



Aspiring Post-Secondary Player Information & Guidance

Introduction

Pursuing a post-secondary playing opportunity whether in Canada, the United States, or abroad requires consistent commitment, maturity, and deliberate development over multiple years. This guidance package outlines the key components that Alliance Academy/PSL players must take ownership of to become viable and competitive college prospects. While the Alliance environment provides structured training, coaching, and competition, the journey to collegiate soccer ultimately depends on the player's personal application, work habits, and character.

This document highlights five major areas of focus:

- 1. Conditioning & Athletic Development**
- 2. Physical Profile & Hypertrophy Development**
- 3. Technical Application Under Demand**
- 4. Tactical Decision-Making & Game Intelligence**
- 5. Character & Personal Conduct**

1. Conditioning & Athletic Development

Collegiate soccer demands high intensity over long seasons. Players must arrive physically prepared, robust, and consistent.

1.1. Strength & Power Development

- Build foundational strength (core, glutes, hamstrings, posterior chain).
- Progress into soccer-specific power (acceleration, deceleration, repeated sprint ability).
- Emphasize unilateral training (single-leg strength) due to sport-specific demands.

1.2. Endurance & Match Fitness

- Aerobic conditioning must support full-match performance.
- Players should supplement team training with:
 - Aerobic base runs
 - High-Intensity Interval Training (HIIT)
 - Ball-based conditioning sessions
- College coaches expect players who can handle match workloads immediately.

1.3. Speed, Agility & Movement

- First-step quickness and change of direction ability are major differentiators.
- Regular speed development sessions improve recruitment potential.
- Proper movement technique reduces injury likelihood.

1.4. Injury Prevention & Recovery

- The ability to stay healthy is a competitive advantage.
- Essential practices include:
 - Warm-up and mobility routines
 - Strength balance (quad–hamstring ratio, hip/glute activation)
 - Sleep, recovery strategies, and nutrition monitoring
- Players must take ownership of their bodies—this is expected at the college level.

Key Message:

Physical conditioning is not seasonal or optional. It is year-round, systematic, and player driven.



2. Physical Profile & Hypertrophy Development

For players targeting collegiate-level soccer, physical readiness is one of the most decisive factors in recruitment. Coaches consistently note that first-year players who arrive undersized or underdeveloped often struggle both physically and mentally in their transition.

A strong physical profile provides two major advantages:

1. **Recruitability Advantage**

College coaches are more likely to recruit players who already resemble collegiate-level athletes who are stronger, more robust, and physically confident.

2. **Smoother Transition into University Training**

Players who arrive with a developed strength base adapt more easily to the high physical demands of collegiate training and competition.

2.1. Key Components of Physical Profile Development

- Hypertrophy (Muscle Development). Building appropriate lean muscle mass improves:
 - Strength in duels
 - Ability to hold off opponents
 - Acceleration and deceleration power
 - Injury resistance
 - Overall physical presence
- A basic hypertrophy approach includes:
 - 2–4 sessions per week
 - 6–12 reps per set
 - Moderate-to-heavy load
 - Controlled tempo
 - Emphasis on progressive overload (gradually increasing weight or volume)

2.2. Protein Intake for Athlete Development

Adequate protein intake is essential for muscle repair, growth, and recovery, especially with the training demands of Academy/PSL athletes.

General guideline: 1.6–2.2 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight per day

For example, an 80kg athlete should aim for 130–175g of protein daily.

This supports:

- Hypertrophy (muscle gains)
- Faster recovery between sessions
- Strength gains
- Improved body composition
- Reduced injury risk

Sources: Lean meats, fish, eggs, protein shakes, Greek yogurt, tofu, beans, lentils, cottage cheese.

2.3. Building a University-Ready Physical Frame

To stand out in recruitment and compete immediately upon arrival, players should aim for:

- Strong lower-body strength (hamstrings, quads, glutes)
- Solid core and trunk strength
- Upper-body strength sufficient to win physical duels
- Healthy body fat percentage (typically 8–14% for competitive male athletes)



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College coaches often comment that this level of preparation reduces:

- The mental stress of “catching up”
- The risk of overtraining injuries
- The time required to earn playing minutes

Key Message to Players

Developing a strong physical profile is not optional for aspiring university athletes.

3. Technical Application on Demand

College soccer is fast. Technical actions must be clean, purposeful, and repeatable under pressure.

3.1. Baseline Technical Excellence

Players must demonstrate:

- High-quality first touch
- Clean passing and receiving in multiple directions
- Ball manipulation and control at various speeds
- Ability to retain possession when under pressure

These skills must become automatic through consistent repetition.

3.2. Position-Specific Technical Demands

College coaches look for players who can perform the actions required by their role:

- **Defenders:** Controlled distribution, composure under pressure, aerial clearances, 1v1 defending.
- **Midfielders:** Body orientation, quick combinations, play switching, scanning, press-resistant turns.
- **Forwards:** Efficient finishing, off-the-shoulder runs, link-up play, ability to create separation.

3.3. Technique Under Fatigue

Players must demonstrate the ability to execute skills with precision during:

- High-pressure phases
- Late-game fatigue
- Fast transitions
- Reduced space and time

Key Message:

Being technical in warm-ups is not enough. College coaches evaluate your technique at full speed, under stress, and when fatigued.

4. Tactical Decision-Making & Game Intelligence

A key separator at the college level is the speed and quality of a player’s decisions.

4.1. Scanning & Game Awareness

- Regular pre-action scanning gives players more options and better choices.
- College players must think ahead, anticipate moments, and recognize cues early.

4.2. Playing Under Pressure

- Expect faster opponents, more physical contact, and quicker transitions.
- Develop composure and confidence to play forward when possible and secure possession when needed.

4.3. Adaptability & Role Understanding

- College coaches value players who can:
 - Understand multiple tactical systems
 - Adjust to in-game changes
 - Take on role-specific responsibilities

Tactical flexibility increases your recruitment value significantly.



4.4. Decision-Making Routines

A top player consistently makes strong decisions because they:

- Scan before receiving
- Understand game principles (width, depth, support, pressure/cover/balance)
- Communicate effectively
- Recognize moment-to-moment game priorities (press, retain, break line, secure, switch)

Key Message:

Decision-making separates “good club players” from “college-ready players.”

5. Character Development & Personal Conduct

College recruitment is not only about talent, coaches invest in people. Character, behaviour, and professionalism matter just as much as technical ability.

5.1. Personal Accountability

Players must demonstrate:

- Consistent attendance and punctuality
- Responsibility for their training, schoolwork, and communication
- Ownership of their development (not relying solely on coaches)

5.2. Growth Mindset & Coachability

College coaches look for athletes who:

- Accept feedback positively
- Show resilience through adversity
- Are willing to work hard and adapt
- Respond well to challenges and higher standards

5.3. Academic Responsibility

- Strong academics are a non-negotiable component of collegiate athletics.
- Good habits such as time management, effort, preparation are essential.
- Academic discipline often mirrors athletic discipline.

5.4. Leadership & Team Contribution

Leadership can be demonstrated in many forms:

- Work rate and attitude
- Communication
- Supportiveness
- Positivity in difficult moments
- Consistency over long periods

5.5. Online Presence & Reputation

- College coaches frequently check social media.
- Players must maintain respectable, mature online behavior.

Key Message:

Character opens doors that talent alone cannot. College coaches invest in the person as much as the player.



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Conclusion

To be successful in pursuing collegiate opportunities, Alliance Academy/PSL players must commit to the full picture of development:

- ✓ **Physically prepared**
- ✓ **Technically sharp**
- ✓ **Tactically intelligent**
- ✓ **High-character individuals**

Players who embrace all four areas consistently and deliberately can position themselves strongly for post-secondary opportunities.

Key Message:

Coaches can support, guide, and recommend but the player is responsible for their habits, work ethic, and readiness.