



Making the Jump to College Sports

By Todd M. Kays, Ph.D.

Sport Psychologist

Making the jump from high school to college athletics is one of the most exciting times in student athletes' lives. It can be one of the most rewarding experiences for both student athletes and their families. This "jump" or transition, however, is more involved than ever. Listed below are some components to think about as a way to "make the jump" successful and rewarding. Again, these are just a few pieces to the puzzle and I encourage you to seek out information from trusted and valid sources

Prepare Early

One of the keys to success in sports is preparation. It is the same way with selecting and choosing a college. The sooner student athletes can gather information about a school and its athletic program, the better off they will be in the long run. If student athletes end up not being interested in the school at a later time, all they have to do is throw away the information or give it to another student athlete.

Money is in Academics, Not Just Athletics

Many student athletes and their families think that if they receive an athletic scholarship, it will pay for most, if not all, of their education. The fact of the matter is that many student athletes receive as much money (and many time more) from academic and citizenship scholarships as athletic ones. One of my high school student athletes received a full-ride to a well-known Division I school – 60% was for academics and 40% was for athletics. Thus, keep the grades and good behavior going!

Prepare a Resume

Although students are not accustomed to creating resumes before they graduate from college, it is important that student athletes develop a resume early in high school. They can illustrate information about their athletic careers, such as championships and key statistics, but non-athletic endeavors, such as academics, leadership positions, and volunteer activities are important as well. Coaches and schools still do value well-rounded student-athletes!

Student Athletes Can Call Coaches Directly

College coaches really enjoy hearing from high school student athletes. It is better for the student athletes to call initially in most coaches' opinions. Certainly the parents will and should be involved as decision-making time approaches, but it is a valuable life skill for student athletes to contact the coaches themselves. Plus, they learn a tremendous

amount about the coach and the program!

The list above represents only a small number of things that need to be addressed as your son or daughter plans for college sports. Preparing to make the transition has become quite a complex and time-consuming process. Do not try to do it alone – rely on fellow parents, student-athletes, coaches and other experts who can help. And as always, feel free to contact us at the Athletic Mind Institute if we can help with any of your student athletes' athletic, academic, or life needs!

Play Hard, Play Smart and Play Well!