

Succeeding On and Off the Ice: Sam Wauer '07 fills us in on her first year at Cornell University.



It wasn't the first time I'd heard it, nor would it be the last. "That's not what it's going to be like at university" and "you know, they don't care if you're late, a due date is a due date". As an incoming freshman attending my first year at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, I can honestly say that I wasn't entirely sure what to expect in my first year academically or athletically. Sure I had spent the last year researching universities, visiting universities and talking about going to university, but it wasn't until I actually arrived at Cornell that I understood what it was going to be like. Am I ever glad I heard those "that's not what it's going to be like at university"!

Originally, my game plan was to pursue an undergraduate degree in Biological Sciences, while undergoing the treacherous path to being accepted to medical school and finally reach the ultimate goal of becoming a doctor. Why? Sciences, biology in particular have always been a strong interest of mine. Combine that with the chronic health issues facing society today and a career as a doctor seemed like a logical goal. But, if there is one thing I have learned while attending university, it is that there is no such thing as a game plan—you require more of a guideline.

I lasted an entire week at Cornell before deciding to change my major, however much of my interests remain the same. It became apparent that a career as a doctor wasn't the only direction I could take and therefore I made a quick switch into Agricultural Sciences. This may seem like a drastic leap until you see that these two majors are not so different after all. Only in its second year as a major at Cornell, Agriculture Science includes a broad range of classes in which students are encouraged to develop a concentration in one or more of animal science, business and economics, and plant sciences. This multidisciplinary approach for a major caught my attention because of the significant biological principles in both plant and animal courses and because of the awareness of many problems it addresses on both the international and local scales in our food system. Agriculture itself is seen in some form just



about everywhere in the world and so concerns regarding the sustainability and ethics of our current practices have nonetheless been raised and are discussed within the classroom. While not everyone is a farmer, agriculture is a relevant and unique subject in that it links everyone on this planet together from something as simple as our need to eat.

Of course, Cornell wasn't just all about study, study, study. Well alright, that's a lie but for a couple hours a day I was able to break free from the books and escape to the rink. Being an overall young team with nine first-year players, Cornell women's hockey had its best season in years. In fact, the team's goals were to secure a spot in the playoffs and have 10 wins by the end of the season, both of which were achieved. This success cannot be accredited to luck, but to literally the blood, sweat, and tears of my teammates daily in the weight room and on the ice. I realize that I am privileged to have been given an opportunity to play along side and against talented athletes and to be coached by such a proficient coaching staff. Although I will greatly miss our graduating senior players, I look forward to the 2008–2009 season with our new and returning players with hopes that we will again achieve our pre-season goals and exceed our own expectations.

Balancing academics and athletics can simply be described as a never-ending juggling act. As a former student-athlete at Balmoral Hall School, time management was a skill to be learned and mastered right from day one and proved to be extremely valuable. I was recognized as a member of the ECAC All Academic Team for maintaining a GPA of 3.0 or higher while playing a university sport.

Where I am today is largely due to the support of all the staff at Balmoral Hall School whether in the classroom setting, administrative offices, or on the ice. I can't tell you how great a feeling it is when I can look back on my first year of Cornell University and say I truly felt prepared. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Balmoral Hall School for giving me the tools I needed to pursue my dreams and I know, they will continue to do the same for others in the future.