

Tips on the college recruitment process for rowing

Edited document originated from Spencer Washburn, former Princeton coach

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Junior Year:

Student becomes a prospective student-athlete when they begin high school, but the process for rowing doesn't get underway until junior year. At the start of the junior year, coaches are allowed to reach out to prospects via email. Women's coaches are allowed to call prospects. Men's coaches still wait until after July 1 to begin calling prospects. Email is most common method of communication.

- Identify colleges you might be interested in. Research the coach and the rowing program.
- Juniors should send introductory email in fall/winter of junior year – basic facts (height, weight, erg, boats rowed in, notable results, GPA, test scores, transcript attached).
- Fill out any online questionnaires (found on the college or crew website)
- berecruited.com – enter a profile for free
- Prospect should plan unofficial visits and coordinate with college coaches to have a one-on-one meeting, or possibly see a practice at some point during the junior year or during the summer before senior fall
- Sign up for a summer rowing camp at the school

Tips for student:

- Take the initiative, own the process, don't wait for coaches to find you
- Be genuine, be authentic and be honest with coaches
- Proofread correspondence (and make sure it is going to the right coach and school!)
- Have an actual interest in the school
- Have actual knowledge about the program. Don't ask basic questions that can be answered by the team's site. Who they race against, how they did, what they use for equipment, etc.
- Research the coach – how long has he/she been there? Who has been recruited in the past? Look at the current roster. Some coaches look for multi-sport athletes, others prefer year-round rowers
- After initial contact keep bi-weekly contact with updates (grades, scores, races, stats, congrats on the colleges races). Again keep it brief.
- Coaches want to hear directly from the athlete, NOT from parents or coach
- Coaches may ask for video of student or to attend a practice. We can help with that.
- Don't get hung up on the recruitment rules, it is the coaches' responsibility to know them

College Expectations

- Academics matter. Grades, test scores, rigor of curriculum all matter. Know what the school looks for in a student. Coaches cannot guarantee acceptance, only the admissions office can.
- Erg scores matter. For many coaches, it is the most important. 2K is the SAT of testing. Coaches look for physiological capacity and development.
- Experience matters. How much has the prospect rowed? What boats have they rowed in? Summer rowing? Again, some coaches like multi-sport athletes, some prefer year-round rowers.
- If you are not rowing year-round, and hope get recruited, you really need to be a spring rower (especially your junior year)
- Personality matters. Every kid needs to fill a role on the team. Through the recruiting process, the connection the rower develops with the coach and the team can shift the scales in a positive direction.
- Process starts with lots of interest and a very big group of prospects. That group gets whittled down to those who are viable academically and athletically. Some are invited on official visits in the senior fall. Even fewer are "supported" through the admissions process