



I. OPENING THOUGHTS

- a. There is place for everyone (all ability levels) → It comes down to where your academic, athletic, and social needs intersect
- b. Swimming can potentially open doors for you → In many cases, athletes can be admitted to colleges/universities that would not gain entrance to on their own merits
- c. Be realistic in your approach
 - i. It typically requires sacrifice → the perfect situation rarely exists
 - ii. This search is about you, not your family and/or friends
 - iii. Identify where you can make an impact over where you can participate
- d. Try to keep emotion out of the process → Ignore the noise (teammates, parents/relatives, social media, SwimSwam, etc.)
- e. Ask for help! → You are not on your own – use the resources available to you
- f. Speed up early, so you can slow down later → Be willing to do the leg work (like another class)

II. HOW TO PREPARE

- a. Prior to completion of sophomore year
 - i. Work hard in school and establish good study habits → build a foundation for the future
 - ii. Grow your communication skills with teachers and coaches → parents need to support this
 - iii. Invest in practice attendance (attendance precedes reward in swimming)
 - iv. Learn to be a great teammate
 - v. Make good choices → especially with social media
 - vi. Parents and athlete should work together to shape preferences early in the process
 - vii. Zoom out → keeping perspective and using the 10,000 ft approach is best early on → specificity will come later
 - viii. Begin to research schools
 1. Fields of study and potential majors
 2. Average entrance requirements
 3. Location / size of enrollment / social life
 4. Cost of attending
 5. Where can you contribute?
 6. Team's history of improvement
 7. Team's GPA
 - ix. Make the initial list (the more options the better)



1. Reaches
2. Right in your wheelhouse
3. Safeties

III. RESOURCES

- a. NCSA – good basic information → differences between NCAA divisions

IV. COACHING PERSPECTIVES

- a. Rich Murphy – University of Tennessee
 - i. Club Coach feedback and our team's impressions of the prospective student-athlete (PSA) have an influence in our evaluation. The club coach has the clearest sense of how coachable the athlete is and how frequently the PSA operates with a growth mindset. The team will pick up a good sense of whether someone is a fit following a visit and time spent with the team.
 - ii. We consider success in long course meters and short course yards when considering potential fits.
 - iii. Freshman and Sophomore year dual meet opportunities are often linked to your ability to swim multiple events well. The team will likely have a 'best' person in your primary event when you start. Versatility in events is very helpful when it comes to creating opportunities to race in dual meets and to travel in the first couple of years.
 - iv. We can take 24 to an SEC dual meet, 22 to our conference championship and 18 to NCAA championships (these numbers include divers, however for NCAA's each diver counts as .5).
 - v. In college you are swimming for points more than times. How can you maximize your point scoring contributions and lean into your role on the team?
 - vi. There is only one 'fastest swimmer' on a college team. The ability to fill another role other than that role is very important. Roles like 'best at making others better', 'best at giving race effort', 'best at making teammates better', 'best at sticking do a meet process', 'best at receiving coaching and peer feedback', 'best in the classroom', 'best at community service', 'best at making athletic changes', etc., are all valuable roles the team needs fulfilled.
- b. Bryan Peresie – University of Akron
 - i. The commitment at Akron and other division 1 schools (P5 or Non P5) is the same. We all require the same amount of time and training.
 - ii. How long has a coach been at that school and why do they stay?



- iii. Its far more important that you are comfortable in your environment than how the big the school is that you attend. Studies show that feeling like you “belong” is important for someone to be successful.
 - iv. Successful people can be successful anywhere...that is a powerful statement.
 - v. Ask yourself the question...is my ego getting in the way of me making a good decision. Am I only looking at bigger schools so my friends, parents, aunt, uncle, etc. think I am good? Be careful to not let what others might think about your decision influence your decision. They might not understand that swimming is not like football. And just because they went to XYZ State University or they are a big fan, it doesn't mean that XYZ State University is the best school for you.
 - vi. Who will be coaching you? At some larger programs you might think the head coach is coaching you...but the reality is they are not. They might only oversee the entire program and have very little day to day interaction with you.
- c. Ryan McCoy – University of Indianapolis
- i. Focus on athletic success as well as academic success. Encouraging environment to succeed at both levels
 - ii. Opportunity to more easily develop global relationships with teammates (more international athletes at the D2 level than D1)
 - iii. More opportunities to score and participate in championship level meets (conference, NCAA, high caliber mid season invites)
 - iv. D2 schools are usually smaller campuses, so an increased opportunity to be more involved and develop relationships with professors and other working professionals in a certain field
 - v. D2 schools usually have a couple of niche majors and fields of studies along with your general business, biology, pre-med, etc. fields. If you're looking into a very specific major of study, a D2 school could be the way for you to do what you want to do, and still compete at a very high level.
- d. Jon Howell – Emory University
- i. D3 offers a very diverse range of academic and athletic choices. There is a school and swimming program out there in D3 for every swimmer.
 - ii. A greater emphasis on academic and athletic balance. Students- Athletes can thrive in both, and don't need to compromise one for the other.
 - iii. No limitations academically. D3 student-athletes typically graduate in four years and all majors are generally available.



- iv. More opportunities for a wider range of athletes to compete at the NCAA National Level, and contribute to a team championship beyond the conference level.
- v. Opportunities to get involved on campus beyond the pool and classroom. Greek life, clubs, study abroad, etc are options for D3 student-athletes.

V. RECRUITING TIMELINES

a. Division 1

- i. JUNE 15TH AFTER COMPLETION OF SOPHOMORE YEAR
 - 1. Coaches can have correspondence/private messages (email, text, direct messages via social media) with recruit
 - 2. Coaches can accept incoming phone calls from recruits
 - 3. Coaches can place outgoing phone calls to recruits
 - 4. Coaches can make a verbal offer of roster spot, scholarship, etc.
- ii. AUGUST 1ST PRIOR TO JUNIOR YEAR
 - 1. Coaches can contact athletes off campus
 - 2. Recruits are permitted to take official visits
 - 3. Recruits are permitted to take unofficial visits

b. Division 2

- i. **Non-recruiting materials:** Athletes can receive brochures for camps, questionnaires, NCAA materials and non-athletic recruiting publications at any time.
- ii. **Printed recruiting materials:** Starting June 15 after an athlete's sophomore year, coaches can begin sending recruits printed recruiting materials.
- iii. **Telephone calls:** Starting June 15 after an athlete's sophomore year, coaches can start calling athletes.
- iv. **Off-campus contact:** Coaches can conduct off-campus communications with athletes and/or their parents starting June 15 after an athlete's sophomore year.
- v. **Unofficial visits:** Athletes can take unofficial visits at any time.
- vi. **Official visits:** Athletes may start taking official visits starting June 15 after an athlete's sophomore year.

c. Division 3

- i. **Recruiting materials:** Athletes can receive recruiting materials at any time.
- ii. **Telephone calls:** There is no limit on when college coaches can call athletes.
- iii. **Digital communications:** There is no limit on when college coaches can contact athletes digitally.
- iv. **Off-campus contact:** After the athlete's sophomore year, college coaches may begin to conduct off-campus communications.



- v. **Official visits:** Athletes can begin taking official visits after January 1 of their junior year.
- vi. **Unofficial visits:** Athletes can make an unlimited number of unofficial visits at any time.

VI. VISITS

a. Unofficial visits

- i. Visit to a college/university campus that is not financed at all by the institution. Recruits can interact with coaches, the team, and administrators. There is no limit to the number of Unofficial Visits a recruit can take. They can be a great tool to learn more about a school early in the active process, especially for local schools. Easy to knock out a few schools in a long weekend.

b. Official Visits

- i. Visit to a college/university that is financed by the host institution, including transportation, meals, and housing. The trip is limited to 48 consecutive hours on campus (may come in early and stay at hotel). Parents may accompany their child at their own expense. Pro tip for parents: don't go. **There are no longer limits on the number of official visits you can take**

VII. SCHOLARSHIPS

a. MEN'S

- i. At the Division 1 level, over 130 universities have swim teams for men. There are a maximum of 9.9 scholarships available per team to be divided among the athletes.
- ii. At the Division 2 level, nearly 70 universities have swim teams for men. There are a maximum of 8.1 scholarships available per team to be divided among the athletes.

b. WOMEN'S

- i. At the Division 1 level, nearly 200 universities have swim teams for women. There are a maximum of 14.0 scholarships available per team to be divided among the athletes.
- ii. At the Division 2 level, over 80 universities have swim teams for women. There are a maximum of 8.1 scholarships available per team to be divided among the athletes.

- c. Division 3 schools (over 200) do not offer athletic based aid

VIII. SUGGESTED PERSONAL TIMELINE

a. EARLY SOPHOMORE YEAR

- i. Fill out online questionnaires (visit athletic website)
- ii. Email coaches your resume

b. END OF SOPHOMORE

- i. Have your initial list ready
- ii. Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center



- iii. SAT/ACT prep
- iv. Have “the money” talk
- c. JUNIOR YEAR
 - i. Narrow the list to 3-5 schools
 - ii. SAT/ACT
 - iii. Unofficial visits ☑ use long weekends/school breaks to hit local schools
 - iv. Official visits ☑ maybe 1-2 in fall, 1-2 in spring, keep 1-2 just in case ☑ this is a guide but don't be in a rush
 - v. May receive an offer
 - vi. Can give verbal commitment
- d. SENIOR YEAR
 - i. Don't panic! You can still do everything here as well.
 - ii. Signing day

IX. CLOSING THOUGHTS

- a. Parents and coaches should help, but the athlete needs to own this process
- b. Athletes and parents must be realistic with the intended outcome
- c. Find the school that checks YOUR boxes
- d. Don't compare
 - i. This is an individual journey... everyone's timeline and destination is different
 - ii. Comparing offers is like comparing apples and oranges
- e. You will know when you know
 - i. Don't rush the decision
 - ii. Make the decision for the right reason
 - iii. Ignore social media