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IMPORTANT FEBRUARY RECRUITING DATES

4: Football (regular) initial signing date for National Letter of Intent

4: Field Hockey, Soccer and Men's Water Polo initial signing date for National Letter of Intent

7: ACT Test

10: SAT registration postmark date for March 14th test

24: SAT late registration postmark date for March 14th test.

27: ACT registration postmark date for April 4th test.

Recruiting Topic of the Month

Create Leverage – Respond to Every Coach / Close No Doors!

Ave Maria University is a five-year-old Catholic school located in Naples, Fla. According to the school's web site, when the doors opened in 2003, it became the first new Catholic University in the USA in 50 years. Its founder is Thomas S. Monaghan, who formerly owned the Domino's Pizza chain and gave \$250 million dollars to get the school up and running. Ave Maria offers six varsity athletic programs and competes in the NAIA. Ave Maria is the very definition of a school seeking its identity. It partly explains the e-mail, which we received from women's basketball coach Bob Batson recently.

Coach Batson wrote, ***“Could you possibly help me with a question I have. On December 16th, I emailed 10-12 2009 graduating female basketball players***

and indicated my interest in recruiting them to come to AMU, get an education and play basketball for us. I used the email address listed in their (CPOA profile). I presume this is set up just for this purpose. I have not had a response from any of the players. Is this normal?

Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!

It's not just the "new" schools like Ave Maria, of course, that our clients often fail to respond to. Too often, if it's a school the student has never heard of, they regard contact from the institution as unimportant. "I'm not going to go there!", they say. But that's not the point and everyone who represents CPOA understands and knows why!

Therefore, I am going to continually hammer home the concept of leverage with my clients. You need to understand the importance of the question, "Who else are you hearing from?"

I realize that many of you will eventually draw a radius in which you intend to focus on the schools in that area, which are recruiting you. That is fine, but you still need leverage!

You still need inquiries and offers from schools that you may never consider attending if for no other reason than to have an offer to use as a bargaining chip for the school that you want to go to that may not be making you the best offer.

Often times a coach will try and "low ball" their offer to you in an attempt to save money, thinking that you will jump at the chance to play there. Often times many people do and leave money on the table.

Remember from our initial meeting " Respond to every school – close no doors "

Make this your new mantra, "Thou shalt not ignore an inquiring college coach!"

RECENT ADDITIONS TO CPOA Pennsylvania

Jeff Quail – Baseball – Mars HS

Tara Gorndt – Volleyball – Moon HS

Christopher Karns – Football – Mars HS

NCAA News

National Signing Date in February

National Letter of Intent signing day for football, soccer, field hockey, men's water polo and track & cross-country begins February 4th.

Football players may sign a National Letter of Intent through April 1st. Athletes in the other sports technically have until August 1st to sign.

There are always a few questions about the Letter of Intent that we field every year. Remember only schools in NCAA Division I and NCAA Division II participate in the National Letter of Intent program. Schools in other divisions or associations may use an "Institutional" letter of intent, but it does not carry the same "commitment weight" as the National Letter of Intent document. The National Letter of Intent is "double binding", meaning it's a one-year contract between the university and the student-athlete that obligates the athlete to the school with which he/she signs. An Institutional commitment letter is binding only on the school to provide the agreed-upon financial aid package to the student-athlete. The athlete can change his/her mind without penalty of sitting out a year with the institutional letter.

A National Letter of Intent is a commitment to a college, not a coach. A common misconception is a student can change his mind if a coach leaves a program. He can, but he would be subject to transfer rules. It may not necessarily be a penalty-free transition.

NCAA Convention Notes

It says a lot that the major legislative announcement from the 2009 NCAA Convention was not a new directive on eligibility, graduation rates, or amateurism. The big news is that male basketball players in 7th grade are now considered "prospective student-athletes". This is the earliest designation ever assigned to prospects. Previously, prospects were not identified until their freshman year of high school.

Why the new rule for 7th graders? According to a press release from the NCAA, "It is intended to prevent Division I men's basketball coaches from being employed in non-scholastic elite camps conducted for seventh- and eighth-graders and to prevent institutions from conducting camps for that age group." The National Association of Basketball Coaches also urged passage of the resolution. In the past, many coaches have said they are not in favor of aggressively recruiting pre-teenage prospects, but the fact that some do puts them at a recruiting disadvantage.

For recruiting purposes, 7th grade boys may now receive questionnaires or camp brochures from Division I coaches. Coaches of women's teams or those in other NCAA divisions are not impacted by the new rule.

Proposals defeated in Division I include a plan to add one more scholarship for women's volleyball and a plan that would have allowed student-athletes in individual sports to accept prize money based on performance in events during all vacation periods.

Sports Sponsorships

Western Washington University, NCAA Division 2 in Bellingham, Wash., is disbanding its football program after 98 seasons.

Davis & Elkins College, NCAA Division 2 in Elkins, West Va., is adding four sports beginning in the fall of 2009: tennis for men and women and swimming for men and women.

North Georgia College & State University, NCAA Division 2 in Dahlonega, GA, is adding both men's and women's golf teams to play next fall. 1973 Masters champion Tommy Aaron is serving as honorary coach for the Saints' teams.

CPOAPA News

CPOA Clients Sign with Colleges

Lindsay Gruss – Swimming - Penn State Behrend

Matt Vogt – Golf – Butler University

Maria Montini – Basketball – University of Pittsburgh (Johnstown)

Chrissy Esachina – Swimming – United States Military Academy

Luke Niezelski – Swimming – Stevens Institute of Technology

Congratulations

CPOA client and Greater Latrobe Basketball standout Jeff Yunetz recently became the all leading scorer in school history. Ironically Jeff beat the mark set by former CPOA client Eric Mueseler.

CPOA client Ale Zozos of Vincentian Academy recently returned from The International Indoor Cup Softball Tournament held in the Netherlands.

CPOA clients Ale Zozos and Chelsy Cosentino of Kiski Area both participated in the Queen of Diamonds Softball Showcase held at Kent State University on January 3rd and 4th.

Speaking Circuit

Area Director Martin Rock will be speaking on the Myths and Realities of college recruiting at the following venues:

Laurel Highlands YMCA – Saturday, March 1st

Tom Alper Elite Football Camp (Robert Morris Bubble) – Saturday, February 21st

Strength Fitness and Speed (Court Time Sports Center Complex) - Sunday, March 2nd

CONTACT SHEETS

Remember to keep track of all questionnaires, calls, etc from college coaches with the contact sheets found in your STUDENT PACKET. Email me at martin.rock@cpoapa.com if you need additional copies!

NCAA ELIGIBILITY CLEARINGHOUSE

Every CPOA PA Student-Athlete has received a NCAA Guide for the College Bound Student Athlete as part of the STUDENT PACKET you received when you joined the program. In this guide, you find instructions on how to apply for your NCAA Eligibility Clearinghouse Number. Eligibility is based on what core courses have been completed, SAT scores and overall GPA in core courses. NCAA approved core courses, by high school, can be found at <http://actrs7.act.org/ahs>. STUDENTS APPLY FOR THEIR NCAA ECN AT THE END OF THEIR JUNIOR YEAR. HOWEVER, IT IS A GOOD IDEA TO REVIEW ELIGIBILITY AS EARLY AS THE SOPHOMORE YEAR TO ENSURE THE CORRECT COURSES HAVE BEEN COMPLETED! For more information about the process, email martin.rock@cpoapa.com for a NCAA Guide or call 888-ASK-CPOA (CPOA Program Members Only).

INTERNET UPDATES

If you have update information for your Internet profile, please forward to martin.rock@cpoapa.com. Remember that you automatically receive (2) two free updates per year. If you've upgraded your program to receive unlimited updates you can send updates every day/week if you'd like. Updates take approximately 72 hours to be made online.

REFERRAL PROGRAM

Do you know of a high school student athlete with the ability to perform at the collegiate level? A teammate from high school? Club team? From the newspaper? If so, contact your CPOA representative at martin.rock@cpoapa.com and if that athlete signs with CPOA PA, **you receive a \$50 referral fee!**

Season End Updates

Attention all fall sport athletes, your season end update forms which were mailed to you are **now overdue**. There are hundreds of coaches out there awaiting an update on your stats, awards and accomplishments from the past season. Please complete these and return to your CPOA representative immediately.

RECRUITING SEMINARS

CPOA Pennsylvania is planning to conduct several recruiting training sessions over the next few months. These sessions will include the basics of the recruiting process, how to choose the right college, review of NCAA rules and regulations, and how to best navigate this important process of college selection. Please let us know if you have interest in hosting one of these sessions for your teammates (students/parents) or teams/booster clubs (coaches).