

LEWISTON, ID – Senior Matt Greener, who earlier in the day was named the NAIA's Player of the Year, hit a grand-slam home run and drove in six runs as No. 2 Cumberland earned a berth in the championship game of the NAIA World Series with a 13-7 win over Point Loma Nazarene Thursday afternoon.

CU will plays again Thursday for its second national title in a 9 p.m. CT game vs. Lee University, a 10-7 winner of Embry-Riddle in the finals of the losers' bracket. Cumberland needs only one win either tonight or Friday to clinch the championship.

"We are a good offensive team, but we will face some good pitching tonight," said Cumberland coach Woody Hunt. "We just have to keep doing it. It feels pretty good (to advance to Championship game). We have been here before. We have enough runner-up trophies so want to win this one."

Greener, who led the NAIA in hits and RBI during the regular season, remained tied with teammate Kris Miller for the home run lead as both went deep in the game.

Because Cumberland (57-9 overall) is undefeated in the 10-team double-elimination tournament, it can still claim the title on Friday if it should lose Thursday night.

Cumberland's bats continue to be the talk of the tournament. The Bulldogs are averaging 10 runs a game and have hit 14 home runs in four games, nearly triple the total of anyone else in the field.

In the win over Point Loma, the Bulldogs hit four as Sam Kikla joined in the fun with two home runs to reach 20 on the season.

Kikla ignited the Bulldogs early when after Greg Appleton singled through the left side to start the bottom of the first, the senior shortstop hit a two-run home run to left field.

Point Loma scored its first run in the third on Tyler Kuehl's RBI double, but a solo home run by Kikla and a two-run shot by Miller, who also was named to the NAIA All-America First Team, put the Bulldogs up 5-1. Appleton added an RBI single to make it 6-1.

Senior lefty Adam Sprague picked up the win to improve to 8-2. He allowed 12 hits and six runs (three earned) in 7.2 innings.

Bulldog bites: Cumberland improves to 24-18 in World Series action and won the 2004 title – of the three remaining teams, the Bulldogs are the only ones with a World Series title ... Point Loma Nazarene falls to 13-10 in the World Series... The Sea Lions are eliminated but have won at least three games in each of their last World Series trips.