



Women's College Recruiting Overview

The National Invitational Club committee in partnership with Karen Fong Donoghue, founder of The Rugger's Edge, compiled this brief overview to help players, parents and coaches better understand the opportunity for female rugby players to continue playing in college. It is an exciting time for girls' and women's rugby as it becomes as varsity level sport with a growing number of colleges and universities starting to offer admission spots and make scholarship dollars available for players.

To that end, we have reached out to invite a wide range of college coaches who represent a variety of programs to watch the teams compete. ***The biggest difference you as a player, parent, and/or coach will notice over the weekend, is that Varsity NCAA coaches are not allowed to speak with players until AFTER the tournament*** (see the list below of the 13 NCAA programs). Club and Varsity Club coaches do not have this restriction in place and will be able to connect with players over the course of the weekend.

Below is brief overview of the number of teams, type of teams and type of programs. For more comprehensive information please go to www.ruggersedge.com.

As of Fall 2015, the number of Women's Teams:

USAR Division I (DI-Elite, DI)	97
USAR Division II	155
Small College (NSCRO)	99

What's the difference between Varsity, Varsity Club and Club?

Team Designation: The main difference among Varsity, Varsity Club, or Club lies in what college department oversees the rugby program and often relates to how much financial and administrative support the team receives.

Varsity: Typically means that the rugby team is supported by the college or university's administration and is under the direction of the school's Athletics Department. These programs typically have also influence on the admissions process and some also have Athletic scholarship money (*but not all*). *Examples include: Army West Point, Dartmouth College (W), Central Washington University*

Varsity Club: Typically means that the rugby team comes under oversight of the Athletic Department and has more resources than their club counterparts, but are not held to full NCAA/NAIA rules/restrictions. *Examples: BYU, Penn State, Stanford and Lindenwood University*

Club: The majority of collegiate teams fall in this category and the level of competitiveness, support from the school and funding runs the full spectrum. *Examples: University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, UC San Diego, Texas A & M*

Team Type

Within the different designation of teams, there are also different levels of types of teams:

Social: These teams typically have volunteer and player coaches and do not have access to dedicated rugby fields. Many players pick up rugby while in college and are involved in many other groups on campus. *Examples include Lehigh University, University of Florida*

Competitive: Teams tend to be a mix of athletes who are new to rugby

as well as players who come in with years of experience at the high school level. *Examples include: UC Davis, James Madison University*

High Performance: HP programs generally require the type of commitment level you would expect for NCAA Division I mainstream sport such as American football, basketball or volleyball. *Examples include Army West Point, Norwich University, Harvard University*

NCAA Women's Rugby teams*

*As of February 2016, there are 14 Teams following NCAA rules and regulations:

Division I: Brown University, Dartmouth College, Harvard University, Quinnipiac University, Sacred Heart University, Army West Point

Division II: American International College, Central Washington University, Notre Dame College, West Chester University, Wheeling Jesuit University

Division III: Bowdoin College, Norwich University, University of New England

2 women's teams fall under the NAIA jurisdiction: www.naia.org

Davenport University and Life University

If you are a prospective player for an NCAA compliant university, you need to register through the NCAA Eligibility Center www.eligibilitycenter.org in order for those coaches to actively recruit you. For more information on the Eligibility Center you can download the "NCAA Guide for the College Bound Athlete" here: <http://www.ncaapublications.com/p-4354-2015-16-ncaa-guide-for-the-college-bound-student-athlete-sold-as-a-package-of-25.aspx?CategoryID=0&SectionID=0&ManufacturerID=0&DistributorID=0&GenreID=0&VectorID=0&>

A few NCAA Recruiting Guidelines to keep in mind during Nationals*

**source Dartmouth Athletics*

Recruiting Presentations

There are a plethora of recruiting rules in Division I, ranging from who a coach may interact with to the method in which they do it, and when. A main recruiting rule is that a coach may not have in-person contact with an individual who has not yet started their senior year in high school, off the campus of that coach's institution. So while a coach may go and *evaluate* (observe only) the athletic abilities of an individual of any age (otherwise the NCAA would have to invent some special eye blinders), they may not interact with anyone other than a senior while off-campus. The NCAA does allow, however, a coach to speak to groups of individuals, even those when individuals not yet seniors in HS are present, provided (1) the coach's involvement was initiated by an individual or entity other than that coach, (2) the event at which the coach is speaking at is conducted by an entity other than the coach's institution, and (3) the coach does not make a recruiting presentation in conjunction with the appearance. Therefore, during the event, a coach may only make presentations about generic information (e.g., Time demands of college student-athletes), and not ANYTHING about that coach's program or institution (e.g., Types of individuals they recruit, facilities, services offered, etc.). See NCAA bylaw 13.1.8.

Contact At Competitions

Along the off-campus, in-person contact with only seniors rule, the NCAA also governs *when* a coach may have those interactions. Specifically, the NCAA highly regulates the interactions with seniors around their competitions. The rules dictate that a coach is prohibited from making in-person contact with a recruit the entire day prior to a competition, during the competition, and up until that individual is "released by the appropriate institutional authority and departs the dressing and meeting facility." Meaning, once the kids are free to go home, the coach may then interact with them. If the competition(s) requires participation on consecutive days (e.g., a tournament), the same rules apply in that the coach may not make contact with the recruits (seniors only) until after the final contest on the final day, once released. See NCAA bylaw 13.1.6.

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