

## **Prospective Student-Athlete Exposure: Building the Personal Profile**

By Tom Kovic

Developing the talent to be a gifted athlete is a blessing, but opening up this talent and grabbing the attention of college coaches takes skill, planning and commitment. The prospect that is willing to make a proactive effort in getting on the radar screen of the college coaches will have a better chance of becoming noticed than those who wait for the coaches to “come-a-calling.”

There are several ways to develop effective exposure for prospects. Face to face contacts, campus visits, phone and electronic communication are a just few examples of getting the coaches attention, but focusing on the development of an effective personal profile that will help coaches make their initial evaluation of the prospect should be the first step.

As one can imagine, college coaches receive hundreds of personal profiles annually from prospects. It is important to streamline your portfolio into a comprehensive and efficient format that stands above the rest. College coaches will begin to prioritize their recruiting file based on the initial cover letter and resume, and these documents will usually be placed in one of three files of importance.

“A” file: Blue chip, top-tier recruits

“B” file: Second-tier recruits; still have excellent opportunity

“C” file: Little chance of athletic impact; Admissions risks

The goal of the prospect should be to remain in the “active” recruiting file throughout the entire recruiting cycle and by creating a streamlined and clean personal profile, not only will this approach provide the prospect with an easier format to work with, it will help make the job of the initial academic and athletic evaluation by the college coach simple. Coaches like that!

### **Format**

I suggest building your profile using the most important and relevant information you can fit on a single page. It should take approximately 90 seconds for coaches to pick out the information they need to determine whether you will be filtered into the active or inactive recruiting file and I suggest you help make the job easy for them.

Begin by developing your header. Here you want to list specific contact information (name, address, phone, e-mail, your sport of interest and your graduation year). Include an action photo or headshot. This section should be simple, but clean and informative. Let the coaches know who you are.

Next, line up all of your academic credentials and information on ½ of the page and highlight the important headers (high school information, standardized testing, current semester courses, eligibility center information and graduation year etc.) in a particular color. Be sure to include your current core course grade point average and highest aggregate score on standardized test. These two areas are critical components in determining initial eligibility. There is much information you can include, but I recommend a “stealth” approach that will include only pertinent information (high school, guidance counselor and contact information, academic honors and awards etc.).

Next, build the athletic side of your profile and maintain a similar format. Chances are this side of the profile could be loaded with a lot of information, but remain diligent and streamline the athletic side to remain even with the academic side. Note the position you play, high school and club coach and contact information, athletic awards and specific athletic statistics as it pertains to your sport. Additionally, it will assist you to list specific camps and tournaments you have recently attended and any awards you received.

### **Testimonials/Mission Statement**

Brief as it may be, I feel that a personal mission statement and a personal testimonial from the club/high school coach is a critical part of the athlete profile. I would keep each statement to no longer than 2-3 sentences and script the wording carefully and in a way that fairly presents the prospects strengths as both an athlete and team leader. College coaches look carefully at how prospects are viewed by their current team coaches. Additionally, they are looking for “self aware” individuals who bring a high level of confidence to the table.

The personal profile should act as the initial evaluation tool for the prospective student-athlete and your gateway to getting on the radar screen of the college coaches. The aim of the profile should be to provide as much vital information you can by using as little space as possible. Remember, you want to convince the coach to move your profile into the active recruiting file, and simplifying the job for the coach by making this an “easy read” will make the difference.

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