

If it quacks like a duck ... and it walks like a duck ... it MUST be a duck!

We like to say, "If it spends like a scholarship ... and if it's yours to keep without interest or ever having to pay it back ... it MUST be a scholarship."



This article will help you evaluate and work around the differences in types of colleges and the sports they fund. A key factor in our success helping over 1 million families is understanding and using the UNIQUE advantage student athletes create by achieving excellence in BOTH the classroom and the playing field ... and then focusing on the schools that want to recruit someone at their level.

What are five kinds of money that a college can include in the student athlete's financial aid package?

1. Athletic Scholarships (prestigious but limited)
2. Merit Scholarships (infinitely large fund)
3. Work/Study jobs (thinly disguised grant)
4. Grants (need never be repaid)
5. Debt (principle and interest may be forgiven)

What are the five American college affiliations?

1. NCAA Division I*
2. NCAA Division II
3. NCAA Division III*
4. NAIA (much less regulated than NCAA)
5. NJCAA (Junior colleges are stepping stones)

Which do NOT offer athletic* scholarships?

The Eight Division I Ivy League institutions (Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, Penn, Princeton, Yale) and NCAA Division III share the philosophy that academics, not athletics, should be their dominant theme.

However, they all love to play and WIN. Many simply repackage funds as Merit Scholarships ... so don't exclude them without evaluating financial aid packages.

It is important to note that the Ivys include your personal expenses, clothing allowance and transportation costs in their estimates before calculating the financial aid package. Always compare bottom lines.

Why is the COMBINATION of excellence in BOTH academics and athletics so important?

Admissions offices are flooded with applicants. The demand far exceeds the supply because there has been virtually no new capacity added, while applicants have grown 30% since the 80s. Some schools accept only 15% of applicants and are proud of their brutal selectivity.

The college coach can be your best friend, if you have realistically matched your qualifications with his/her recruiting requirements. Just go where they want you.

Why are good grades so important to a coach?

Athletic scholarships are limited by affiliation (example: 9.9 full soccer scholarships in men's DI) and could be reduced (to say 6) by a college's bean counters. Bring good grades and you become more recruitable because you help the coach stretch his athletic scholarships budget by giving you part Merit and part Athletic money.

Can Club sports be as valuable as Varsity sports?

Varsity sports are those that are sanctioned by the affiliation (e.g. NCAA) have coaches, travel & equipment budgets and travel to compete. Unless they are Ivy League or Div. III, all varsity sports programs generally offer some athletic scholarships.

But what if your sport is not sanctioned by the affiliation or is not yet sufficiently developed to be funded by your target college as a varsity sport?

Many emerging sports like women's ice hockey, synchronized swimming, fencing, squash, handball, rugby, scuba, crew and even "ultimate" frisbee are making the transition from intramural to club to varsity. Intramural teams usually play on campus, while club teams may play on campus and travel to face other college teams.

Think about it. If a club sport has a coach and an operating budget, at your target college, it is really no different than an Ivy League or DIII school, i.e., it simply has no athletic money, but does have merit, work/study grants and debt ... and a coach who may recruit you!

We think rugby will soon be a varsity sport. There are 430 men's college rugby teams ... with Cal Berkeley the clear standout ... National Champs 20 times since the 80s.

And the supply of qualified college level rugby players is growing. Today there are over 490 US High School and U-19 National Teams producing college freshmen with more than four years rugby playing experience.

Sports Endeavors (parent of EUROSPORT) offers quality rugby gear and information via its catalog and website. See page 32 for more information.