

TRAILBLAZING 10

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Changing the Game

Sports aficionados Kevin McGuire and Michael Perrett tackle the football industry head-on.



It's like Jerry Maguire meets the A—minus the whole angsty “who’s coming with me” thing. Enter **Kevin**

McGuire and **Michael Perrett**, supersuccessful 30-somethings who branched out from their posts as established A-Town SportsTrust Advisors to co-create NFL agency Element Sports Group last July.

Hardly rookies, the go-getters opened the playing field with 18 athletes—including gridiron-greats Marcus Lattimore (49ers), Geno Atkins (Bengals) and Gwinnett County boys Cameron Heyward (Steelers) and Bradley Roby (Broncos)—moving agency from STA. “They felt our passion, our drive, and knew we had the experience—[25 years combined]—to get the job done,” says McGuire.

Both partners earned degrees in finance, “in case the sports thing didn’t work out,” says McGuire, who graduated from the University of Florida and also has a J.D. from St. Thomas University School of Law. Southern California boy Perrett’s sheepskin is from UGA. They met in 2005, when McGuire landed an STA internship with an agent he knew from law school—an internship that, he admits, “did not yet exist” and his acquaintance was not authorized to create. Perrett had come to STA three years before that, after an intern-to-hire stint at powerhouse IMG, where he worked for super-agent Tom Condon (now at CAA Sports—hey, Peyton Manning!).

With a shared entrepreneurial spirit—“Both our fathers are entrepreneurs, so we [always] had the itch to start our own thing,” says McGuire—the pair has negotiated their way, literally, from the bottom to the top of the field. “We walked away from an established agency and bet on ourselves,” says McGuire. “In our industry, agents change companies all the time, but they rarely start their own thing—they usually opt for the safer bet and just join another established agency.”

Exploding to 27 clients, with huge success in the 2015 draft (dealing players to the Broncos, Steelers, Jaguars, Panthers and

more), their drive is already paying off. “In addition to the [initial] 18, we signed seven for the 2015 NFL draft [six are SEC!] and have signed a few other veterans,” says Perrett.

The formula? “Being an agent at Element is not a typical 9-to-5 job,” says Perrett. “We travel a lot; we live on our cellphones; we work days, nights, weekends and holidays. It’s definitely a lifestyle around here, not a job.”

So what’s the future look like for these primetime players? “Stay tuned,” says McGuire. But, spoiler alert: “The best is yet to come for us and our clients,” adds Perrett. “We’ve only scratched the surface.” @element_sports —Melissa Howsam