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Like it or not, the college recruiting process for swimming is rapidly changing. We have recently seen the first sophomore give a verbal commitment to ASU and there are over 200 high school juniors who have given their verbal commitments.

This is the tip of the iceberg and all of it is within NCAA rules.

One big problem for recruits is that they are not able to find out which college coaches are interested in them during their sophomore year because the college coaches are not allowed to contact them until September 1 of their junior year.

When September 1 rolls around they are inundated with emails from college coaches introducing themselves. We are already starting to see coaches asking for a verbal commitment over a year ahead of the early signing period in November of their senior year.

As a 16 year old it is pretty tough to decide what you want to be when you grow up and what college you want to attend.

What does this mean for swimmers and parents?

- You will have to start the recruiting process much earlier.
- You will have to do a great job of selling your potential to the college coaches.
- You will have to have your club and high school coaches send your information to your favorite schools and try to find out if they are interested in you or not. The big problem is that a lot of college coaches don't respond right away so your coach will have to stay after them until they do. The college coaches can respond to your coach and your coach will have to let you know. Club coaches will need a raise.
- You will have to do your research on the schools you are interested in during your sophomore year so that you will be prepared to communicate with the coaches once your junior year starts.
- You and your parents will have to decide what they can afford to pay for college so that you can determine if a school is affordable if you receive a scholarship offer.
- Your results/times in your sophomore year will carry a lot more weight than they used to.
- You will have to be prepared for deadlines for accepting a scholarship.
- You will need to familiarize yourself with the NCAA transfer rules in case you choose the wrong school.
- If you do commit early, you will have to find the motivation to continue to train seriously even though you have already agreed to a scholarship.