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Gregor swings a sweet bat and string bass

Jim Ecker

Conrad Gregor and his teammates took a 12-hour bus ride from Indiana to New York for a major event this year, but it wasn't for a baseball tournament. No, this trip was for a performance at the famed Lincoln Center in New York City, and his teammates were members of the orchestra from Carmel High School, not the baseball team.

They didn't go to see a performance at the Lincoln Center. They went to perform themselves. Gregor is a 6-foot-3, 220-pound member of the Carmel orchestra who plays the string bass.

"That's sort of a hidden talent that a lot of people don't know about me," he said.

Gregor is also a talented 6-foot-3, 220-pound first baseman and outfielder at Carmel High, talented enough to make the Aflac All-American High School Classic in San Diego on Aug. 16. He can play sweet music with his string bass or his bat, a .400-plus hitter with power and a musical ear.

He's been playing the string bass since the sixth grade. "It's relaxing for me," he said. "It relieves my stress during the day."

Gregor said he greatly enjoyed the trip to New York City this year. They got to see the sights of New York, including the Statue of Liberty and Empire State Building, and the orchestra won its competition at the Lincoln Center.

Gregor seems to succeed at just about everything he tries. He's got a 3.4 GPA and posted a 1900 on the SAT exam. He helped Carmel High School win the state football title in 2007 as a tight end, but stopped playing football after that season to focus on baseball. "I knew I wanted to play baseball, because that's what I love most," he said.

The Carmel High School football coach reluctantly let him go. "He was upset," said Gregor, "but he was OK with the choice I made."

Gregor has been a decorated scholar-athlete at Carmel High School who also helps with Special Olympics. He takes education, sports and music seriously.

"Both my parents value education highly," he said. "Getting an education and a good degree will help me in life if baseball doesn't work out."

Gregor has committed to play college baseball at Vanderbilt, pending the draft. He's been spending the summer in Ohio, playing baseball for the Midland Redskins. He left home the first week of June and won't return until the third week of August, following the Aflac game at PETCO Park in San Diego.

He's never been away from home for such a long period of time. "Never in my life," he said.

He's been living with one of Midland's coaches this summer. He's said the experience of being away from home has helped him mature and accept more responsibilities.

"Fixing meals, doing your laundry, getting places and getting to practice on time," he said. "It's managing your daily schedule."

He's also had a good time with the team.

"It's going well," he said. "I've learned so many little things about the game and had a lot of fun."

Gregor's long summer away from home is almost over, but he's still got a trip to New Mexico for a tournament and the trip to San Diego for the Aflac game.

"It's just such an honor," he said of being an Aflac All-American. "I'm thankful I'll get an opportunity to play. It's one of the most important games of the year."



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