

Recruiting Tip: 3 rules to live by on social media

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Every year college coaches are becoming more active on social media and now use it as a way to communicate with potential recruits. In fact, most college programs actually have someone who's in charge of monitoring and reviewing the social media accounts of all prospective recruits. They take the time and resources to do that because college coaches assume that how you act on social media will be how you will act on campus. For that reason, if you really want to play in college, you have to be careful on social media. Here are my three "social media rules to live by" when it comes to college recruiting.

1. Understand that a coach's first impression will likely be based on your social media accounts

A college coach's first impression of you will likely happen sooner than you think. In fact, it might have already happened. College coaches generally do their homework on recruits well before the first phone call or email and they probably will start by checking out your social media accounts.

Coaches feel they can learn a lot about a recruit from their social media behavior. Many potential scholarships have been lost before an athlete is even considered a prospect just because of their online behavior. Consistent profanity or negative posts are certainly red flags, but coaches also monitor social media for other warning signs. If it's obvious from your posts that you don't get along with your coaches or teammates, that you dread practice, or hate homework, most coaches will move on to the next recruit.

2. Read twice, post once

So, if every college coach who is interested in you is going to review your social media accounts, I guess you better keep that in mind every day! In fact, you should seriously think about each and every share, post or tweet. Since many high school students share, post and tweet more than they talk, being careful is critical. Whether you like it or not, your posts are a reflection of you as a person – good or bad.

There is an old saying carpenters use to avoid mistakes: “Measure twice, cut once.” The same thought process holds true for social media: “Read twice, post once.”

3. If you make a mistake on social media, fix it immediately

The best thing you can do when you make a mistake of any kind is to admit it, learn from it and don't let it happen again. Don't make excuses or try to hide it. If you realize that you tweeted or posted something you shouldn't have: 1. Delete it immediately 2. Take responsibility for it. I'm not telling you to issue a blanket apology across all your social media platforms, but if the subject of an inappropriate post comes up with a college coach or anyone else, just be honest, take responsibility and let them know it was just a mistake that won't happen again.