



# College Connection

## The NCAA Clearinghouse

*By Brad Donoho, CMP Program Manager*

One of our goals with *On the Mark* is to provide junior shooters the information they need to continue their shooting careers. Far too often a junior's career ends after graduating from high school. When they choose a college, many school-age juniors simply do not know or they overlook the fact that shooting is a collegiate sport. Not only can you shoot for a college team, but you can earn a scholarship for rifle shooting as well.

There are also lots of junior shooters and parents who know about college shooting, but who do not know how to join one of these teams. So the question is, what steps do you need to take to join a rifle team and possibly earn a scholarship? This article is the first of a new series that addresses the steps every junior should take if they hope to take their shooting to the next level.

The first step prospective collegiate student athletes must take before beginning their college search is to fill out the paperwork for the NCAA Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse is a branch of the NCAA that is responsible for pre-screening athletes and ensuring that they are eligible to compete for a collegiate team. The paperwork should be filled out and sent in at the completion of your junior year of high school. This gives the NCAA plenty of time to process the application. If you send the paperwork in too late, there may not be enough time for the NCAA to clear you for competition before your freshman year of college begins.

In order to apply for the Clearinghouse, you should meet with your high school guidance counselor and discuss your options. Each applicant must send in a one-time \$50 dollar registration fee and have their school submit an official school transcript with ACT or SAT scores. You can find a list of NCAA Clearinghouse requirements and application forms at <http://www.naaclearinghouse.net>.

The NCAA will not clear you for collegiate competition until you have fulfilled your final graduation requirements. However, even though you have not been cleared, being registered with the Clearinghouse gives college coaches the go ahead to actively recruit you. After you register, you will be ready to start looking for a school that is right for you. In the next installment of *College Connection*, I will address how to find universities that have collegiate shooting programs.

*Brad Donoho is a graduate of the University of Kentucky where he was a member of the Wildcats Varsity Rifle Team for four years. He was a Team Captain his junior year. Subsequent to his graduation, he also served as Assistant Rifle Team Coach at Kentucky.*