ATHLETIC SCHOLARSHIP GUIDE

How athletic scholarships really work — and how to put yourself in the best position to earn one. Remember: the strongest recruit is a strong student.

KNOW THE LANDSCAPE

- ☐ Headcount sports (e.g., FBS football, basketball, volleyball, tennis, gymnastics) offer full scholarships only.
- ☐ Equivalency sports split scholarship money across the roster — partial scholarships are normal.
- ☐ Division III does not award athletic money, but academic merit aid can be significant.
- ☐ NAIA and junior college programs offer scholarships and can be a path to a four-year school.

MAXIMIZE YOUR CHANCES

- ☐ Start the recruiting process by sophomore or junior year — most rosters are largely filled before senior year.
- ☐ Protect your GPA: coaches recruit students they can admit and keep eligible.
- ☐ Keep your highlight film current and post it where coaches can view it without a password.
- ☐ Attend camps at schools that recruit your position, not just the biggest-name camps.

FINANCIAL AID & SCHOLARSHIPS

- ☐ Complete the FAFSA every year — it's required for most aid, athletic or not.
- ☐ Ask each coach exactly how much the scholarship covers and whether it includes summer school.
- ☐ Ask about stacking: can athletic money combine with academic and outside scholarships?
- ☐ Compare total cost of attendance, not just the scholarship amount, across your offers.

QUESTIONS TO ASK COACHES

Scholarship amount, duration, and renewal criteria:

What happens to my scholarship if I'm injured or redshirted?

Summer obligations, housing, and meal plans covered:

RED FLAGS — BE CAREFUL

- ☐ Never pay a service that 'guarantees' a scholarship — no one can guarantee that.
- ☐ Be cautious of pressure to commit immediately or sign anything you haven't read fully.
- ☐ Verify coaches are using official school email addresses, not personal ones, for offers.