

Tristan Bogler '10

FROM BAY STREET TO THE RINK

BY LAUREN ALPERN

Tristan Bogler '10 always knew he wanted a career in hockey. When he was in Grade 12, he remembers when the General Manager of the Toronto Maple Leafs at the time, Brian Burke, came to speak to him and his fellow Georgians in the Chapel. Tristan stopped him at the Chapel door and told him good-naturedly that he was going to take his job. And while

Mr. Burke is no longer the Leafs' GM and Tristan is now working in hockey, he is still aspiring to become one of 32 General Managers in the National Hockey League.

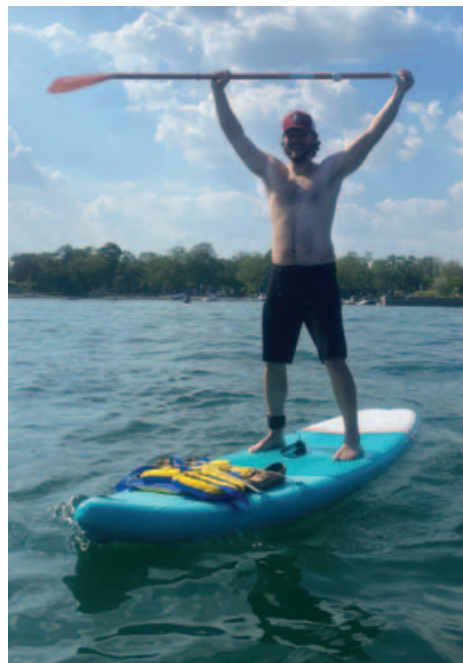
It has been a tumultuous route for Tristan, who studied Kinesiology at Western. Despite internships with the Hamilton Tigers, the London Knights, Hockey Canada and small

roles with the Baycrest Scotiabank ProAm, Tristan absolutely could not find a job in sports after he graduated. "I put my name and resume on baseballs and sent them to the Blue Jays. I called everybody I could think of. I just couldn't find a job in sports," said Tristan. "I ended up in sales roles and in the insurance business, of all places. I knew it wasn't for me. I was sitting at my desk in 2015, throwing pencils up at the ceiling. I knew where I wanted to be—and that's the hockey arena."

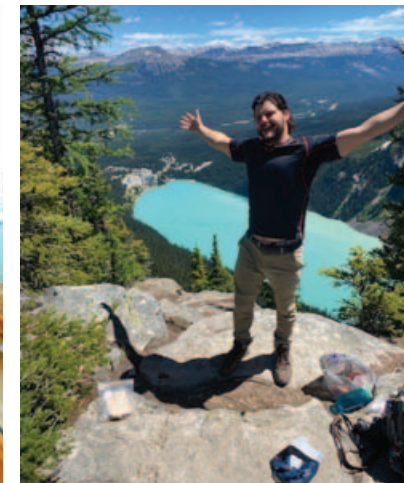
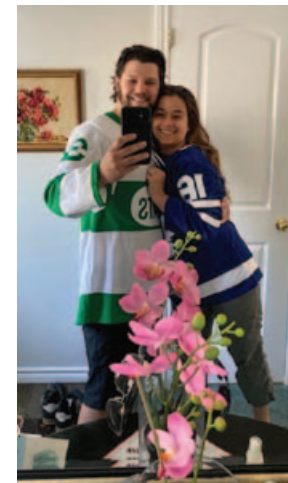
That's when Tristan contacted every single GM in the NHL to ask what he had to do to get where they are. He heard back from two, including Ken Holland of the Detroit Red Wings, who told him that since he didn't have a history as an NHL player, he would either need a law degree or an MBA. Tristan immediately went back to Western to upgrade his GPA and then got into the University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management.

"I had no business being there, but I managed to get in because my reason for doing an MBA was so unique," said Tristan.

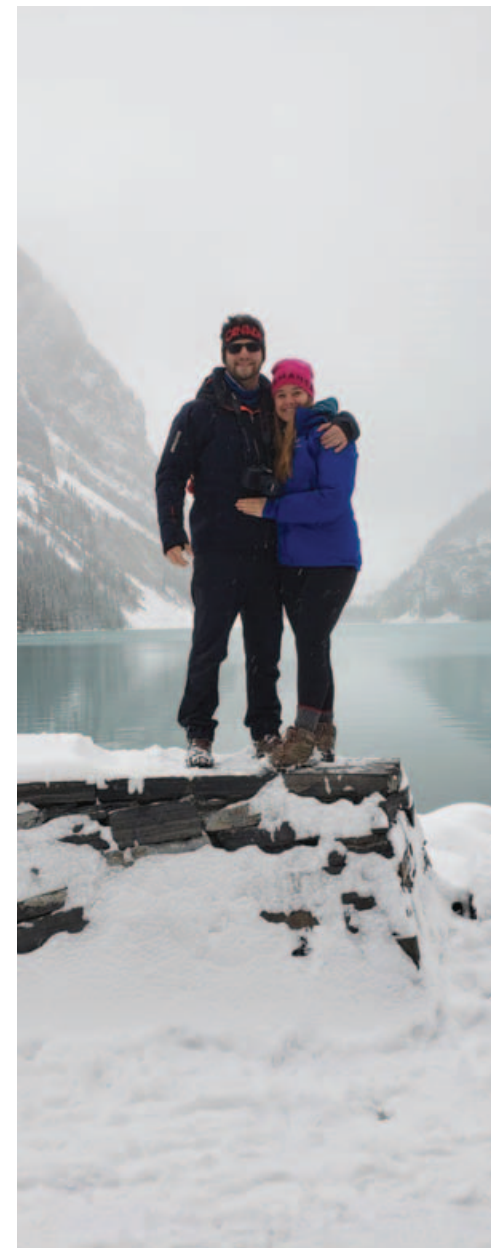
Much to Tristan's dismay, upon graduation, there was still no hockey job for him. He ended up working at Accenture in human capital development. As with everything he did, he saw it as a way to parlay that experience into a hockey



Tristan loves sports and was on several athletics teams while at RSGC.



It was a long and winding road, but Tristan has finally found his place in the sports world. He's not going to stop, but he is happy.



experience. He hoped to learn why certain teams work better than others, how to build the culture of a team and how to manage projects, but that didn't turn out to be possible.

"That industry wasn't for me and I wasn't happy. Fast forward to October of 2020, and I said, 'I've had enough.' I knew I couldn't keep doing this to myself, so I resigned with nothing in hand. I had no job networks, no nothing," said Tristan.

"That same week that I left, I spoke to my old manager at Hockey Canada. I ended up with a six-month contract, and that set things in motion to put me in the hockey world. I had had enough of big Bay Street, and the game was there for me when I least expected it."

That six-month contract has since turned into a full-time gig. Tristan is now the Manager of Philanthropy of the Hockey Canada Foundation.

"Now, instead of building spreadsheets and talking in corporate gibberish, through Hockey Canada Foundation's Assist Fund, I get to remove financial barriers for families in need from coast-to-coast and ultimately grow the game that we all love!" said Tristan.

Tristan has worked hard to get where he is. He is determined, driven and passionate.

"It definitely feels right to be here, but it has come with a lot of frustration and patience. It's been a big time commitment and there has been a lot of rejection. But to be able to be a part of the game that I love every single day and get paid for it... come on!" said Tristan, who also works as

a scout for the Ontario Hockey League's North Bay Battalion on his own time.

"It's a dream come true in a sense, but it's keeping me hungry. I don't believe in looking in the rearview mirror—I'm keeping one foot forward," said Tristan. "Until I've got the Cup over my shoulders, I'm not going to stop. I'm always going to look for opportunities. As soon as it's enough, you become lazy, you become sloppy. I'm not there yet. That's not to say that I'm unhappy, but it's not the dream yet."

Fellow Georgian Will Bryant '10 has known Tristan since Grade 7 and is proud of his sports-loving friend for finally making it in the sports world.

"I'm very happy and proud of Tristan for knowing what he wants to do and never being satisfied with less," said Will. "He's definitely not afraid to speak his mind and take risks."

Which is exactly the message that Tristan has for Georgians of all ages: you have to take risks—especially if you want to find joy and laughter in what you do.

"The place you're in now is the perfect breeding ground for your ideas. If you want to find joy and laughter, know what you want. Who do you want to be? You don't have to be those pre-determined visions of what people have for you or whatever path people have for you. If you want to work in hockey, go do it," said Tristan.

"I just want these guys to know to kick some butt. If you want to be in hockey, you can make it happen. There's a lot of potential for all Georgians. It matters what you want to do with your life."