

WHICH DIVISION IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

NCAA Division I

Currently, there are 312 Division I universities with volleyball programs. At Division I, most schools have 12 scholarships to recruit with. With the schools that are fully funded and have the 12 scholarships to recruit with, it is a head count. What that means is 12 players on their rosters can have athletic scholarships. A scholarship cannot be split between 2 or more players. If a volleyball program is not fully funded, they may have the 12 scholarships, but they may not all be full rides, or they may not even have 12 athletic scholarships at all. Most programs will carry more than just 12 girls on a roster, so they can get money via academic grants, loans, etc... Confusing – yes. Make sure if you are offered an athletic scholarship that you know what is included in that scholarship.

Now that we've covered athletic scholarships, I would like to touch on the commitment level required to play at the D-I level. Playing at the D-I level requires a lot of time and commitment. There are year round requirements that are expected from you. Another consideration is the travel schedule throughout the fall season. You need to know how many classes are typically missed due to travel and what you can do to cover yourself while you are away. Time management is a very important skill to have if playing at the Division I level. If you have the option to play at the Division I level, you need to decide if you can handle the commitment that is required of you.

NCAA Division II

Currently, there are 270 Division II universities with volleyball programs. At the Division II level, there is a maximum of 8 full athletic scholarships. However, the difference is, they can be split, so you can have more than 8 athletes on partial athletic scholarships. At Division II, there seem to be more local and in-state players because the athletic scholarship money goes further, versus paying out-of-state tuition. A lot of athletes at the D-II level use combination funding to pay for schooling: athletic scholarships, academic scholarships, grants, etc...

The commitment level at Division II is less rigorous than the Division I level. It certainly depends on your coaches and what they require of you, but overall, there is more of a balance throughout the year. You need to know the off-season, spring season and summer requirements, travel schedule, classes missed, etc... One thing I do want to stress is just because a team is playing at the Division II level doesn't necessarily mean that they are not as good as Division I teams. There are D-II teams that could beat D-I teams. The level of play does not dictate their division designation; it is based on how many sports their institution sponsors. Don't rule out this level just because you think there is not good volleyball.

NCAA Division III

Currently, there are 411 Division III universities with volleyball programs. The main difference is there are no athletic scholarships at the D-III level. However, there are ways to help pay for school. Academic scholarships, grants, campus jobs, etc...

The commitment level at Division III is more balanced throughout the year as well. There are rules in place that only allow the coach to coach his/her players so many days throughout the year, so that puts limits on some requirements. The travel schedule is more local, so there are fewer classes that are missed. If you are interested in a Division III school, it is beneficial for you to contact them right away. Their recruiting process is a little more delayed because it is more of a waiting game for them. Once again, there is very good volleyball at this level. If a little more balance is what desire, maybe the D-III route is your best fit.

The underlying theme throughout is to find what will work best for you. If you are a Division I caliber player – can you handle the commitment requirements? If you are not a D-I prospect, what division will work better for you? Do you have the grades to attend a D-III school? There are so many opportunities and so many questions to ask yourself. Find out as much information from the coach and current players as possible to help you figure out what is the best fit for you.

For a list of all the NCAA schools that have volleyball programs, go to www.ncaa.org / Sports & Championships Tab – click on fall / then click on Sponsoring Institutions. It will break it down into each division.

In the meantime, I am working on putting together an interactive DVD of the seminar that will allow you to get the information you want and need whether I hold a seminar in your area or not. So please look for that to come in the next few months.

Feel free to contact me with any questions that you may have on recruiting. My email is still andrea@preprecrUIT.com and the website is www.preprecrUIT.com