

## Climate Change and its Impact on Student Athletes

---

Monday, May 13, 2024

In today's sports environment, student athletes have more opportunities and choices in selecting sports programs. These opportunities may occur due to factors including the impact of NIL (name, image, and likeness) deals, coaches, best pathways to the pros, facilities, etc. The sports world for today's student athletes are moving faster than before with everyone trying to navigate this era. However, there is one factor that student athletes need to consider when choosing a sports program as either their first choice or through the U.S. collegiate transfer portal. Student athletes must consider how climate change and its effects will impact where they go and play in their sports career.

### **Effects of Climate Change on Student Athletes**

Climate change has impacted everyone's lives regardless of where they reside, work, play, or study. For student athletes, climate change can factor into the recent extreme storms that has impacted communities across the world. These extreme weathers include, but not limited heavy rains, below- and above average temperatures, flooding, intense tornadoes and hurricanes. These extreme weather patterns can impact the student athletes' ability to train and play their sport at their peak performance. For example, higher than normal temperatures in areas like Minnesota and Wisconsin have impacted winter sports athletes' ability to train and play their respective sports. Another example is when extreme heat causes wildfires that impact the air quality for outdoor sports such as football and baseball. As a result, many organizations are having to adapt their playing fields and equipment to the changing conditions. These changes may impact the quality of play and training of the student athletes in their sports.

Another concern is how climate change and its effects impact the geographic areas that are hotbeds (pun not intended) for recruiting talent for college programs. The southern region of the United States is commonly known for its football, but what happens if the effects of climate change push the talent to other parts of the country? The Midwest and Northeast regions are known for its cold weather sports talent, but the effects of climate change could impact where these student athletes can play. And we cannot forget the Caribbean and Pacific Island regions with its sports talent in how rising sea levels and intense hurricanes could result impact the athletes' training and ability to play in those communities.

In each of the examples, student athletes may have to face the growing concerns of climate migration, or the relocation to another location because of the effects of climate change. Climate migration could change the demographics of regions with sports talents, making recruiting more challenging for sports program. Climate migration could impact the student athletes and their parents or guardians emotionally, financially, academically, and athletically. This is also not taking into consideration of the increased competition and adaptation to a new school and sports programs.

## Climate Change and its Impact on Student Athletes

---

Monday, May 13, 2024

### **Takeaway**

Climate change and its effect are impacting everyone and has the potential to significantly impact student athletes. Climate change and its effects may hamper a student athletes' ability to practice and play sports. Student athletes and their parents or guardians will need to consider how the effects of climate change will cause climate migration. Climate migration will change the demographics of regions known for sports talent. Student athletes and their parents or guardians will have to adapt financially, academically, emotionally, and athletically to the effects of climate change. This factor will become more important as climate change and its effects change lives and communities.