

Why Junior College May be Your Best Option

Episode 72 Shownotes

The both of us (Matt and Jacob) are very familiar with the junior college system having studied and competed at different junior colleges, and you also coached at a junior college, not to mention we now work in the world of college recruitment so you can call us experts.

As we move through this episode try and determine whether or not this is you. As we touch on different topics and make different points see if you can relate to it, because look, Junior College may very well be the best pathway for you and you just don't know it or realise it yet.

We will start first and foremost with academics. Obviously a very important component of this pathway. We will say it over and over again, you are a student before athlete.

Now, if you are out there listening and you are on B's and C's or lower in high school. Or you have a lower or failing SAT score, or you don't sit the SAT at all, then Junior College may very well be the best pathway for you. Now with a lower or failing SAT that doesn't mean Junior college is 'lower' or 'worse' than four-year colleges and universities when it comes to academics. So please don't get confused.

We will put it this way first. If you aren't passing classes in the US, you won't be competing, or training. You will be in the library studying. Why would you want to put yourself at risk of not competing or failing classes if you aren't a great student as it is coming out of high school.

The Junior College system is used as a stepping stone even for American student athletes that may not be the best students. Junior Colleges are smaller in student population meaning class sizes are smaller. Really between 15 to 30 students to a class. More one on one time with teachers. Essentially, it's a lot easier to adjust to full time study, full time sport and travel, and being away from home and it is easier to pass classes because of all of the support you have.

So athletically, If you want to go in and compete straight away, or at least give yourself the best chance to go in and compete straight away as a freshman. Maybe Junior College is the best pathway for you.

And look, we want to make this clear, even though it should be pretty clear. There is more chance to compete straight away at a junior college, but you still have to earn it. You aren't just given a position on the first team.

Now junior colleges are two-year schools. The turnover of athletes every year is huge. You are only competing for starting positions against freshman and sophomores. Again, you still have to earn a spot, but a coach is recruiting you because they think you can come in and make a difference straight away. You still have to show it however.

In four year colleges and Universities you may very well play in your first year. However, your chances are lower obviously. Kids that have been there for four years. Junior college is used as a stepping stone athletically the same way as it used academically. Get used to the system, find your feet, prove yourself and move on.

So if its important that you go in and compete for a starting position, or to get game time, tournament time, straight away then Junior college may be the best option for you.

If you are listening/reading out there and your financial capabilities are anywhere between \$10,000 to \$16,000 for your first year, then Junior college may certainly be the best option for you. If that is your first-year budget then certainly Junior College would more than likely be the best option.

Even at full costs without scholarship Junior colleges range in costs from about \$9,000 to \$18,000 for everything. Room and board, classes, books, meal plans, tuition and fees, team travel everything. Then you can add scholarship and financial aid on top of that to decrease costs further.

As we have said in plenty of other episodes. It is not easy to get athletic scholarship in your first year. You need to be something pretty special coming out of high school. To make those large schools affordable and to receive an athletic scholarship in your first year is hard. Now, if you do have a larger budget then of course the best pathway for you may be somewhere else.

Now we have spoken about academics, athletics and the financial capabilities. I guess the three main variables that determine first year opportunities in the US.

If you do see yourself falling into one of those categories, then Junior College may be your best option. Even if it is only one of those, for example, maybe you have a big budget, and great academics. But, you do want to try and compete straight away. Junior college may be right for you.

What other things are there? If you aren't sure that you want to stay for four years? Or if you only want to do a year or two and get an associate degree then certainly Junior College is the pathway for you.

A lot of people, even Jacob when he went through the process, aren't too sure how long they will be staying for. Well why spend all the money on a larger school if you aren't even sure that you will be completing a degree?

Now another is in regard to the type of character you are, by you I mean the listeners, and the social settings. If you are maybe a little shy, or you aren't as confident of a student or athlete then Junior College may be best for you. Everyone knows everyone at Junior Colleges. You are known by name, not by number. Definitely easier to adjust from a social perspective. Being thrown into a massive school may not be the best idea if you aren't really an outgoing person that is comfortable being on their own. Small fish in a big pond.