

## What College Coaches Need or Want to Know About Recruits

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First, water polo is not like Football or Basketball. Most college programs have only one coach who really is qualified by the NCAA to recruit and most college coaches are so busy coaching they really don't have a lot of free time to deal with recruiting until their season is over. Second, with gender equity and the growth of female sport there is not much money out there for water polo financial aid. While the number of high schools playing water polo is increasing the number of colleges with varsity polo teams is down to 43 from a high of 57. Of the 43 only 12 have any financial athletic support to offer.

Every year I get between 90 and 110 water polo athletes from the USA writing me and most of them want or feel they should be getting financial aid. On top of this I get probably 10 to 12 from foreign athletes looking for a way to come and get a free education in the USA. I am sure that universities like UCLA, USC, UCB, Stanford, Pepperdine etc. get as many, if not more, letters like this than I do. Many of the same players write to all the major water polo schools but I am sure there is at least 500 seniors out there who have the size and speed to play water polo at the college level if they get good coaching when they get there. This is one reason why college teams are so close and why no one program can dominate any longer.

What college coaches need to know about incoming freshmen is not what many players send out. What you should write me and what I believe most coaches want to know: Name, address, phone number, E-mail number, FAX number, Social security number, date of birth, name and address of your high school. This is information needed for NCAA clearing house clearance.

Academic record. GPA in numbers, ie, 3.1. Give both a straight GPA and then a weighted GPA. A list of all your classes would be nice from 9th-12th grades. SAT scores and the SAT II scores. Make sure you tell what level math you took, I or II. In water polo most coaches want good students or students that they know can make it through the University. If you are below a 3.0, I want a list of classes and grades so I know if I can special action you.

Size and weight are important. Just like basketball and football size and weight have become more and more important in water polo.

Swimming times are important. The game is played in the water and speed in the water is a very objective measure and very important to success. The level of competition varies greatly from area to area and league to league so being all league or even All American is pretty subjective but swimming times are very objective. I know I would be much more interested in what you can hold swimming 10 X 100 on the 1:20 or 1:15 than know you were first team all league. Key times are 50, 100, 200, 500 free, 100 back breast, fly and 200 IM are all worthwhile. A good 200 IM time might have more value to playing water polo than any other time but I think that is a matter of opinion. I don't know about other coaches but I would like to know how many times you can chin yourself, how many bar dips you can do, and how many times you can bench press your body weight plus how many sit ups you can do in 5 minutes with your knees bent and some one holding your feet. Again these are objective measures.

I am not really interested in video tapes of you playing because I don't know who you are playing against and what the level of competition is. Most of the time I know if you are on the Jr National team; but if the team you are on has done well in the National JO that means something.

I would like to know what kind of work ethics you have as I believe the key to success everywhere is self discipline and self motivation but I have never found a good way to find this out before you come to my school. However if you can repeat well in swim series and can chin yourself 20 times and do 30 bar dips and 200 sit ups and have good grades you must have spent some time working at these so you must be pretty self disciplined and self motivated or so it seems to me.

These are the things I believe coaches want to know, at least these are the things I want to know. It would be nice if we had the staff to see players play and go around and really check on who can play and who can not but water polo just doesn't have enough coaching staff to find those things out. You are going to be lucky to just get into a big time program at a good school so you have the opportunity to prove yourself.

Put your coaches phone number down so college coaches can phone and find out about you from your high school or club programs. A letter from a high school teacher can also be worth while.

Good Luck!

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