



SASO College Talk 2016

Freshman Year

Get good grades

Have great practice attendance (attendance precedes rewards in swimming.)

Be a teacher's pet in both settings – those who stay after and ask good questions get improved attention from the coach or teacher.

Grow a general curiosity about college entrance requirements, follow swim results.

Start researching colleges.

Set aside some time to look at collegeswimming.com. Take a look at various schools with teams that might be of interest.

Attend any meets that SASO attends on college campuses (UCSC, CAL, etc.)

Apply for USA Swimming Academic All American (summer) if qualified.

Sophomore Year

Continue to follow freshman year to do items.

Further research test scores and GPA of incoming students.

Continue to research colleges. Identify schools that have a major that you interests you.

Review best times from swim teams based on their conference championship meet.

Email the coaches of the colleges that you are interested in a cover letter with an athletic resume (update annually) Include GPA and Test Scores, workout and competition info.

College coaches can send you a questionnaire and general team info in response.

Check Initial Eligibility Requirements. There are certain courses you will need to take to be eligible to swim as a Freshman in college.

Register with “Naviance” at your high school (or similar.)

Go through all social media accounts. Make sure what you post sells you to the schools, coaches and future teammates.

Junior Year - Fall

Coaches can begin to send you official recruiting materials.

Continue to send college coaches updated info.

Bring SASO and high school coach into loop on your list of schools that you are interested in. Set up individual meeting with SASO Coach and parents.

Take the SAT / ACT early and more than once.

Register with NCAA eligibility center if you plan to swim in college. Update “my sports section” regularly.

Teams can start emailing you on 9/1.

Acquire admission steps and pertinent deadlines.

Research academic scholarships available in general and specific to interested schools.

Create list of 3 to 5 great fits, 3 to 5 possible fits and 3 to 5 reach schools.

Start identifying ‘must-haves’ at the college

Find a short and long-term way to offset the stress of the recruiting and search process.

Junior Year - Spring

Use breaks and days off from school to visit schools and/or meet coaches.
(set up swim dates with clubs that train at universities)

Go to junior days put on by teams or schools if invited.

Take last round of standardized tests.

Further define 'must-haves'.

Prepare questions for campus tours, admissions counselors, initial coach meetings.

Junior Year - Summer

College can call 7/1 – should have an idea of their interest level by 7/15;
Schools will offer trips anywhere from spring via email through early fall.

Update list to include 5-7 schools – maintain 3 categories (great fit, possible fit, reach.)

Start applications if appropriate.

Honest dialogue about fits, strengths and weaknesses of student / school.

Affordability

Have honest conversations about costs, college budget and student contribution with your parents.

College will expect the student-athlete to be at least conversational on topic.

Most appropriate area for direct parent involvement.

Growing in importance every year.

Senior Year - Fall

Take trips and visit schools (official and unofficial college visits.)

Ideally you have done the homework to make decision if the right opportunity presents itself.

Ask direct question of coaches and team.

Trust your gut.

Marketing yourself to school and coaches continues through summer – moves from spot on team offers to relationship-building.

Other Thoughts

From a parent perspective: good to classify this as an academic, athletic, or cost-based decision in how parents are steering student-athlete.

Consider cost of undergrad as well as possibility of cost of master's degree.

Passiveness / Lack of persistence is biggest limiting factor in choices.

Continue to remember the excitement of search to combat roller-coaster of emotions.

Most people overvalue swimming's importance/ value. Many factors for choosing a school include teammates, coaches, campus, academics, etc. Always consider what school you would most like to attend if you were no longer swimming.

Top 3 on roster compared to conference results of team and/or Top 16 at conference get scholarship money.

Thank coaches for their time, effort, and interest in your child. Let them know if not interested and give them chance to move on to next candidate.

Your school guidance counselor can help you through this process, too.....s/he can help you with financial aid information, getting your test scores, etc sent to places before your official visits, and may also have resources to tell you about the academic reputations of the schools you're looking at. Don't be afraid to ask questions and get help!

Terms

Verbal Commitment

This phrase is used to describe a college-bound student-athlete's commitment to a school before he or she signs (or is able to sign) a National Letter of Intent. A college-bound student-athlete can announce a verbal commitment at any time. While verbal commitments have become very popular for both college-bound student-athletes and coaches, this "commitment" is NOT binding on either the college-bound student-athlete or the college or university. Only the signing of the National Letter of Intent accompanied by a financial aid agreement is binding on both parties.

National Letter of Intent

By signing an NLI, you agree to attend the institution for one year in exchange for the institution's promise, in writing, to provide you athletics financial aid for the entire academic year. Simply, by signing an NLI you are given an award including athletics aid for the upcoming academic year provided you are admitted to the institution and you are eligible for athletics aid under NCAA rules. Furthermore, by signing an NLI you effectively end the recruiting process. Once you sign an NLI, a recruiting ban goes into effect and you may no longer be recruited by any other NLI school.

Men's Water polo	Feb 1, 2017	
Other Sports	November 9, 2016	early signing period
Other Sports	April 12, 2017	

Official College Visit

During your senior year the NCAA allows any academic institution to pay for you to attend campus on a 48-hour **Official Visit**. Included in the **visit** is transportation (airfare or mileage reimbursement) to and from campus, lodging (either on campus or in a hotel), meals, and tickets to sporting events on campus.

In Division I schools, a prospect can take **five official visits**. In Division II schools, Division III schools and the NAIA, official visits are unlimited. Prospects who are being recruited by both Division I and Division II schools should take advantage of this, and give many Division II schools a chance.

Unofficial College Visit

Student athletes can visit a coach on that coaches campus at anytime, as long as they pay their own way. These types of visits are called unofficial visits and have become a big part of the recruiting process. Because college coaches are recruiting players during their freshman and sophomore years in high school, the only way they can really meet and talk with these recruits is on unofficial visits. Recruits are being asked to commit to schools before they can take official visits, so unofficial visits are playing a more important role.

Additional Resources

SASO/High School coaches

Collegeswimming.com

beRecruited.com

Pay sites/services-not really necessary

Athletic dept web-sites (staff directory)

National Letter of Intent

<http://www.nationalletter.org/index.html>

NCAA Clearinghouse

https://web3.ncaa.org/ECWR2/NCAA_EMS/NCAA.jsp

NCAA Guide

<http://www.ncaapublications.com/productdownloads/CBSA15.pdf>