Des Moines team takes state crown

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Gazette sports reporter

Des Moines dropped a bomb on Cedar Rapids this weekend.

It didn't endanger any lives. But it exploded a few hopes.

The Des Moines Coors-Bombers destroyed everything in their path while sweeping the Men's ASA State Fast-pitch Softball Tournament at the Kirkwood-Welty Complex.

The Coors-Bombers climaxed a near flawless tourney Sunday night with a 7-3 victory over Penn Corporation of Sioux City in the championship game.

"We played excellent defense and we hit the ball real well," said Coors-Bomber manager Ron German. "This is the best we've played this year. But we always play for August. August and September is the time to play."

The Des Moines team started its waltz through the tourney Friday night with a 1-0 victory over Climate Control and ended it with two victories on Sunday.

In the title game, the Coors-Bombers jumped out to a 7-0 lead by scoring in the first, third, fourth, sixth and seventh innings.

And Coors' pitcher Gene Olson was taming Penn Corp's bats by

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allowing just three hits through six frames.

But in the bottom of the seventh, Penn Corp erupted for four hits and three runs thanks mainly to Ron Ege's two-run homer.

But Denny Linderbaum then relieved Olson and retired the final two batters.

Despite Olson's seventh inning, the veteran hurler was named the Most Valuable Pitcher. He won three games, gave up 16 hits, struck out 22 and walked just four. The only runs he allowed came in the seventh inning of the finale.

Coors' Willie Herndon earned the Most Valuable Player award by knocking in two runs with a pair of hits in the title game. Herndon finished the tourney with a .533 average and nine runs-batted-in.

"We had some great performance out of Wille Herndon and Hector Sanchez . . . and everybody else," said German, "Everyone in our lineup hit the ball."

The Coors-Bombers will now face Modern Piping of Cedar Rapids in the first round of the regional tournament in St. Joseph, Mo. over the Labor Day weekend.

"No matter what the season has brought us we're always capable of beating them (Modern)," said German, noting that the Pipers have beaten his team seven of eight times this year. "We're looking forward to playing them."

ADM, the only local team to survive the first three days of th tourney, was elminated, 3-0, by Penn Corp in the loser's bracket semifinal. In that game, ADM's Roger Bruner gave up three runs and four hits in the first inning. But he then bore down and gave up just two hits over the final six innings.