary target list. Review the AJGA Performance Based Entry (PBE) Exemption Table and the AJGA PBE Tournament Map to identify the events that match your competitive ambitions.

As a rising junior you are slightly more than 15 months away from the early signing period (National Letter of Intent signing date) for your class and should continue to take a proactive approach in the process. Staying current with the world of college golf and continually focusing on the aforementioned action items will keep you ahead of the game in the college placement process. Be honest with your level of commitment to both academics and golf to ensure your daily and weekly habits match your expectations and college ambitions. With the proper knowledge, initiative and confidence you will be able to manage and work through the college placement process successfully.

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The Recruiting Rundown

High School Juniors, Issue 1

Preparation Phase

Starts when a student-athlete begins attending classes in 9th grade and lasts until May 1 of his/her sophomore year.

Freshmen

- Begin PSA Process
 - Begin unofficial visits
 - Attend college tournaments
- ### Sophomores
- Continue unofficial visits
 - Develop preliminary "best fit" schools
 - Respond to questionnaires

Action Phase

Includes the critical 18-month window which lasts from May 1 of a student-athlete's sophomore year until Nov. 1 of his/her senior year.

Juniors

- E-mail summer results and progress report to coaches prior to Sept. 1.
- Schedule SAT/ACT
- Continue unofficial visits
- Attend college tournaments
- Send SAT/ACT scores to coaches
- Register with NCAA Eligibility Center

Transition Phase

Includes the time from when a student athlete signs a National Letter of Intent (or commits to a school) until the time they matriculate in college.

Seniors

- Send final HS transcripts to NCAA Eligibility Center
- Complete Amateurism Certification process

About the Authors

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Nicky Goetze is a three-time All-American from Clemson University and served as the head coach at four Division I schools including Mississippi State and Florida State (nickygoetze.com)

The Action Phase: Put a Plan into Action

As you begin your junior year, there are various "to do's" that will assist you in better navigating and managing the college recruiting process as a prospective student-athlete. A key date to remember while handling these tasks is **September 1** of a prospect's junior year. This date marks the first time Division I coaches can initiate contact via e-mail and written correspondence (note: text messaging is not permissible). Prior to September 1 of a prospect's junior year, a coach can only send a general questionnaire (which should be completed and returned) or a camp brochure. However, Division II coaches are able to send emails, written materials and text messages on or after June 15 prior to a prospect's junior year. Regardless of the NCAA rules that define coaches communication with prospects, it is important for prospective student-athletes to remember that they can initiate contact with a coach via phone calls, emails or written correspondence at anytime.

During your junior year, it is important that you plan potential dates to take the **SAT and/or ACT** for the college admissions process. Your SAT and/or ACT score will certainly become a factor in refining your initial "best fit" list of schools. All potential SAT dates can be found at www.collegeboard.com and for ACT dates go to www.actstudent.org. Also recommended is participating in an SAT or ACT preparation program to better understand the testing format, style and structure. Please remember that when taking the SAT or ACT, you can mark code "9999" on the testing form so that the NCAA Eligibility Center will receive your test scores. To learn more about the NCAA Eligibility Center and its initial-eligibility requirements, please go to www.eligibilitycenter.org.

Additionally, as a junior in high school, you will want to continue making unofficial visits to college campuses during the fall and spring. An unofficial visit is a visit to a college campus by a prospective student-athlete at his or her own expense and are unlimited in number. At this time, a meeting with the coach could be organized to learn more about their golf program, tour the team's practice facilities and better understand the coaches expectations for potential recruits. Keep in mind that a prospect is allowed to initiate a phone call to arrange this visit, but a Division I coach cannot initiate a phone call (or return a voicemail) until July 1st at the conclusion of a prospect's junior year (June 15 prior to a prospect's junior year for Division II). These visits allow a prospect to gain valuable insights about the campus environment, surrounding areas, student life and the overall feel for what it would be like to attend that university. Simply put, unofficial visits are certainly crucial in narrowing down your "best fit" list of schools.

"Prospective student-athletes can initiate contact with a coach via phone, e-mail or written correspondence at anytime."

Finally, attending one or more college tournaments is also highly recommended as it is a great way to gain a clear perspective on the competitive level of college golf, observe how coaches interact with their players during a tournament and see firsthand what a college event "looks" and "feels" like. This experience will assist you in developing a sense of where you see yourself fitting in at the collegiate level. A complete listing of all college tournaments held throughout the year can be found at www.golfstat.com.

Good luck with your junior year!

Key Terms

September 1 – The date during a prospect's junior year which DI coaches can initiate contact via email and written correspondence (June 15 prior to a prospect's junior year for DII).

ACT, SAT – Start planning to take the SAT and/or ACT test during your junior year. Prospects are allowed to take the tests multiple times if they wish to try to improve their scores.





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The Recruiting Rundown

High School Juniors, Issue 2

Preparation Phase

Starts when a student-athlete begins attending classes in 9th grade and lasts until May 1 of his/her sophomore year.

Freshmen

- Begin PSA Process
 - Begin unofficial visits
 - Attend college tournaments
- ### Sophomores
- Continue unofficial visits
 - Develop preliminary "best fit" schools
 - Respond to questionnaires

Action Phase

Includes the critical 18-month window which lasts from May 1 of a student-athlete's sophomore year until Nov. 1 of his/her senior year.

Juniors

- E-mail summer results and progress report to coaches prior to Sept. 1.
- Schedule SAT/ACT
- Continue unofficial visits
- Attend college tournaments
- Send SAT/ACT scores to coaches
- Register with NCAA Eligibility Center

Transition Phase

Includes the time from when a student athlete signs a National Letter of Intent (or commits to a school) until the time they matriculate in college.

Seniors

- Send final HS transcripts to NCAA Eligibility Center
- Complete Amateurism Certification process

About the Authors

John Brooks is the former Head Coach of the University of North Florida and founder of Red Numbers Golf (www.rednumbersgolf.com)

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The Action Phase: Put a Plan into Action

As you approach the holidays and mid-point in your junior year, it is very important to make sure you are staying focused on the college recruiting process. Although Division I coaches can only write or e-mail you at this time (DII coaches can email, call and text message) and attending college may seem like it is still far off in the future, there are a few very important things that you should be doing to stay ahead.

1. Try to visit at least three or four college campuses (unofficial visits) before you complete your junior year and if possible, meet with the golf coach for 20-30 minutes to learn more about their golf program and recruiting needs for your graduation class. **This is the most important thing you can do at this time in the recruiting process.**

2. Visit www.golfstat.com to review the list of upcoming spring college golf tournaments and plan to attend at least two or three events. This is a key exercise that will help you formulate ideas as to which golf program you would like to play for in a couple of years. You may want to target tournaments where schools that have previously contacted you will be competing.

3. Update your academic and golf resume. Two excellent places to create and post resumes for coaches to review online are at www.ajga.org and www.juniorgolfscoreboard.com. The Junior Golf Scoreboard now offers a golf and academic resume service that allows recruits to create a resume online that can be updated easily and attached to e-mails when communicating with coaches.

4. Spend time doing research on the PING American College Golf Guide (www.collegegolf.com) to continue to narrow down a "best fit" list of schools and golf programs. Consider academic requirements, student population, cost to attend, golf team ranking, team roster, realistic opportunity to play and coach's background. Include several "reach" schools as well as several "safety" schools on your list. The majority of the list should include schools that have attainable golf and academic requirements based on your current resume. As soon as possible, send coaches on this list an introductory letter, your resume, upcoming tournament schedule and golf swing/short game video.

5. Continue to practice and compete as often as possible. This can be difficult for players who live in cold-weather

climates. When possible, travel south during the winter to work on your game and possibly participate in tournaments. There are a number of tours that offer competition during the academic year and many of these tours have been granted AJGA Performance Based Entry status. Visit www.ajga.org for a comprehensive listing of tournaments that may fit your schedule.

6. Review the list of seniors who signed a National Letter of Intent recently to see where they are planning to attend college and play golf. These players will be sophomores when you begin your collegiate career and could influence your decision to attend a particular school. Also review each school's roster to see how many seniors they will have next year. Teams with three or more seniors (during your senior year in high school) are good targets and very likely will be looking for several recruits from your graduating class.

"Teams with three or more seniors (during your senior year in high school) are good targets and very likely will be looking for several recruits from your graduating class."

7. Make sure you are registered to take the SAT or ACT exam (both is preferable) in the upcoming months and that you are doing everything possible to prepare for these exams. Private tutors, prep classes and online tutorials are highly recommended. Make sure you note "9999" on your exam registration so your scores will automatically be forwarded to the NCAA Eligibility Center.

This is a very important and exciting time for you in the college recruiting process. Continue to gather as much information as possible regarding colleges, golf programs and what is required to succeed at the next level. Visiting campuses and meeting with coaches will really help you figure out which schools would be good fits for you to attend. Although Division I coaches cannot have off-campus contact with you until July 1st at the conclusion of your junior year (June 15 prior to junior year for Division II), you are permitted to telephone coaches at this time. DI coaches cannot return calls (DII may return calls at this time), but if you happen to reach a coach on the phone, introduce yourself, tell them you are interested in their school and ask them to tell you about their golf program and recruiting needs. This can be a great way to get your name on their "short list" of potential recruits.

Recruiting Checklist

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Take 3-4 unofficial campus visits | ☐ Register to take ACT and SAT |
| ☐ Attend college golf tournaments | ☐ Narrow down "best fit" list of schools |
| ☐ Visit Golfstat and the PING American College Golf Guide | ☐ Call and introduce yourself to coaches |
| ☐ Update golf and academic resumes | ☐ Practice and maintain a competitive tournament schedule |

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The Recruiting Rundown

High School Juniors, Issue 3

Preparation Phase

Starts when a student-athlete begins attending classes in 9th grade and lasts until May 1 of his/her sophomore year.

Freshmen

- Begin PSA Process
 - Begin unofficial visits
 - Attend college tournaments
- ### Sophomores
- Continue unofficial visits
 - Develop preliminary "best fit" schools
 - Respond to questionnaires

Action Phase

Includes the critical 18-month window which lasts from May 1 of a student-athlete's sophomore year until Nov. 1 of his/her senior year.

Juniors

- E-mail summer results and progress report to coaches prior to Sept. 1.
- Schedule SAT/ACT
- Continue unofficial visits
- Attend college tournaments
- Send SAT/ACT scores to coaches
- Register with NCAA Eligibility Center

Transition Phase

Includes the time from when a student athlete signs a National Letter of Intent (or commits to a school) until the time they matriculate in college.

Seniors

- Send final HS transcripts to NCAA Eligibility Center
- Complete Amateurism Certification process

About the Authors

John Brooks is the former Head Coach of the University of North Florida and founder of Red Numbers Golf (www.rednumbersgolf.com)

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Nicky Goetze is a three-time All-American from Clemson University and served as the head coach at four Division I schools including Mississippi State and Florida State (nickygoetze.com)

The Action Phase: Put a Plan into Action

As you wrap up your junior year in high school, you are now faced with a very important time in the college golf recruiting process, the **Action Phase**. Beginning July 1, NCAA Division I coaches will be permitted to call you once per week and have up to three in-person, off-campus contacts with you and your parents (note: permissible unofficial and official visits do not count against the three allowable contacts). Division II coaches are already able to make unlimited phone calls and off-campus contacts as of June 15 prior to a prospect's junior year in high school. For Division III, coaches can initiate phone calls to prospects at any time and contacts are permitted at the conclusion of your junior year.

Although some juniors have already verbally committed to schools, do not be concerned that recruiting for your graduating class is over. Nothing could be further from the truth. How you play this summer can greatly affect the college opportunities and scholarship offers you are presented with during the early signing period later this fall. Your academic success throughout your junior and senior years will also play a key role in this process. At this time, there are several key action steps you should take to stay focused on the recruiting process.

1. Visit eligibilitycenter.org and register as a prospective student-athlete (be sure to indicate your correct graduation year). Once you complete your junior year (six semesters of high school), ask your high school to forward your updated transcripts to the NCAA Eligibility Center on your behalf. This will need to be done after you graduate as well. You should also review the NCAA Division I and II initial eligibility requirements to ensure you are on track to satisfy the core-course and test requirements.

2. E-mail your summer tournament schedule to your updated list of potential "best fit" schools and request an unofficial visit if your travel plans will bring you close to any of the campus locations. Continue to update coaches regularly throughout the summer with all of your tournament results and reiterate to them your interest in attending their school and participating on their golf team. E-mail is the best form of communication. Also review the NCAA's Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete to learn more about the recruiting process.

3. Try to visit at least three or four college campuses (unofficial visits) on your target list of schools this summer and if possible, meet with the golf coach for 20-30 minutes to learn more about their golf program and recruiting needs for your graduation class. This is the most important thing you can do at this time in the recruiting process. Remember phone calls to coaches can be made by a prospect or a prospect's parents at anytime, even prior to July 1, however Division I coaches are not allowed to return calls or voicemails until July 1. Coaches at Division II colleges can return or initiate calls on or after June 15 prior to your junior year and Division III coaches can make calls at anytime.

4. Continue researching schools and golf programs on the PING American College Golf Guide

(www.collegegolf.com) and update your "best fit" list of schools and golf programs. Consider academic requirements, student population, cost to attend, golf team ranking, team roster, realistic opportunity to play and coach's background and resume. This list should be updated periodically as your academic and/or golf resume changes. Include several "reach" schools as well as several "safety" schools on your list. The majority of the list should include schools that have attainable golf and academic requirements based on your current resume. If you have not already done so, make sure to send coaches on this list an introductory letter, your resume, upcoming tournament schedule and golf swing/short game video.

5. Keep your academic and golf resume updated.

Two excellent places to create and post resumes for coaches to review online are at www.ajga.org and www.juniorgolfscoreboard.com. The Junior Golf Scoreboard now offers a golf and academic resume service that allows recruits to create a resume online that can be updated easily and attached to e-mails when communicating with coaches.

6. Review the list of senior recruits who signed the National Letter of Intent recently to see where they are planning to attend college and play golf. These players will be college sophomores when you begin your career and could influence your decision to attend a particular school. Also review each school's roster to see how many seniors they will have next year. Teams with three or more seniors (during your senior year in high school) are good targets and very likely will be looking for several recruits from your graduating class.

7. Make sure you are registered to take the SAT or ACT exam (both is preferable) in the upcoming months and that you are doing everything possible to prepare for these exams. Private tutors, prep classes and online tutorials are highly recommended. Make sure you note "9999" on your exam registration so that your scores will automatically be forwarded to the NCAA Eligibility Center. This is necessary to make sure you have satisfied the Initial-Eligibility requirements before competing at the NCAA Division I or II level.

As a rising senior, your upcoming summer season will be a great opportunity for you to advance yourself in the college golf recruiting process. Embrace the challenges you will face and enjoy the process of working towards a golf college scholarship and/or roster position. It is also important to remain patient if you do not hear from coaches as soon as you would have hoped. Continue to gather as much information as possible regarding colleges, golf programs and what is required to succeed at the next level. Visiting campuses and meeting with coaches will really help you figure out which schools would be good fits for you to attend. Finally, continue to self promote by communicating regularly with coaches on your "best fit" list of schools.

Good luck this summer!

"Although some juniors have already verbally committed... do not be concerned that recruiting for your graduating class is over."

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The Recruiting Rundown

High School Juniors, Issue 4

Preparation Phase

Starts when a student-athlete begins attending classes in 9th grade and last until May 1 of his/her sophomore year.

Freshmen

- Begin PSA Process
 - Begin unofficial visits
 - Attend college tournaments
- ### Sophomores
- Continue unofficial visits
 - Develop preliminary "best fit" schools
 - Respond to questionnaires

Action Phase

Includes the critical 18-month window which lasts from May 1 of a student-athlete's sophomore year until Nov. 1 of his/her senior year.

Juniors

- E-mail summer results and progress report to coaches prior to Sept. 1.
- Schedule SAT/ACT
- Continue unofficial visits
- Attend college tournaments
- Send SAT/ACT scores to coaches
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Transition Phase

Includes the time from when a student athlete signs a National Letter of Intent (or commits to a school) until the time they matriculate in college.

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- Send final HS transcripts to NCAA Eligibility Center
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Nicky Goetze is a three-time All-American from Clemson University and served as the head coach at four Division I schools including Mississippi State and Florida State (nickygoetze.com)

The Action Phase: Making a Decision

As you continue your summer tournament schedule and begin to think about your upcoming senior year in high school, the Action Phase of the recruiting process is in full motion. NCAA Division I coaches are now permitted to call you once per week and have up to three in-person contacts with you and your parents. Permissible unofficial and official (after September 1st) visits do not count against the three off-campus allowable contacts. Division II and Division III coaches may make an unlimited number of phone calls and contacts at this time. Although some rising seniors have already verbally committed to schools, do not be concerned that recruiting for your graduating class is over. Nothing could be further from the truth. How you play this summer can greatly affect the college opportunities and scholarship offers you are presented during the early signing period later this fall. Your academic success throughout your senior year will also play a key role in this process. At this time, there are several key action steps you should take to stay focused on the recruiting process.

1. Make sure you have registered at www.eligibility-center.org as a 2013 prospective student-athlete and confirm that your transcript (including six semesters of high school) has been forwarded to the NCAA Eligibility Center on your behalf. This will need to be done after you graduate as well. You should also review the NCAA Division I and II initial eligibility requirements to ensure you are on track to satisfy the core-course and test requirements.

2. E-mail your summer tournament results and remaining tournament schedule to your updated list of potential "best fit" schools and request an unofficial visit if your travel plans coincide with the location of the campus. Continue to update coaches regularly with all of your tournament results and reiterate to them your interest in attending their school and participating on their golf team. E-mail is the best form of communication. Also review the NCAA's Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete to learn more about the recruiting process.

3. Try to visit at least two or three more college campuses (unofficial visits) on your target list of schools in the remaining months this summer and if possible, meet with the golf coach for 20-30 minutes to learn more about their golf program and recruiting needs for your graduation class. This is the most important thing you can do at this time in the recruiting process. Remember, a prospect or a prospect's parents can make phone calls to coaches at anytime and Division I and II coaches are now allowed to return calls or initiate calls to you (no more than once per week for Division I and unlimited for Division II).

4. Continue researching schools and golf programs on the PING American College Golf Guide (www.collegegolf.com) and update your "best fit" list of schools and golf programs once you complete your summer tournament schedule. Consider academic requirements, student population, cost to attend, golf team ranking, team roster, realistic opportunity to play and coach's background and resume. Include several "reach" schools as well as several "safety" schools on your list. The majority of the list should include schools that have attainable golf and academic requirements based on your current resume. If you have not already done so, make sure to send coaches on this list an introductory letter, your resume, upcoming tournament schedule and golf swing/short game video.

5. Keep your academic and golf resume updated. Two excellent places to create and post resumes for coaches to review online are at www.ajga.org and www.juniorgolfscoreboard.com. The Junior Golf Scoreboard now offers a golf and academic resume service that allows recruits to create a resume online that can be updated easily and attached to e-mails when communicating with coaches.

6. Make sure you are registered to take the SAT or ACT exam (both is preferable) in the upcoming months and that you are doing everything possible to prepare for these exams. Private tutors, prep classes and online tutorials are highly recommended. Make sure you note "9999" on your exam registration so that your scores will automatically be forwarded to the NCAA Eligibility Center. This is necessary to make sure you have satisfied the Initial-Eligibility requirements before competing at the NCAA Division I or II level.

As a rising senior, it is very important to understand exactly what your realistic college golf opportunities are at this time and begin to make a list of the pro's and con's for each of those schools. You should also have an idea in mind as to whether or not you would like to sign a National Letter of Intent (if given the opportunity) during the early signing period this fall. Keep in mind all NCAA Division III and some Division I and Division II schools do not sign recruits to the NLI. Continue to communicate as often as possible with coaches via e-mail and telephone, updating them on your golf and academic progress and as time permits, schedule visits to their campus to learn more about their school and golf program. It is also important to remain patient if you have not heard from coaches as of this time. Continue to gather as much information as possible regarding colleges, golf programs and what is required to succeed at the next level. Visiting campuses and meeting with coaches will greatly assist you in determining schools that would be good fits for you to attend. Finally, continue to self promote by communicating regularly with coaches on your "best fit" list of schools.

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The Recruiting Rundown

High School Seniors, Issue 1

Preparation Phase

Starts when a student-athlete begins attending classes in 9th grade and last until May 1 of his/her sophomore year.

Freshmen

- Begin PSA Process
- Begin unofficial visits
- Attend college tournaments

Sophomores

- Continue unofficial visits
- Develop preliminary "best fit" schools
- Respond to questionnaires

Action Phase

Includes the critical 18-month window which lasts from May 1 of a student-athlete's sophomore year until Nov. 1 of his/her senior year.

Juniors

- E-mail summer results and progress report to coaches prior to Sept. 1.
- Schedule SAT/ACT
- Continue unofficial visits
- Attend college tournaments
- Send SAT/ACT scores to coaches
- Register with NCAA Eligibility Center

Transition Phase

Includes the time from when a student athlete signs a National Letter of Intent (or commits to a school) until the time they matriculate in college.

Seniors

- Send final HS transcripts to NCAA Eligibility Center
- Complete Amateurism Certification process

About the Authors

John Brooks is the former Head Coach of the University of North Florida and founder of Red Numbers Golf (www.rednumbersgolf.com)

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The Action Phase: Making a Decision

As you begin your senior year of high school you are now approaching the final phase of the recruiting process. There are several things to remember and pay attention to during this time.

You may receive an invitation to take an **official visit** to a college. These official visits are offered by the golf coach and signify a sincere interest in you as a prospective student-athlete to that university. An official visit is paid for and arranged by the university. A prospective student-athlete may take a maximum of five expense-paid visits, with no more than one to any single university. A prospective student-athlete can only take an official visit once they have begun classes for their senior year in high school. These visits take place over a maximum 48-hour time period and lodging, meals and related travel expenses can be provided by the university. Prospects can also receive three complimentary admissions to a home athletics event. Prior to taking an official visit, a prospective student-athlete must 1) present the institution with a score from a PSAT, SAT, PLAN or ACT, 2) present the institution with a high school academic transcript, and 3) be registered with the NCAA Eligibility Center.

At this time, you are also encouraged to forward your summer tournament results, updated resume and upcoming fall tournament schedule to all the coaches on your "best fit" list of schools. This "best fit" list of schools needs to be continually evaluated and refined based on your summer tournament results, corresponding interest from coaches and your objectives as a student-athlete. Proactive follow-up (phone

calls) and additional unofficial visits may be necessary as you determine your list of "best fit" schools. As you continually review your list of schools, remember that there are literally hundreds of options to play college golf and varying levels of competition. A comprehensive listing of all college golf programs can be found and researched at www.collegegolf.com.

You may also want to consider retaking the SAT/ACT to improve your test scores and/or to garner interest from additional schools.

Remember

to mark "9999" on the testing form to ensure that your scores are sent directly to the NCAA

Eligibility Center (www.eligibilitycenter.org).

so that your initial eligibility requirements are updated. A continued commitment to your high school academics is equally important, as coaches/universities want to see a consistent or upward trend in your core GPA.

Finally, during this phase you are encouraged to 1) maintain a competitive tournament schedule throughout the fall and early spring, 2) correspond with schools on your "best-fit" list and update the list as necessary, 3) make unofficial visits or official visits when appropriate, 4) make your academics a priority, and 5) stay proactive and positive throughout the process.

Good luck with the beginning of your senior year!

"A prospective student-athlete may take a maximum of five expense-paid visits, with no more than one to any single university."

Key Terms

Official Visit – A visit paid for and arranged by a university. Prospects are allowed five official visits to different schools once they begin classes for their senior year.

NCAA Eligibility Center – Minimum academic requirements that are set by the NCAA to participate in Division I and II athletics. As a senior, you must be registered with the NCAA Eligibility Center in order to take an Official Visit.

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The Recruiting Rundown

High School Seniors, Issue 2

Preparation Phase

Starts when a student-athlete begins attending classes in 9th grade and last until May 1 of his/her sophomore year.

Freshmen

- Begin PSA Process
- Begin unofficial visits
- Attend college tournaments

Sophomores

- Continue unofficial visits
- Develop preliminary "best fit" schools
- Respond to questionnaires

Action Phase

Includes the critical 18-month window which lasts from May 1 of a student-athlete's sophomore year until Nov. 1 of his/her senior year.

Juniors

- E-mail summer results and progress report to coaches prior to Sept. 1.
- Schedule SAT/ACT
- Continue unofficial visits
- Attend college tournaments
- Send SAT/ACT scores to coaches
- Register with NCAA Eligibility Center

Transition Phase

Includes the time from when a student athlete signs a National Letter of Intent (or commits to a school) until the time they matriculate in college.

Seniors

- Send final HS transcripts to NCAA Eligibility Center
- Complete Amateurism Certification process

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The Action Phase: Making a Decision

As the first semester of your senior year draws to a close, you either remain in the action phase of the recruiting process or are entering the transition phase. Your status depends on whether or not you signed a **National Letter of Intent (NLI)** this past November, so let's look at both situations to explore the best practices for your next steps.

If you signed an NLI in the early signing period, then congratulations! Once you have signed with your respective college there is no limit on the number of phone calls or contacts that can be made by the institution (golf coach) with which you signed. At this time you should be aware of and complete all necessary steps required by the **NCAA Eligibility Center** (www.eligibilitycenter.org) as you conclude the final portion of your senior year. This includes completing the NCAA Amateurism Certification process in April of your senior year and having your high school forward your final academic transcripts to the NCAA Eligibility Center once you have officially graduated. To better familiarize yourself with the NCAA rules and Eligibility Center, please refer to the NCAA Guide for the College Bound Student Athlete, which is available on the aforementioned website. Additionally, you will want to remain in communication with your college coach, finish strong academically, plan an appropriate spring and summer tournament schedule, and enjoy knowing you have a wonderful opportunity ahead as a college student-athlete.

For those of you who did not sign an NLI in November, do not be discouraged or feel as if no options remain. In fact, many opportunities still exist and there are numerous things you can do between now and next April (start of the regular signing period) to position yourself for an opportunity to be a student-athlete at the college level. First, you should review the early signees list with respect to your schools of interest to gain a sense of what potential opportunities still exist. These signings can be found on both the AJGA Web site (www.ajga.org) and the Junior Golf Scoreboard Web site (www.juniorgolfscoreboard.com). At this time you also should carefully review your current "best fit" list of schools to

determine if additional schools should be researched and added based on your recent tournament results, academic standing, corresponding interest from coaches and your objectives as a student-athlete. Remember to use the PING American College Golf Guide (www.collegegolf.com) for a comprehensive listing of all college golf programs and consider the varying levels of competition and academic requirements that exist. It is worth noting that there are more than 1,200 colleges that have men's golf programs and more than 800 that have women's golf programs. To have the experience of being a student-athlete in college at any level is a worthwhile opportunity. Be open to exploring all possibilities.

It is also extremely important that you maintain a competitive tournament schedule this winter and spring to continue to demonstrate your abilities to college coaches. Additionally, you should provide all of the schools on your "best fit" list with your most updated information: academic standing, tournament results, upcoming tournament schedule, pertinent references and most recent swing video. When communicating with coaches, make sure to have specific questions formulated that will help you determine their interest level in you as a prospective student-athlete, what they are looking for specifically with respect to a golf and academic profile and the timeline they have for determining their respective recruiting decisions. Finally, continue to make unofficial and/or official visits when appropriate and attend college tournaments that have participating schools that you are interested in. Taking these actions are the keys to moving forward in the college placement process.

Most critical is staying proactive and positive during this time. Many opportunities still remain and your commitment and persistence to this process will provide you the best opportunity to identify your "best fit" college.

"It is also extremely important that you maintain a competitive tournament schedule this winter and spring to continue to demonstrate your abilities to college coaches."

Key Terms

National Letter of Intent - The official binding document used by subscribing member institutions to establish the commitment of a prospective student-athlete to attend a particular institution for one academic year. This written offer is accompanied by some degree of athletically-related financial aid. There are two signing periods for the NLI: the early signing period is held in November (for a one-week period beginning on the second Wednesday of the month) and the regular signing period, which takes place on the second Wednesday of April and runs through August 1 of that same year.

NCAA Eligibility Center - The Eligibility Center certifies the academic and amateur credentials of all students who want to play sports at an NCAA Division I or II. In order to practice, play and receive an athletics scholarship, students need to meet certain academic benchmarks. An additional certification process exists to make sure the student is still an amateur, which is necessary in order for the student to compete.

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The Recruiting Rundown

High School Seniors, Issue 3

Preparation Phase

Starts when a student-athlete begins attending classes in 9th grade and last until May 1 of his/her sophomore year.

Freshmen

- Begin PSA Process
 - Begin unofficial visits
 - Attend college tournaments
- ### Sophomores
- Continue unofficial visits
 - Develop preliminary "best fit" schools
 - Respond to questionnaires

Action Phase

Includes the critical 18-month window which lasts from May 1 of a student-athlete's sophomore year until Nov. 1 of his/her senior year.

Juniors

- E-mail summer results and progress report to coaches prior to Sept. 1.
- Schedule SAT/ACT
- Continue unofficial visits
- Attend college tournaments
- Send SAT/ACT scores to coaches
- Register with NCAA Eligibility Center

Transition Phase

Includes the time from when a student athlete signs a National Letter of Intent (or commits to a school) until the time they matriculate in college.

Seniors

- Send final HS transcripts to NCAA Eligibility Center
- Complete Amateurism Certification process

The Transition Phase: Making a Decision

As you graduate from high school and begin to focus on your upcoming freshman year in college (the Transition Phase of recruiting), it will be necessary for you to balance your time between practice, tournament golf, friends and family vacations. It is always important to maintain a competitive edge with your golf game, especially considering the fall college golf season will begin immediately once you arrive on campus. In most cases, college coaches will schedule qualifying rounds for the first tournament sometime within the first week or two of the fall semester. You are also faced with new academic courses, being away from home and having to adjust to a new environment. Incoming freshmen who have competed full time during the previous three summer months run the risk of being burned out and ready for a break. On the other hand, incoming freshmen who elected to take a significant amount of time off during the summer months usually do not have enough time early in the fall semester to get their game in shape and make an impact on their college team. The key is to find the right balance that will afford you some free time to enjoy the summer, rest up for a busy fall semester and also play and practice enough to remain competitively sharp.

Scheduling local and regional tournaments can be an excellent way to reduce travel time without affecting your golf game. State Amateurs, State Junior Amateurs, State Opens, U.S. Amateur Qualifiers, U.S. Open Qualifiers, U.S. Amateur Public Links Qualifiers (if eligible) and City Amateurs are excellent examples. One or two AJGA events in your region of the country may also fit your tournament schedule. The bottom line is that you need to be challenged by the best competition you can find but not to the extent

that it takes all of your time during the upcoming summer months. Here are a few key reminders at this time:

1. Make sure your high school sends your final transcript to the NCAA Eligibility Center and your college. Also, complete the final phase of the Amateurism Certification process and then follow up with the Eligibility Center to confirm that you have been certified to compete as a freshman. If you are planning to attend and play for an NCAA Division III school, the Eligibility Center does not apply to you and this is an unnecessary step.

2. Communicate with the other incoming freshmen to see what tournaments they are competing in this summer. There may be an opportunity to schedule two or three events in common and spend some time with your future college teammates.

3. Schedule several sessions with your instructor(s) and ask them to help you formulate a checklist of things to work on once you get to college. Also develop a plan that will allow you to communicate regularly with each of them while you are away at college.

4. Ask your new college coach for a copy of the team's workout program so you can start following it this summer. This will pay dividends once you begin your college career later in the fall and will be one less thing you have to adjust to.

Have a great summer!

"The key is to find the right balance that will afford you some free time to enjoy the summer, rest up for a busy fall semester and also play and practice enough to remain competitively sharp."

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Key Terms

NCAA Eligibility Center – The Eligibility Center certifies the academic and amateur credentials of all students who want to play sports at an NCAA Division I or II school. In order to practice, play and receive an athletic scholarship, students need to meet certain academic benchmarks. An additional certification process exists to make sure the student is still an amateur, which is necessary in order for the student to compete.

National Letter of Intent - The official binding document used by subscribing member institutions to establish the commitment of a prospective student-athlete to attend a particular institution for one academic year. This written offer is accompanied by some degree of athletically-related financial aid.

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The Recruiting Rundown

High School Seniors, Issue 4

Preparation Phase

Starts when a student-athlete begins attending classes in 9th grade and last until May 1 of his/her sophomore year.

Freshmen

- Begin PSA Process
 - Begin unofficial visits
 - Attend college tournaments
- ### Sophomores
- Continue unofficial visits
 - Develop preliminary "best fit" schools
 - Respond to questionnaires

Action Phase

Includes the critical 18-month window which lasts from May 1 of a student-athlete's sophomore year until Nov. 1 of his/her senior year.

Juniors

- E-mail summer results and progress report to coaches prior to Sept. 1.
- Schedule SAT/ACT
- Continue unofficial visits
- Attend college tournaments
- Send SAT/ACT scores to coaches
- Register with NCAA Eligibility Center

Transition Phase

Includes the time from when a student athlete signs a National Letter of Intent (or commits to a school) until the time they matriculate in college.

Seniors

- Send final HS transcripts to NCAA Eligibility Center
- Complete Amateurism Certification process

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The Transition Phase: Your Freshman Year

Every college freshman faces the same challenges, especially early on during their initial academic semester. Most are away from home for the first time, adjusting to harder academic courses, managing increased responsibilities, and trying to meet new friends. As student-athletes, some freshmen are challenged further because they also have a sport and team to focus on. This can be particularly tough for golfers who face a fall season that begins within the first two weeks of their freshman year.

Here are a few suggestions that will help high school seniors as they prepare for taking that big step at the end of the summer.

Learn Effective Time Management Skills

- Purchase a watch
- Keep a calendar with golf and academic deadlines/key dates
- Get more organized

Focus on Health & Fitness

- Sleep at least 8 hours per night
- Eat three healthy meals daily & a healthy snack between meals/at practice
- Remain hydrated
- Work out regularly
- See a doctor if you get sick or injured

Develop a List of Priorities & Set Goals

- Set academics as your main priority
- Work with your coach to establish golf goals
- Enjoy a social life but not at the expense of academics or golf

Stay in Contact with Your Support Team

- Communicate regularly with your parents
- See your swing instructor when time permits
- Schedule periodic meetings with your college coach
- Talk to your sports psychologist before and after tournaments
- Meet once per semester with your academic advisor
- Find a mentor on the team to listen to (upper classman)

Trust Your Golf Ability & Play "Your Game"

- Resist the temptation to change your game now that you are in college
- Be careful whom you listen to when working on your golf swing
- Remain patient and have reasonable expectations as a freshman
- Work hard to get better with all aspects of your game—learn through experience
- Compete in amateur tournaments when time permits

If you can follow these five suggestions, your transition to college will be smooth, and your golf game will continue to improve as a collegiate player. It's okay to make "freshman mistakes"—just make sure you learn from them. And always choose your friends carefully.

Good Luck!

Key Reminders Before Leaving for College

1. Make sure your high school sends your final transcript to the NCAA Eligibility Center and your college. Also, complete the final phase of the Amateurism Certification process and then follow up with the Eligibility Center to confirm that you have been certified to compete as a freshman. If you are planning to attend and play for an NCAA Division III school, the Eligibility Center does not apply to you and it is unnecessary to send them a transcript.
2. Schedule a final session with your instructor(s) and ask them to help you formulate a checklist of things to work on once you get to college. Also develop a plan that will allow you to communicate regularly with each of them while you are away at college.
3. Ask your new college coach for a copy of the team's workout program so you can start following it this summer. This will pay dividends once you begin your college career later in the fall and will be one less thing you have to adjust to.

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