What's a sample letter to a college coach look like?

If you are a junior or senior in high school, it is important to take an active role in the college recruiting process. The first step in doing that is to identify the colleges and Universities that would make a good fit for you. ***Start with a list of 10 to 20 schools that make sense from an academic, financial and, of course, soccer perspective.*** Once you have done some research, preferably with the help of family members and your club/high school coaches, and have a good idea of the type of college that would be the right fit, it is time to contact a member of the coaching staff of those soccer programs.

When constructing a letter to a college coach, keep these five tips in mind:

1. Most every coach now relies on e-mail to both contact and receive contact from potential recruits. That is the preferred method of communication. To find out the e-mail addresses for the coaches you are looking to contact, simply go to the college's athletic website and look for a staff listing of names and e-mails.

2. Be brief. Coaches at all levels receive dozens and dozens of e-mails/letters from high school-aged players. All you are trying to do is show you have interest, pass along all of your contact information, your soccer resume, and provide each coach with an upcoming schedule of your games so he can see you play.

3. NEVER have one of your parents write to a coach. You are the one the coach might be recruiting, so he/she wants to hear from you directly. (If the relationship develops and it appears that you might be attending that college, they'll be plenty of time for your parents to have contact with the coaching staff.)

4. Provide contact information for your coach (es). Nothing is worse for a college coach than to have to track down your coach's e-mail or phone number. By having both an e-mail address and a phone number listed after his/her name, it allows for the college coach to quickly e-mail or call your club and/or high school coach to follow up.

5. Do not send a form letter that starts out with "Dear Coach" and does not mention anything specific about his/her program and school. The bulk of your e-mail will be kept the same for correspondence you send out to various coaching staffs; however a portion of it should be personalized.

Here is a sample e-mail to a college coach, using fictitious names and information.

Coach John Davidson,

My name is Eric Martin and I'm a junior at West Valley High School in Lagrange, Indiana. I am interested in attending Southern University because of your fine business management program as well as your soccer program. My sister, Janice Martin, is currently a junior there, so I have visited the school several times and have been able to see your team play three different times.

Currently, I play for FC United Under-16 team out of Macon, Illinois. My club coach's name is Jason Leonard. His e-mail is: jleonard@aol.com and he can be reached at: 555-555-5555. Our team will be playing in the Disney Showcase from December 27-30 in Orlando, Florida, and will also be in Indiana on February 21-22 for the Winter Invitational. I can provide you with our game schedule when that information comes available.

I have attached my soccer resume listing my GPA (3.2) and my other academic and athletic accomplishments. My home phone number is: 555-777-5555 and my cell number is: 777-555-5555. My email is: emartin@aol.com

Best of luck in your current season.

Sincerely,

Eric Martin

If you follow the steps outlined above and always remember to include all the necessary contact information for you and your coaches, the process will be made much easier. Then, it's just a matter of hearing back from the coach and, hopefully, attracting his/her interest to come check you out in person during one of your team's games