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BOYS' SOCCER



ESPN RISE RECRUITING ROAD



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ESPN RISE

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## Sizing up scholarships



Although NCAA Division I women's programs can offer up to 14 scholarships, most come up well short of the maximum. Photo By: Associated Press

05/04/10 - **Editor's Note:** How can you get recruited? Depending on your skill level, academic standing and future plans, the answer will vary. ESPN RISE is kicking off a comprehensive series dealing with college recruiting concerns. We will discuss every level of college soccer: Division I, II and III, NAIA and junior college. The objective is to get straight advice from those doing the recruiting and those who have been recruited.

We start the series today with a basic overview of scholarships vs. opportunities at NCAA schools.

There's never been a better time to be a college soccer player.

The number of men's and women's college programs and participants are at an all-time high at NCAA institutions.

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That's the good news. The bad news? The large number of athletes doesn't mean college soccer is flush with scholarships.

The following are the NCAA scholarship limits per institution:

	Men	Women
<b>Division I</b>	9.9	14
<b>Division II</b>	9	11.9
<b>Division III</b>	0	0

It's important to note that the above indicates the maximum number of scholarships a university can hold on the roster at one time. Quite often programs offer well below that figure on the Division I and II levels. In fact, when the limit of Division I women's soccer scholarships was raised from 12 to 14 in 2006, a survey at the time indicated that less than 35 percent of the schools offered the maximum allotment. The NCAA does not track the number of scholarships offered by sport at a given institution.

Since men's and women's soccer do not offer enough scholarships to cover the roster, these grant-in-aids are often divided and parsed out as partial scholarships to help cover more athletes.

A study published in July 2009 by College Sports Council shows that men's soccer remains among the most difficult sports in which to earn a scholarship. There is an average of one Division I scholarship available for every 196 high school soccer players. Only men's track and men's volleyball faced longer odds. Factor in that many elite, college-bound players who bypass high school to focus on club soccer, then the ratio becomes even greater for the high school soccer player.

**Number Crunching**

The following facts are pulled from the most recent NCAA Sports and Participation Rates Report, which includes information through the 2008-09 school year.

- Women's soccer has grown more than 1,000 percent in both teams and participation since 1981-82 and stands at an all-time high 23,357 players on 959 teams.
- Men's soccer has grown 49 percent in the same time period with most of the growth occurring on the Division II and III levels.
- More than half of all men's soccer players (11,075 of 21,601) play at Division III schools where there are no athletic scholarships.
- The average size of a college soccer team stands at 24.4 members for women, 27.8 for men.

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