

## **U16 (Sophomore Year): Initiate Contact and Continue Research**

Players in the midst of their sophomore year of high school need to continue much of the work that they began during their freshman year. In addition, players should begin identifying schools that could potentially fit their academic, social, and athletic aspirations and initiate contact with the respective coaches of these schools. Finally, be prepared to deal with the prospect of speaking to coaches who show an interest in you as a person and player.

*-Begin Narrowing Your List:* Go back through the list of schools that you began to assemble during your freshman year of high school. Do any schools no longer fit your future goals? Are there any that you omitted that could be added? This can be determined based upon your interest in various majors/areas of study, your academic performance (GPA, class rank, etc.), and the distance from home you wish to go to school. Begin narrowing your list so that you can hone in on the schools that you might begin to contact.

*-Develop a Player Profile:* When it comes time to contact the coaches of schools you might be interested in, you will want to have a detailed player profile prepared so that coaches who may not have seen you will have some background information on your academic and athletic achievements. You will want to include this profile in any initial e-mails that you send to coaches and bring it with you to any tournaments/showcases you may attend. There will be a sample player profile on the Galaxy Soccer Club website shortly. Information that should be added to this profile includes the following:

- Basic Information and Contact (name, address, phone number, e-mail, etc.)
- Academic Information (school, address, GPA, test scores, class rank, etc.)
- Athletic Information (for club and for high school, team name, level of competition, position(s), uniform number, awards, coach contacts, etc.)
- References: typically coaches that you are close to and comfortable with
- Photo: should be a head shot so that coaches can identify you on the field

*-Initiate Contact With Coaches:* during your sophomore year, you should begin to contact coaches from schools that you may be interested in. You can find the contact information for each coach by accessing the school's athletic website and going through the staff directory. A simple google search can often bring you to the appropriate page. Once you have the appropriate e-mail addresses, you can begin to form an introductory e-mail. In this message, you should focus on introducing yourself: who are you, where are you from, and what is your athletic/academic background. In addition, be sure to state your interest in the school and the soccer program. If you know something unique about the school or program, this will help separate you from the hundreds of other e-mails these coaches receive (did the team make the playoffs, is there a player on their roster from your area, etc.). Anything you can add to this e-mail that will help show an interest will benefit you. Be sure to include your player profile and any tournaments that you may be attending soon. Be professional and have your parents check for grammatical errors, but be sure to write the letter yourself. Coaches do not want to communicate with your parents. You will be the one they are working closely with for four years and you are the one they

want to get to know. After contacting these coaches, feel free to fill out a "Prospect Questionnaire" on each program's website if available.

*-Attend College Camps:* a great way to put yourself in front of college coaches and interact with them on a personal level is to attend various college camps. These camps allow college coaches to actually work with players throughout the duration of the event. However, they are not allowed to speak to athletes during the camp about potentially attending their particular school. Typically, the host college will bring in a variety of coaches from other schools as well. This allows athletes to put themselves in front of several coaches over the course of the camp. This is a very beneficial opportunity for prospective college athletes.