

Niagara University ACHA Hockey Frequently Asked Questions

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Head Coach Larry Brzezowski [-lhb@niagara.edu](mailto:lhb@niagara.edu)

Associate Coach & Director of Recruiting Clayton Miller ('04)

Assistant Coach Jim Kelley ('08)

Strength and Conditioning Coach Jason O'Mara



We have compiled this list as a go to source for recruits and parents to help answer some of the common questions which may come up during the process. Picking a school to play hockey at is a long process. Please view this as a guide to facilitate further discussion with the coaching staff! We would invite you to visit our website at www.nuachahockey.com . Once there, you will be able to find most of this information in a much more in-depth form.

I am looking at a lot of great hockey schools. Why should I come to Niagara?

At Niagara we can offer you the best of the both worlds. A world class education coupled with a tremendous hockey program. We can offer you many things that other teams can not! We believe that our program and University can quite literally sell itself. The more you learn about our team, University, and commitment to winning, the more it will become clear that NU is the place for you! In the end the place you play your college hockey should be the best fit for you and your future. However, we are not shy about our contention that we can offer our players experiences, dedication, facilities, and support that 90% of other ACHA D1 teams cannot.

What exactly is ACHA Hockey?

This question is best answered by an article done by NHL.com . Niagara plays in Division 1 of the ACHA. The divisional breakdown is similar to NCAA hockey. Division 1 consists of the best teams and talent. Division 1 teams generally have larger budgets, more travel, and better facilities.

Where do you recruit players from?

Most of our players are recruited from either Jr. A or Jr. B organizations. We currently have players on our team from the **EJHL (Jr. A), AJHL (Jr. A), OPJHL (Jr.A), MJHL (Jr. B), CHA (Jr. B)**. We have coaches actively recruiting on the road. We also have players from top prep schools on our team. In rare cases we will recruit players from 18U teams.

Are there scholarships to play for your team?

There are no athletic scholarships given at the ACHA level. However, most of our players receive a great deal of academic and needs based scholarship money from Niagara. **The 2010-2011 recruiting class averaged \$10,750 per year just in academic scholarships.** We have great relationships with advisors in admissions at financial aid at NU. We work with each player and their family to put together the best financial aid packages. Want to know how much academic money you could get from NU. Find out instantly by [clicking here](#).

Do you have your own rink?

Yes. We have one of the best ACHA facilities in the entire country. We call Dwyer Arena our home rink. Dwyer is located on the campus of Niagara (within walking distance of the dorms). The NCAA D1 teams at NU call Dwyer Home as well. All of our practices and home games are played here. Dwyer is also home to the **Buffalo Sabres Rookie Camp** and in 2011 will host **the IIHF World Junior Tournament**. There are only three other teams in ACHA D1 that have rinks of their campus. There is only one other ACHA D1 team whom plays at an NCAA D1 facility. Our website contains some great pictures of Dwyer.

How long has the coaching staff been together?

Head Coach Larry Brzeczowski is the fourth longest tenured coach in the ACHA. For over a decade he has been head coach of the team. He has won league coach of the year several times and was a runner up for the ACHA Coach of the Year in '07-'08. Associate Coach Clay Miller ('04) is entering his fifth year as Associate Coach and Director of Recruiting. Jim Kelley, former Purple Eagle Captain, is entering his third year as Assistant Coach.

How often are you on the ice?

Usually our players are on the ice five times per week.

Does the team have its own locker room?

Yes. Our locker room was also recently renovated in the summer of 2010.

Do provide your players with equipment?

Yes. We provide our players custom gloves and pant shells. Our players are also allowed to buy sticks through our team at a significantly reduced price! All of our players are provided warm up suits, shorts, tee shirts, hats, bags, etc.

Off the ice what can you offer me as a player?

The team has strength and conditioning coach to coordinate all off the ice work outs along with nutrition. We provide a team trainer for care before and after the games. The team utilizes video and advanced scouting for pre game preparation. The goal of the coaching staff is to provide our players with amenities and resources to get the very best out of our players on and off the ice.

What can you tell me about Niagara's academics?

NU is one of the best private Universities in New York State and is best known for amazing Education, Business, Hospitality, and Criminal Justice programs. Niagara is a liberal arts college that prides itself in "total education". A student at Niagara is not a number but a partner in academia. For a full listing of course offerings and accreditations please visit www.niagara.edu.

How does the team travel?

The ACHA Purple Eagles traditionally are one of the best traveled teams in the ACHA. On the road we take either motor coach or plane. We make every effort to stay at the comfortable hotels available to us. On the road players are provided with pre/post game meals.

Is there any affiliation between the ACHA D1 team and the NCAA D1 team?

No. The two teams are totally separate. We share no affiliation with the NCAA D1 Purple Eagles.

How many games a season do you play?

We average 35-40 games per year depending on showcases, playoffs etc. We have one of the best travel schedules annually in the entire nation. In the past the teams have traveled to take on some of the best teams in the nation. Trips in the past have included Arizona, Maryland, Virginia, Illinois, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, etc. The Eagles will fly to the University of Central Oklahoma during the 2010-2011 season.

Can recruits visit NU?

Of course! We welcome all players and their families to visit. While at NU we will show you our rink, locker room, give you a tour of the University, etc. We will also set a meeting up for you with Admissions to go over your financial aid package which NU can offer you. You will also have a one on one meeting

with the coaching staff and a chance to meet with the players! We will never have two recruits visit on the same day. This will ensure you and your family as much time as you need to fully learn about what we can offer you.

I want to keep you updated as to how I am doing. Is this okay?

Of course! We want our recruits to stay in contact with us as much as possible. The more we know about you the better. Our job and mission is to bring in the best possible players from the US and Canada to play for our team! We will always return a call or email within six hours to any recruit or their parents. Never, ever, be shy about contacting us!

Applying to colleges and financial aid are new to me and my parents. Can you help us out?

Niagara prides itself on being accessible. We will put you in direct contact with financial aid and admissions. They will point you in the right direction and answer any questions the coaching staff cannot.

Is it okay for my parents to give you a call?

Of course! Just contact us to set up a time! Again, we will also respond to recruits and parents within a few hours whether we are on the bus or at home.

Where do we go from here?

As coaching staff we would welcome the chance to speak more about our program and how you can contribute to it. We put great pride and effort in spending a great deal of time with each player and their family. The best thing you can do is keep an open dialogue. We will walk you through every step of the process! We look forward to hearing from you.

Remember, application to NU is non binding. Just because you apply and get accepted does not mean you have to attend. However, the earlier you apply, the quicker we can proceed with your on ice evaluations and putting together **the best financial aid package** for you and your family.

The best way to reach us would be via email. nuachahockey@gmail.com

A member of our coaching staff will get back to you within 24 hours!