



COLLEGE HOCKEY DIRECTORY

Find Your Opportunity To Play College Hockey

SCHOLARSHIPS

Hockey is one of the most guideline-driven sports among those offered at the college level in the United States. In addition to the rules and requirements that must be met in order to play hockey, it is also important to understand and recognize the opportunities that exist for college ice hockey scholarships.

While most universities compete in some division of the NCAA for basketball and football, ice hockey incurs a higher cost to the school and is therefore not always included in a school's athletic department offerings. It can be very expensive to run a NCAA ice hockey program because of the high requirements and standards that must be met by a facility. Additionally, Title IX requires colleges to provide equal opportunities for all students, regardless of gender. This means that if there is a men's ice hockey team offered at a college, there must also be a women's ice hockey team offered, or another comparable women's varsity sport. Unfortunately, many schools do not have the resources to finance and maintain both a men's and women's NCAA college hockey team, let alone offer scholarships for those teams. For these reasons, many colleges are now supporting hockey by participating in ACHA (American Collegiate Hockey Association). (In the ACHA, players contribute financially to the hockey team, making it easier for a school to offer a college hockey program).

According to the 2007-2008 US Hockey report, there are 461,594 hockey players in the United States, and only 59,020 (12.8%) are female. Yet, women's hockey makes up 21% of the available teams at the college level. Even though there are fewer women interested in playing college hockey, the number of NCAA men's and women's programs are the same. This means there is less competition for female athletes wishing to obtain a coveted spot on an NCAA or ACHA hockey team. And, less competition means more room for success for individual female players.

In addition to competitive discrepancies, there are also differences in men's and women's college hockey scholarship opportunities. According to the 2008-2009 breakdown of teams and scholarships there were 1534.5 full scholarships available to ice hockey college players in the NCAA leagues. Out of these, 32.9% went exclusively to females. As you can see, although 21% of college hockey teams are women, they receive almost one-third of the athletic scholarships available.

Why is this happening? Simply stated, there are far more men who want to play college hockey than females. Consequently, the positions available to men are tougher to obtain because there are not enough spaces on a team to accommodate everyone. Scouting potential male players is also a much more tedious process, since there are so many more to follow through the high school years.

For students wishing to play ice hockey at the college level and desiring a college hockey scholarship, it is important to remember that there are differences between men and women in both numbers of players and available scholarship money. Based on statistics from recent college hockey seasons, it seems fair to assert that women have an advantage from the start: There are more spots available on female college hockey teams because there are fewer women interested in playing. Secondly, because there are fewer females competing for hockey scholarships, there are more available to women who are hoping to receive one.