Self-Marketing Timeline for Players

The following is a sample timeline for self-marketing to college programs and coaches; however, it can be adjusted depending on when you start. It is never too early or too late so “don’t sit there, do it.” My suggested timeline would be:

- May-June: Prepare an initial list of schools that you feel are of interest and seem realistic. Don’t be too limiting at this point, the list could be large. Establish a book or spread sheet to record info as you move forward.
- June: Prepare a short introductory email. I am happy to edit or offer suggestions. Send out the email before college coaches leave for the summer.
- July: Prepare a package to send to college coaches that includes the following: 1-2 page introductory letter, updated player profile, transcripts etc.
- August: Send out the packages before the season starts. Don’t be discouraged if the responses are minimal in the early going… it is a process.
- September: Look at possibly sending out a follow-up email.
- Ongoing: record all of this in your book as well as any responses or communication with coaches. Add and delete schools as we move forward.
- Ongoing: as the season progresses, send the college coaches updates on your season, links to game film, updated marks, results in college courses, recognition that comes along, etc.
- Midseason: as some schools show interest ask your coaches to make calls to these or other coaches. They must see a player doing some work and the player must feed them the names and contacts not just expect them to run around doing the work for the player.
- Late season: focus on schools that seem interested and those that realistically fit the player and student you are and the profile you are looking for. For some players this is when things get real and they become much more realistic in their expectations.
- Post season: if a commitment hasn’t yet been finalized consider visiting 3-4 of the most likely options
- Spring – Summer: schools often will make decisions very late unless a player is very high profile and in demand.

Factors in Decision-Making:

1. Education – does the school have academic/career options you are interested in and of sufficient quality?

2. Hockey – what are they looking for and what are you looking for, will you get a chance to play, do you fit the coach’s philosophy?

3. Cost – what are the total costs, how much is the school able/willing to help, scholarships, financial aid, what can you afford, is the value there for what you will have to pay?

4. Lifestyle – where do you want to live (big city, small town, urban, rural, Canada, US, etc.) and what does the school and community offer outside of school and hockey, quality of life, dorms, apartments, activities etc.?

5. Feeling – what is your heart telling you is the right fit?

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