Swedish golf coaches and staff - Presentation

Differences between Swedish and U.S. Universities

1. **PRE-COLLEGE EDUCATION** It is my opinion that up to college the Swedish system produces a student that is slightly more advanced than the average high school student in the U. S. Swedish and European prospects are certainly more mature.
2. **COLLEGE EDUCATION** The average college in the U. S. is different than most European institutions. The majority of the top rated Universities in the world are in the U.S.
3. **COLLEGE EXPERIENCE** There is a great difference in the college experience and what you have experienced pre-college in Sweden. It is a lot more fun, offers tremendous amount of avenues of study, and generally is a lot looser in structure. This is not to say that it isn’t without its challenges. There are over 3,000 schools offering some type of golf scholarships in the U. S. Some are extremely challenging Academically, others are less so. The most important difference is that the golf completion and instruction is at a very high level

Why have your players go to the U.S. on a scholarship?

1. **BECAUSE IT IS FUN**. There is a lot more to going to a University than getting an education and playing golf. There are Dances, concerts, parties, and a whole social scene that is wonderful experience for a young individual. In later life, almost every individual that played sports in college refer to their college experience as the best days of their life. Even the other sports are interesting and attending a game is like going to a mini-Olympics contest. The basketball, soccer, volleyball get crowds of students, who are as fanatic as many of your professional soccer fans. Often these sports, as it is in golf, are very high quality. I was impressed how many of the Olympians in London either were in college in the US or had graduated from one.
2. **BECAUSE IT SAVES THE SWEDISH GOLF FEDERATION MONEY**. On the average seventeen Swedes go to Division I colleges in the U. S. every year. A like amount go to D II, Junior Colleges, and NIAA universities. Assume that on the average they are receiving $10,000/year on Scholarship and that adds up to $170,000 a year and multiply that by four and Swedish Players are $680,000 in scholarship each year – and that is just the ones in D I programs. This savings can be used for the Junior squads, development and education of Junior families.
3. **BECAUSE THEY WILL IMPROVE AS A GOLFERS.** Golf at the US collegiate level is very high quality. At its highest level it is the fourth best tour in the world. Players at the University of San Francisco improve on the average from two to four strokes per round over the course of their stay, playing very difficult courses. A quick look at both the U. S. and European Tour will show that the vast majority of players have played golf in college in the U. S. There is no right or wrong way on the path of becoming a professional, but playing golf in the U.S. college system is the proven way**.**
4. **EARN A DEGREE.** School sometimes seems that it just gets in the way of golf. It is harder to do both, but it is not only possible, but it is possible to excel in both. In the U.S., a person with a college degree will earn $1,500,000 more than a high school graduate in a working career, even though they work fewer years. There is more money made by good golfers off the course than on tour. Education helps with that. Tour players with an education tend to make more, save more and invest more profitably with educations in worthwhile subjects.
5. **SAVE MONEY WHEN YOU GO TO COLLEGE RATHER THAN TURNING PROFESSIONAL.** Playing on a minor tour in the USA costs around $125,000 per year if you give it a real chance. It is less in Europe but there still are travel, tournament costs, coaching costs, hotels, rental cars, and other expenses. Most players at a high level might get a sponsorship from a manufacturer, but that usually only covers clubs, shoes and some clothes. A college scholarship saves you a lot of money that you would otherwise spend.

How to help your players start the recruiting process and obtain a college scolarship?

1. **IF THEY ARE A NATIONAL TEAM MEMBER** A national team member should find it easier to attract a college coach, and after that has happened, the college coach will help with all the paperwork and NCAA regulations. Still to get in the best college for you it will take a little homework
2. **NOT ON NATIONAL TEAM OR LOW ON THE LADDER.** If they are just below National team status, or if you have particular requirements in choosing a University, you will have to do more work initially.
3. **ENCOURAGE THEM TO START EARLY** If they are thinking of playing in the US. Start the process of looking for a college early. 15 to `16 years old is not too early to start the process. Encourage them to do their homework early.
	1. Help them pick five to seven universities that might fit their academic and golf skills. It is important that the school have the type of program that they would like to study, ei: Business, Sport Management, Pre-Law, History, and be strong in that field
	2. Have them go to ncaa.org and under publications find ***GUIDE FOR THE COLLEGE BOUND ATHLETE*** It gives an overview of the regulations that the coach must follow as well as your own. It will also give them information as to the necessary SAT and school grades they must attain.
	3. Choose schools because of climate, the city, and area where the university is located because the culture of the United States changes greatly with the part of the country in which the school is located.
	4. Chose programs that they will have an excellent chance of playing in competition. National Rankings are a good indicator of your possible position on the team. (Only the top five players travel to tournaments)
	5. Chose them because of the courses they play and their practice facilities.
	6. Probably the least effective reason for finding the right university is because an acquaintance has gone there or even a friend. Unless they have had a wonderful experience, there might be a better fit. There are over 300 Division I teams, and over 600 Universities that offer scholarships

**4. START THE PROCESS** Once they have chosen five to seven universities help to start the process of identifying them to coaches. U. S. coaches are under many NCAA restrictions related to contacting prospects. Generally speaking **Swedish Coaches and players have no restrictions other than staying an Amateur.** Have the player you are helping do the following:

**a)** Email them briefly giving your qualifications and telling them that you willcontacting them by phone

1. Phone them. Most coaches are in the office in the morning hours between 9 am and 12 am. They are usually out of the office in the afternoon.
2. NCAA rules do not allow the coaches to phone you our even return your call before July before your last year in school. They can talk to you forever as long as you initiate the call.
3. If you can afford the time and expense, take a trip to the U.S. and visit the programs that have responded positively. It is important to have face-to-face contact with the coach, meet the team, see the campus and the courses you will be playing. The school can not pay for this trip until you start your final year in high school, (A Levels), and by then most of the good spots, in the good school, as well as the majority of scholarship money will be gone.
4. **KEEP A FILE ON EACH UNIVERSITY** Fill it with all your contact dates, copies of the documents you send to the university, your NCAA Eligibility Center contacts and passwords, and any correspondence

**4b. GETTING HELP WITH THE PROCESS** The application and contacting process can be confusing and frustrating due to all of the regulations that a college coach is under, as well as the fact that your player is doing this for the first time. It is exciting but at the same time easy to miss some vital piece of information either about your chosen universities, or the NCAA application process. There are many more good golfers applying for scholarships than there are places to play. There approximately 1000 spots each year with about 75% of those with some type of scholarship. Helping your player to find the right match both athletically, academically, and financially, will make you a better coach

**5. WHAT TO EXPECT IN A COACH** College coach in the U.S.will have a full range of qualifications. Some are PGA professionals with tour experience but no teaching background, some are PGA instructors but with limited playing experience. Most coaches are not Professionals, but are good golfers, and some are merely managers. It is up to you to determine in what area your player requires the most attention. Often the best players are not the best coaches, often the best teachers conflict with what your National team coach is working on.

1. First and foremost he or she should chose a coach that you like and that as far as you can tell is honest.
2. If they have a good swing coach, then a teacher might not be the most important attribute in a coach.
3. On the course, a coach is allowed to do anything a caddy could do, help with your swing, club and shot selection, read putts, everything but carry the bag. If the program has an Assistant Coach, he can also do the same things on course.
4. A coach will arrange tournaments, pick traveling squads, acquire uniforms, balls, equipment, shoes, etc, establish practice schedules, and provide practice venues.
5. A smart coach will rely heavily on your National Coach or the players swing coach.
6. A coach will often have an assistant coach who has a lot of contact with the team. The assistant coaches are often younger individuals, often just out of school and starting on their own coaching or professional career.
7. If a coach is not a teacher and you do not have a swing coach, he will often provide you with a local swing coach

**6. WHAT TO EXPECT IN SCHOOL** Your player should expect to study. The NCAA is determined to make sure that the term Scholar-Athlete is a reality. It requires a certain level of performance of you in high school and the SAT just to be eligible for a scholarship. Once he or she is admitted to a university, the NCAA requires them to take a certain number of courses each year, and maintain a C average in order to be eligible to play.

1. The University should have an Academic Resource department to arrange for classes that allow you maximum practice time, to provide tutors for the athletes if needed, arrange study halls, but the primary responsibility for doing well in class resides with you.
2. University should provide a course of study that interests you.
3. University should provide a course of study that will provide you an opportunity to get a well paying job if, or after you stop playing golf professionally.
4. University should provide a safe and comfortable environment.
5. The University should fund the Golf program.

7 WHAT IS THE NCAA AND WHAT IS ITS ROLE IN THE RECRUITING PROCESS

a) The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) is the governing body that controls all sports in Division I athletics.

b) They set the rules for competition as well as recruiting that all Division I and Division II schools and rules that recruited prospects must follow.

c) The NCAA also sets academic standards that recruits must pass before they can play athletics in the U. S. These include the number and type of core courses that a recruit must take in high school as well as a minimum grade in those courses. It also sets minimum standards for the SAT or the ACT standardized test.

1. The rulebook is the size of a medium size phone book, over 800 pages. They do provide a pamphlet called “Guide for the College Bound Student-Athlete which they will send you hard copy of or you can view on line at ncaa.org under publications. This pamphlet explains most of the prospects responsibilities and the standards that must be met.

**8. WHAT IS A SCHOLARSHIP AND WHAT ARE ITS RESTRICTIONS**

A scholarship is an offer of money to defer part or all the expense of going to a University.

* 1. An Academic Scholarship is sometimes given for exceptional scholastic achievement. It does not count against the number of Athletic Scholarships that any University is allowed to give. International students are most often non-eligible for these scholarships.
	2. An Athletic Scholarship is given to an individual who agrees to play sport for a University team. An Athletic Scholarship can vary in monetary amount.
		1. A full scholarship can vary in amount depending on the type of University and it’s total tuition charge. This is a little complicated, but generally a full scholarship in a private school would be in the $50 -$60,000/year range. A state University might have a full scholarship in the $30 -$34,000/year range.
		2. A partial scholarship is a percentage of a full scholarship. At a $50,000 / year university, a half scholarship would be worth $25,000 / year and the student/athlete would be responsible for $25,000 a year on his or her own.
		3. A Full Scholarship consists of all Tuition, Books, Fees, and Room and Board. It does not pay for recreation or other expenses that an individual might incur during a school year.
		4. The NCAA limits the number of scholarships that a school can offer to 4 1/2 full scholarships for each men’s golf team. They allow each woman’s team 6 full scholarships. Most teams have 8 – 12 members. The math is not difficult. Most people are offered a partial scholarship.
		5. A full scholarship offer from a top University is very rare and usually would be offered only to an elite prospect. Usually the top Universities recruit and sign or get commitments from highly ranked prospects a full year prior to their graduating from high school. Since International players often enter the recruiting process late, most of the scholarship money is often already committed at the major programs. International players looking for a full scholarship often then fall to the less desirable schools, either in academic standing or location. This is the main reason that many Scandinavian players return home after one year. This is the main reason to start early.
		6. Perks. This is separate from Scholarship awards. This is a little tricky because it varies so much depending on if the University has a relationship with a manufacturer, and what kind of relationship it is. At it’s best, a University will have what we have at the University of San Francisco, a full sponsorship. This means that a player is supplied everything needed to play golf, as well as free practice facilities. The player does not get money for these things, they are just provided for them. Kind of like what you receive from the National Team on steroids. Other programs might have a sponsorship that would allow you to buy equipment for 40% off retail.

## **9. WHAT IS A TYPICAL COLLEGE SEASON FOR COLLEGE GOLF**

1. College golf is played both in Fall and Spring Semesters
	1. University usually starts the Fall Semester around the third week in August.
	2. Once enrolled, a student athlete must under go physical evaluations and a seminar concerning NCAA rules and Compliance issues, before the team can practice together.
	3. Once they can practice NCAA rules allow 20 hours a week with the coaches.
	4. Players will usually be expected to put in an additional 10 hours on their own working on things identified by the coach. Many programs provide practice facilities and courses to play through the weekend should the player want to put in even more time playing or practicing.
	5. Most programs will also have weight training usually three days a week prior to class.
	6. Classes are arranged so that the team can practice together. Arranging all morning classes, allowing practice and play in the afternoon usually does this.
2. Competition Schedule
	1. College tournaments are usually 54 holes. Most are played over two days. 36 holes on the first day, and 18 holes on the second day. There are events that are contested for three days with 18 holes a day as well.
	2. Tournaments are almost always stroke play events that are hosted by an individual university. The host school will invite from 12 to 20 schools.
	3. Teams consist of five players. Each round the high score from each team is thrown out and the low four scores counted. This round is added to the second and third round scores for a total.
	4. Competition is for a team champion as well as an individual champion
	5. A teams won loss record against other teams is placed into a computer and at the end of each week a standing is published. At the end of the Spring the best 68 or so teams receive NCAA Regional invitations.
	6. The NCAA allows 24 days of competition. Practice rounds and travel do not count.
	7. Post season play both Regional and NCAA Finals also don’t count against the 24-day competition limit.
	8. During the school year, student-athletes are not allowed to play in any team events except their college events. The exception is National Team competitions. So if you were to play for the English Squad, or the Walker Cup Team in International competition, you would be eligible to do so.
	9. Tournaments are usually scheduled with four or five events in Fall, and seven or so in Spring
	10. Spring is the Championship season with the NCAA Championships being held the last week in May.

**10. NOW THAT YOU HAVE HELPED YOUR PLAYER DO THEIR HOMEWORK and identified the type of university they would like to attend (and have interested the coach enough for a conversation) here are some of the questions they should ask to finns out if the program is really what they expect. Remember! Coaches will usually tell the truth, but not always the whole truth . These questions will help you decide if the program is really right for them.**

* 1. **How big is your squad?** In college the traveling team is five players. Most programs keep between 9 and 12 players. Some schools, especially State schools, will carry as many as 18 or 20, some of whom might be designated as a J.V squad or a B team. Some programs bring in many freshmen and then Red-Shirt them the first year, look at them for a year then cut them the second year to keep the squad size down. Usually only the top 8 players will see competition unless the coach has a policy of playing every one on the squad sometime during the year.
	2. **How many players have left your squad, or have been kicked off your squad for any reason in the last five years?** Any number more than four is a red flag no matter what the coach gives as an explanation. When a player leaves, no matter what the reason, it means that there was someplace better to be than in that program.
	3. **How many team members have you cut?**
	4. **How many scholarships have your reduced, cut, or reassigned in the last five years?**
	5. **What is your graduation rate?**
	6. **How do you maintain the size of your team?** Hint: There are only three ways: Take a bunch of players every year and cut, don’t care how large your team becomes, or only recruit the number you graduate.
	7. **If I come to your school, can I take any course of study I want and still play golf or must I take specific courses. For instance, what if I want to become a doctor, and take pre-med courses, or pre-law courses will it affect my status on the team due to lack of practice time?**
	8. **How big are the Freshmen classes?**
	9. **Can you provide me with the email addresses of all of your players**? Hint: You want to discuss the program with the team members, especially the players that are the poorer ranked players. You often get a different picture than the one the coach gives you
	10. **If I come on a partial scholarship, what would I have to do to increase the dollar amount?**
	11. **Will you set goals that if I achieve them will lead to a scholarship increase?**
	12. **Do you have a sponsorship from a manufacturer? Which one?**
	13. **If I have been sponsored by another brand, can I still play that equipment? What if I want a special shaft?**
	14. **What courses do you play? Do you play the real good ones every week, or just occasionally?**
	15. **Do you have a place for me to practice and play for free on the weekends?**
	16. **How close to the school are your courses?** There are some schools that have their own courses, but most schools do not. Having your own course is good because it is convenient, but a player often gets stale playing the same course everyday, especially if the course does not demand a variety of shots and club selection. Probably the best situation is to have several great courses, and weekend practice facilities that are either on or near the campus.
	17. If you like the coach and are basing your decision in part on him/her coaching you, ask him/her if he/she has applied for another job in the last five years? Also, you can ask **how long are the terms of his/her contract?**
	18. **When do you give a commitment (verbal commitment)?**
	19. **How much scholarship would you consider and how much would that leave for me to pay each year?**