

OV grad Poalino strikes goal

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Otter Valley graduate Gabby Poalino recently accepted an athletic training scholarship with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. Provided photo

Everything is coming together for Otter Valley graduate Gabby Poalino. She just learned that she has been accepted into an athletic training internship with the Super Bowl champion Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

Securing an internship with the Bucs is not the only feather in Poalino's cap. She recently found out that a case study she wrote on a Purdue wrestler will be published in the *Journal of Athletic Training*.

A connection that Poalino had at Purdue helped set her up with an interview with Tampa Bay.

"I had a phone interview and was offered the internship on the spot. I accepted it two days later," Poalino said.

She found her love of football working with the Boilermakers in that sport her sophomore year. She knew then that she would gravitate toward the NFL.

This past season her main assignment at Purdue was not with the football team but she volunteered to work at three home games to stay connected.

When Poalino was a senior at Otter Valley Union High School she took a tour of Big Ten schools Ohio State and Michigan.

She decided she wanted to make a side trip to West Lafayette, Indiana to see the Purdue campus. It was love at first sight. Everything clicked.

She has not regretted the decision for a moment.

“The Purdue athletic training program is amazing. It is all that it was cracked up to be,” Poalino said.

Poalino was aware of Rutland High graduate Jordan DelBianco’s internship for athletic training with the New York Jets in 2019.

“I knew about that but I never got to talk about it with her,” Poalino said.

One of Poalino’s friends at Purdue also secured an internship in the field with the Jets.

It is an example of how tight knit the field of athletic training is.

Poalino said that is certainly true at Purdue.

“Everyone is helping everyone else here,” Poalino said.

Poalino begins the internship in July when training camp opens.

She was a standout goalkeeper at Otter Valley in soccer, an inside presence on the basketball floor and a power hitter in the middle of the Otters’ lineup in softball.

Poalino named softball as her favorite sport to play.

Softball has had to make room for football now.