



## **TIMELINE**

### **9th grade**

#### **July, August, September**

- Start high school and attend orientation. This will help you to become acclimated to high school life, and will also help you to understand what is expected of you.
- Meet your Guidance Counselor and set up schedule to take at least 16 NCAA Core Courses. The NCAA requires all students participating in NCAA athletics to achieve a certain minimum grade point average in specific designated courses. These courses must be completed prior to the conclusion of your senior year, or you may not be academically eligible to compete in NCAA athletics. Discuss with your counselor your academic strengths and weakness.
- Set academic plan. Develop good study habits. Study and get good grades, especially in your core classes. Strengthen your math and reading skills. The difference that good academic performance can make cannot be underestimated. You will find that there are many more schools willing to accept good students, and all schools will take a good student over a poorer student with equal athletic ability.
- Evaluate your time management skills. It is not easy to be a good student, a good athlete, and a good member of the community. Time must be allowed to accomplish these goals and to enjoy the social aspects of high school life. Allot your time appropriately.
- Research available extra curricular activities, join clubs, and volunteer in your community. Good citizenship and well developed social skills are also extremely attractive to college coaches. Do not underestimate the benefits of a well-rounded approach to student life.
- Explore possible community service opportunities through your school or area organizations like the American Red Cross, Habitat for Humanity, and the Hunger Coalition.

#### **October, November & December**

- Meet with your guidance counselor with your parents to discuss how you can improve academically. They can be a valuable asset in helping you through the process. By involving them, you increase your chances of success.

- Assess your strengths and weaknesses in sports and prepare an athletic plan to improve your performance. Be honest in this self-assessment and work hard to overcome your deficiencies.
- Discuss with your coaches what they think you need to work on to improve athletically. Coaches work harder for a motivated athlete. Ask for their advice and follow through. Ask for their opinion on what you need to do to become the best athlete you can be in your particular sport.
- Discuss obtaining statistical information and game films from your high school and/or club coach. Show your coach the statistical information that you can include in your SportsWorx Athlete Portfolio and ask for his advice as to how to compile this information on an ongoing basis.
- Play more than one sport and do not be afraid to play more than one position. Work out all year round. Lift weights, do agilities, and improve your quickness, speed, and flexibility.
- Begin to consider what schools you might be interested in. Think about what is important to you – the size of the school, playing time, academics, social environment, etc. Develop a preliminary list of schools. It is not too early to begin looking at schools and considering which ones might be a good fit for you.
- Write a letter to one college coach. Let him or her know that you are interested in the school and athletic program. This will help you learn how coaches communicate and what might be expected of you.
- Participate in community service.

### **January, February & March**

- Start a college file. Begin by making a list of roughly 20 schools you have a serious interest in. Include schools of all sizes and all levels of collegiate competition. Create a file for each of these schools and gather all available information. Look at the players at your position and see how you compare.
- Research and evaluate summer camps. Find out which coaches are working at which camps to maximize your exposure. These camps are an excellent opportunity to meet coaches, get to know them on a personal basis, and show them what you can do. Even if the coaches are not interested, they are part of a vast network and frequently communicate about athletes they have seen.
- Identify the NCAA Core Courses. Be sure that you are on track to complete the courses and maintain the requisite grade point average.
- Set athletic goals for the summer. Look at different areas of competition – AAU sports, Olympic Development Programs, Recreational Teams, etc. Select a team that will test you athletically and allow you sufficient competition to be able to improve.

## **April, May & June**

- Set your academic plan for the next year. Your parents and guidance counselor can a big help.
- Enter your statistics on the SportsWorx web site. Constantly update statistics, enter new activities, and list any awards you have won.
- Evaluate those schools looking at your SportsWorx Athlete Profile. You will find coaches who have entered a search inquiry that fits you. Learn about these schools, and begin the process of evaluation, considering athletic, academic, and social criteria.
- Pick colleges to visit and begin taking unofficial visits to schools. An unofficial visit is one which you undertake on your own initiative and is paid for by you or your family. During unofficial visits, you are free to visit with coaches. Be sure to contact them before you try to schedule a visit.
- Meet with counselor to review your progress and goals for the next year.
- Obtain a letter of reference from your coach and guidance counselor to post on the SportsWorx web site.
- Attend at least one college camp. Try to select a camp where you can meet coaches from the schools you are interested in.