

U17 (Junior Year): Maintain Contact, Narrow Your List, and Visit Schools

Junior year is typically a very important year within the college recruitment process. As a U17 player, you can expect to see more and more college coaches at your games and tournaments and can expect to see more contact being initiated by coaches potentially interested in you as a player. In addition to managing this interest and beginning the application process, there are several things you need to be doing to continue along the college search trail:

-Maintain Contact: touch base with those coaches who you may have already sent introductory e-mails to. You will want to remind coaches of your interest in their program and will want to continue to inform them of events that you will be playing in to allow them ample time to see you play. As with the introductory e-mail, be sure to try to separate yourself and make each e-mail unique (if the coach is in the midst of their fall season, comment on a recently played game of his/hers). In addition, be sure to reply to any e-mails that you may receive from coaches in a prompt fashion. Whether you maintain an interest in the school or not, be sure to reply to any/all e-mails you receive. By doing this, you ensure that coaches know that you are interested in them and that they should continue contact with you, or that you are not interested in them and that they should spend their time elsewhere.

-Narrow Your Search: continue to narrow down your list of potential schools. By this time, your academic profile should be fairly developed with your GPA and test scores you may receive during your junior year (ACT/SAT). Begin to take an honest look at the academic standard of the schools that you are interested in, and determine whether or not they are plausible options for you from an admittance standpoint. In addition, this is a time when you can begin determining what NCAA Division best suits you and your athletic aspirations. We will have a list of some of the differences between NCAA Divisions I, II, III, and NAIA on the Galaxy Soccer Club website shortly.

-Arrange Campus Visits: junior year is a good time to begin visiting schools that may interest you. There are varying degrees of campus visits from exploratory to overnight. A good start and a cost effective way of investigating schools would be to investigate which colleges may be nearby when you are away at tournaments with your Galaxy SC team. Stop by the campus and look around. Get a feel for what different campuses look like as this will have an effect on whether or not you could see yourself living there for four years. Once you have narrowed your list of schools, you can begin to inquire with college coaches as to whether you can spend a night at the schools with members of the soccer team. This will give you a better idea of the make-up of the team as these will be individuals that you spend a great deal of time with during your college tenure. Other items that you will want to address on a college visit could include a meeting with the coach, watching a game, a meeting with an admissions or financial aid counselor, a campus tour, or even sitting in on a class in a major/program of interest. "Official Visits" to DI and DII programs are typically paid for by the school. However, most visits will have to be covered by you and your family.