



Colorado United Soccer

Recruiting Game Plan

(in partnership with Scouting Zone and College Fit Finder)

“Developing Players for Life”

Colorado United Soccer is excited to share the following 4-week college recruiting plan, courtesy of ScoutingZone and in partnership with College Fit Finder, as a complimentary resource to players during this period of widespread postponements and cancellations. Please refer to the **Resources** list on the last page of the document for instructions on how to best utilize Colorado United’s College Program. Feel free to also reach out to Chris Smith, Director of College Relations: chris@littletonsoccer.net for further support.

Week 1: Building Your Top 20 List

Take the first week to create your Top 20 College List based upon the criteria below. Create a pros and cons list, as you uncover details about various colleges to build your list. This will be your target list you work off of for the next four weeks. Remember: The majority of the colleges on your list should be realistic options both athletically and academically.

Financial aspects: Consider tuition - both in-state and out-of-state - and the percentage of students receiving financial aid.

Academic aspects: Evaluate the SAT, ACT and GPA requirements. Be realistic when evaluating your grades. Academics & college experience should be put before soccer. What major are you interested in and does the school offer it? Can you academically get into this institution?



Social atmosphere: Super important! If you didn't play soccer, would you still want to be at this college? Note other interests that you have such as Greek life, clubs or activities outside of soccer.

Soccer program: Is it a realistic match? Look at the current team, alumni, style of play, social media handles, coaching staff and current players' youth playing bios to help determine if you can realistically play there.

Athletic program: Take time to research the entire athletic program, including other sports they offer and facilities/support they provide to athletes.

Size of school: Public or private? Large 4-year? Small 4-year? Big city or small town? Are you a small private or big football team kind of person?

Division: Make sure to consider ALL divisions (Div I, Div II, Div III, NAIA, junior college) - even those that may be outside of your initial thoughts. You will be surprised at the variety of opportunities out there.

Geographical location: Beach or mountains? Do you like seasons or unchanging weather? Do you prefer a school close to home, or are you looking for a brand new experience in a completely different place?

Quality of life: Evaluate the quality of life, scholastic intensity and then soccer.

✓ Your To-Do : Write down your top 20 schools and make sure to add them to your college list on CollegeFitFinder.com. Congrats! you just created your recruiting list and will be working off this in the coming weeks!



Week 2: Emailing College Coaches

Your Week 2 objective is to start connecting with college coaches that are on your Top 20 list. Email. Email. Email. Remember, they are hunkered down, too, and welcome recruits reaching out to them. This "downtime" is a HUGE opportunity to make an impact. Think about it: right before a big tournament, coaches receive hundreds of emails. Today, they are probably only receiving a few per day. You can make an impact and stand out *more* by emailing today, and they actually have time to open all their emails now.

Email is personalized: When coaches receive an email from a recruit, they want to know that it is NOT a copy/paste to every coach across the country. There should be something personal to show genuine interest. Keep it brief, yet informative, authentic AND personal. Tell them why you are interested in attending their college and being a part of their team.

Players should write the email (not the parent): Coaches want to hear from you, not from your parents or via a database email system. Also, make sure your email address is professional, containing your name and grad year, if possible. (*NO: partygirl@hotmail.com; YES: Aubrey.Jones2023@gmail.com*)

Include your upcoming tournaments/games: When things return to normal and we all get back on the field (yippee; can't wait!), you can include when/where you will be playing next, including game details.

Interested college major: Many schools have very specialized majors, so coaches will narrow their player search to those specific majors.

GPA: Noting your GPA is always important, especially if it's stellar. Most highly academic schools aren't able to recruit a player lower than their school GPA standard (Ex: 3.6+). If you do have a stellar GPA, it can be advantageous to the soccer program, because perhaps you would qualify for an academic scholarship instead of having to use soccer scholarship money.



✓ **Your To-Do:** Send one email to every college program within your Top 20 list. Create a folder within your email account labeled "recruiting emails," and save your sent emails there, so that you can keep track and properly follow up.

Example email template:

Dear [Coach's Name],

My name is [Your Full Name], I am part of the class of [Your Graduating Class] at [Your High School] in [Your Hometown and State] and play for Colorado United [Your Club Team Name]. I am interested in [The Name of The University] and learning more about your program.

[Include information here about the research you did into their program]

I play [List your position or best events here and the name of your team]. Some of my best accomplishments to date are [list your top two or three best times, awards or recognitions]. You can view my complete online profile here [Link to your online profile if you have one]. Here is a link to my highlight tape [link to your online highlight tape]. Please feel free to contact my coach(s) [List the email and phone number for your high school and/or club team coach]. Here is my schedule:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Name of Event</u>	<u>My Team Name</u>
5/25/2020	Denver, CO	Real Cup	Nor-Cal All-Stars

[List your GPA and test scores here if you have taken them]. [Talk about what you like about the academic reputations of the school].

I will be following up this email with a phone call. I look forward to hearing back from you and learning more about your program.

Sincerely,

[Your Name, Email, Phone, & Address]



Week 3: Create a Highlight Video

During Week 3, begin gathering your game highlights over the past six months to compile into a reel. Right now, since you are unable to play in front of college coaches, highlight videos/clips have become an important part of the recruiting process. By sending coaches your highlights, you are still staying in front of coaches. Here are some things to consider when creating your highlight video:

Keep it short (3-5 minutes): Highlight videos should be just that: your highlights - not entire games, just clips showing your special moments. If they are kept within 3-5 minutes, they will likely watch most of your video. If it is too lengthy, you will bore them and they will move on. The main intention of your highlight video is to pique an interest. It's rare a player is offered a scholarship solely off of a video. However, your video gives the coach an idea if you are someone they want to continue tracking and see play live. Or a highlight video can remind them who you are after they have already seen you play.

Keep it positive: Show your positives. This is not the time to show that you're human and make mistakes. Leave your bloopers off the reel and wow them with your talent.

Intro to your video: A few must-haves at the start: name, team, league/level, jersey #, grad year and your email/your coach email. Something to consider including: a quick 5-10 second intro of you speaking can show personality and put a face to the player on the video. It's nice to have a personal touch to help you stand out and give the coach a look at you, the person. This is definitely not a must-have, but rather nice to add, if it seems fitting to you.



Make it relevant to your position: It's helpful to have "sections" in the video that are specific to you/your position. For example: if you are a forward, you can have sections for: (i.e., Goals, Assists, Movement off the ball, & Set Pieces)

Make yourself visible: Remember, the scout doesn't know who you are. Add a circle, arrow, light or some indication other as to which player they should be watching. Even if you indicate your jersey # at the start, they are not going to scan the field for your jersey # on each clip. Make it very obvious who you are on every clip.

Music: If you are going to use music, make sure it is tasteful, and definitely without profanity.

Cost: There are many resources and options to help create a video. However, through College Fit Finder, Colorado United takes care of the fee for you. Make sure to access the video function [HERE](#) .Many players create great videos themselves. You just need clear clips showing your highlights; you're not looking to win an Oscar.

✓ Your To-Do: Write down what you want the coaches to see about you. A coach has only a few minutes to make a decision on you, so what do you want to come across as you, the player? Make sure your video contains the important aspects noted above and that it is produced in a shareable link.



Week 4: Follow Up

Week 4 will be your chance to circle back with another touch point to your Top 20 College List. Your highlight video may now be complete, which is a perfect reason to follow up. And if it's not quite done yet, even sending them a teaser with a few clips is a great reason to touch base with them again. Whatever your reason, it's important to use this "downtime" to get on their radar and the perfect way to do so is through consistent communication.

Club Coach Utilization: Club coaches are an extremely important resource, yet are under-utilized in this process. You definitely should rely on your coach for guidance in this process; they know you well as a player and a person. You have a unique opportunity to use this "downtime" to really utilize your club coach. Schedule a 1-on-1 coaching call with them to discuss these three main items:

1. *Review Top 20 College List:* does your list realistically match your athletic ability? Do you have reach schools and safe schools on your list?
2. *Review Your Highlight Clips/Video:* does your video/clips represent you as a player? Are you using the right footage to showcase your best moments?
3. *Developmental Areas for Improvement:* areas to work on to prepare for college soccer level; how can you prepare for the next level? What aspect of your game can you improve upon?
 - *NOTE: Make any adjustments to your Top 20 College List based upon feedback from your club coach.*

Follow-up email to college coaches: Go back to your email folder that you created labeled "recruiting emails" and reply to the emails that you initially sent with an updated personalized note. A great practice is to use the same email chain, so the coaches can see the previous info you sent.

How often should I email? There isn't a magic number of how often you should reach out. But what we can say... players that reach out more frequently have a better chance of being remembered and their emails read. Sending 1-2 emails in an entire year makes it difficult for a coach to remember you. Have different touch points/reasons to reach back out. If you really want them to remember you and truly know your interest level, you must make yourself visible.

✓ **Your To-Do : It's time to send a follow-up email. Refer back to your email folder "Recruiting Emails" and your Top 20 College List and make sure that every coach gets a follow-up/personalized email from you that includes your highlight video or a teaser clip that gives them an idea of the type of player you are.**



Resources

[College Fit Finder](#) ←---- Click Here

[Colorado United Soccer College Fit Finder Checklist](#) ←---- Click Here

[Video Editing](#) ←---- Click Here

[Colorado United College Recruiting Resource Page](#) ←---- Click Here