

# **MISSOULA STRIKERS**

**COLLEGE RECRUITING TIMELINE**

REV JAN 2021



It's important to note that there are differences in the timeline for both boys and girls and differences for each division of college soccer. For girls the emphasis is earlier (Freshman/Sophomore) and for boys it's later (Junior/Senior).

The earlier you start the better ... but it's never too late to get started.

## FRESHMAN YEAR

Get off to a strong start with your grades. Your high school will calculate your GPA, which will correspond with your class rank. Eventually, these statistics will be used to determine your academic scholarships.

Most colleges will use your grades from your "core" academic classes: <http://www.ncaa.org/student-athletes/future/core-courses>. For potential DI athletes the NCAA requires a total of 16 core classes BUT need 14 by the end of junior year or 6th semester.

Create a highlight video that is three to four minutes in length. Focus on clips that highlight your strengths. The best highlight videos are the ones that focus on specific aspects of your game (passing, dribbling, defending, finishing, etc.)

Go watch area D1, D2, D3, NAIA, or JC college games to get an understanding of the different levels of college soccer.

## SOPHOMORE YEAR

Continue to focus on your grades and begin to challenge yourself with Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) classes and if your school offers it, Dual Enrollment classes where students can earn both high school and college credits.

Take PSATs in the fall. Most area high schools will offer this test for free during the regular school day. This is a great opportunity for students to become accustomed to the test format and test length.

Meet with your school counselor and let them know that you are considering playing college soccer. Counselors will be able to assist with core course classes and meeting requirements.

Attend a college financial aid seminar hosted by your school.

Update your highlight video with new game footage. Use clips against good competition.



Contact college coaches of schools you may be interested in prior to attending college showcases. Plan a meeting with your coach or Strikers staff 2-3 weeks before the event for help with structuring your email to coaches. College showcase tournaments will list the college coaches that will be attending that specific event.

<http://tournaments.usyouthsoccer.org/events/2019-Far-West-Regional-Championships/coaches/>

Attend college ID camps/clinics of schools that you may be interested in.

Go watch area D1, D2, D3, NAIA, or JC college games to get an understanding of the different levels of college soccer.

By the end of your Sophomore year, identify 20-25 schools that meet your academic and athletic aspirations. Plan visits and take tours of schools you are interested in.

## JUNIOR YEAR

Continue to focus on your grades and begin to challenge yourself with Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) classes and if your school offers it, Dual Enrollment classes where students can earn both high school and college credits. Your Junior year is a very important year for academics and a year that colleges will focus on when they examine your transcript, so continue to work hard and stay focused.

If you know that you want to play DI or DII college soccer, register with the NCAA Eligibility Center at the beginning of your Junior year. If you are unsure about what level you want to compete at you can still register: <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>

Register to take the ACT and/or SAT tests.

When you register for the ACT and/or SAT tests you can have your scores sent directly to the NCAA Eligibility Center using code: 9999

Attend a college financial aid seminar hosted by your school.

Update your highlight video with new game footage. Use clips against good competition.

Contact college coaches of schools you may be interested in. Prior to college showcases plan a meeting with your coach or Strikers staff 2-3 weeks before the event for help with structuring your email to coaches. College showcase tournaments will list the college coaches that will be attending that specific event.



Contact your current Strikers coach and/or High School coach and request honest assessment of your current level of play.

Attend college ID camps/clinics of schools that you may be interested in.

Go watch area D1, D2, D3, NAIA, or JC college games to get an understanding of the different levels of college soccer.

By the end of your Junior year, identify 10-12 schools that you are interested in and that meet your academic and athletic aspirations. Plan visits and take tours of schools you are interested in.

## SENIOR YEAR

There is a misconception that colleges will not look at your senior year grades - this is inaccurate. Your senior grades will be sent to the colleges you apply to and they will be factored into the admissions process. Stay focused and continue to work hard.

At the beginning of your senior year, you should have your college search narrowed down to 2 - 5 schools that you are seriously considering.

Confirm your eligibility status with the NCAA clearinghouse at the start of your senior year.

Register to take ACT and/or SAT in the fall.

Meet with your guidance counselor, apply to the schools that you are seriously considering and ask selected teachers to write you a letter of recommendation. Be mindful of application deadlines as every school is different.

Submit your FAFSA application. This determines how much aid you qualify to receive:  
<https://fafsa.ed.gov/>

Plan any final college visits and tours in the fall.

Update your highlight video with new game footage. Use clips against good competition. Have full game film available.

Contact any of the colleges that you are seriously considering prior to any event you could get scouted.

Follow up with all of the schools you are seriously considering and weigh your options before making your final decision and ask yourself "If I'm not playing soccer, is this a school that I want to be at?"



# IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

## QUESTIONS ABOUT THE COLLEGE

Is this a four year or two year school?

Is the school public or private? Does it have a religious affiliation?

Where is the school located?

Is this in the country, small town, or in an urban area?

What is the campus like, compact or spread out?

How large is the school, what is the undergraduate enrollment?

What are the strongest degree programs offered, and which are the best academic departments?

Does the school have my potential major/career interests? It's alright if you don't know what you want to do as a career now - most individuals don't.

What is the growth potential for internships?

Do most students live on campus or off campus?

What is student housing like?

Do the members of the soccer team room together?

What transportation is possible from my home to the campus? Bus, train, flight?

What is the academic calendar - quarters, semesters, trimesters?

What do you do to help players with their school work? Is tutoring available? Academic advisor?



## QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROGRAM & TEAM

In what division does the school play? NCAA DI, DII, DIII, NAIA or NJCAA?

In what conference does the team play?

Do I want to start and play as a freshman?

What were the team's conference and overall record this year?

How many players will there be on the roster next year?

What many players will travel with the team?

What training happens after the season?

What is the pre-season schedule?

What is the practice schedule during the season? Morning, afternoon or evening?

Including meetings, training, travel and matches, how much time is required?

What facilities and staff are available to take care of injuries and rehab?

What is the style of play you want to see?

What are the goals for the team?

## QUESTIONS ABOUT THE COACH'S NEEDS FOR THE TEAM

How many seniors are graduating?

Are there redshirt players returning?

What positions do you have open on the team and where would I fit in?

How much playing time should I expect as a freshman?

How many other players are playing that position?

Are you recruiting other players for that position? Have you committed to any?



## QUESTIONS TO ASK GOING FORWARD

Which tournaments will you be attending?

Will your school be hosting any ID clinics or camps that I can attend?

Have you talked with my coaches?

What's the next step? What should I do? Do you see me as a serious possibility?

## QUESTIONS TO ASK AFTER YOUR VISIT

How did I like the coach's personality?

Do I feel his coaching style will mesh well with my playing style?

Is the school in my price range?

Did I enjoy the team members?

Did the school have what I wanted academically?

Is there growth potential within my major?

Do I like the campus? Was I comfortable?

Is the lifestyle of a college athlete a good fit for me?

What happens to the scholarship if I'm injured and unable to play?



## COLLEGE QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of this questionnaire is to help assist you in finding schools and college soccer programs that best fit you. Please fill it out honestly and don't be afraid to answer, "I don't know", as you are just beginning the process.

1) Do you have an idea of what area's of study you might want to pursue in college:

- No
- Yes (please list, can be more than one \_\_\_\_\_)

2) Which best describes the area of the country you'd like to go:

- I would prefer to stay close to home
- I would prefer to stay on the west coast
- I am open to going anywhere in the country for college
- I have no idea

3) Which best describes the size of the school that interests you:

- I like big college campuses (15,000+ students)
- I like medium college campuses (5,000+ students)
- I like small college campuses (1,000+ students)
- I have no idea

4) I would prefer:

- An urban setting for college
- A college town
- Makes no difference
- I have no idea

5) Are you open to playing at the following levels (check all that apply):

- Junior College
- NAIA
- Division III
- Division II
- Division I

6) Check the statement that best applies:

- Being on a top team is the most important thing even if I am a practice player
- I want to go to a school where I can go and compete to play
- I want to go to a school where I know I can and start and be the star
- I want to use soccer as a way to get into a top academic school





## SAMPLE EMAIL

Pack as much information as you can in as short an email as you can (coaches don't have time and/or energy to read long emails). Players should take ideas from the example below, but they should write the email themselves and make sure it sounds like themselves. Coaches don't love it when they get a well-written first email and then find out in future emails or phone calls that the athlete was not being themselves. It's okay to use the same email for different universities. JUST MAKE SURE TO CHANGE NAMES.

DEAR [UNIVERSITY COACHES](#) (last names of all Coaching Staff)

I hope you are all doing well.

We have played our first 3 League games and I wanted to send you some video of me and my team from those games. Our schedule is a work in progress at this point but I will update film as we go and send you our schedules as we get them. Our club has decided not to go to the Florida showcase in January due to Covid, but we are still hoping to go to Texas which I am very excited about. I will send you that schedule as soon as we have it.

[HIGHLIGHT VIDEO LINK HERE](#)

I know that NCAA rules may not allow you to contact me at this time but I plan to attend an upcoming [UNIVERSITY](#) ID Camp and I hope to see you in attendance at one of our future tournaments.

Lastly, here is my club coach's email should you want to connect with him/her.

[CLUB COACH'S NAME](#)

[CLUB COACH'S EMAIL](#)

Thank you for your time and GO [UNIVERSITY](#)!

[PLAYER NAME](#)

[PLAYER CLUB](#)

[AGE & GRADUATION YEAR](#)

[POSITION\(S\) PLAYED & JERSEY #](#)



## AREA COLLEGE PROGRAMS

Carroll College, Men's & Women's Soccer (NAIA)

Montana State University - Billings, Men's & Women's Soccer (NCAA DII)

Providence University, Men's & Women's Soccer (NAIA)

Rocky Mountain College, Men's & Women's Soccer (NAIA)

University of Montana - Missoula, Women's Soccer (NCAA DI)

College of Idaho, Men's & Women's Soccer (NAIA)

Eastern Washington University, Women's Soccer (NCAA DI)

Idaho State University, Women's Soccer (NCAA DI)

Gonzaga University, Men's & Women's Soccer (NCAA DI)

North Idaho College, Men's & Women's Soccer (NJCAA)

Northwest Nazarene, Men's & Women's Soccer (NCAA DII)

Spokane Falls Community College, Men's & Women's Soccer (NCJAA)

University of Idaho, Women's Soccer (NCAA DI)

Washington State University, Women's Soccer (NCAA DI)

Whitworth University, Men's & Women's Soccer (NCAA DIII)



## RESOURCES

NCAA <http://www.ncaa.org/>

NJCAA <https://www.njcaa.org/landing/index>

NAIA <https://www.naia.org/landing/index>

NICHE <https://www.niche.com/>

STRIKERS ALUMNI <https://www.missoulastrikers.com/alumni>

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN DIVISIONS?:

<https://www.sportsrecruitingusa.com/difference-between-naia-ncaa-njcaa>



**NOTES**