

# Blackburn College Men Lose in Semifinals of SLIAC Tournament

by Tom Emery  
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ST. LOUIS - The Blackburn College men's basketball team lost 85-77 to Webster at Webster University in the semifinals of the St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference tournament Thursday evening, Feb. 27.

Blackburn trailed 45-36 at the half, but a layup from senior guard Nigel Farrell (St. Louis) with 16:14 remaining cut the lead to 54-51. That was as close as Blackburn could get, however, and Webster led by as many as twelve the rest of the way.

Senior guard Karson Hayes (Little Rock, Ark.) led Blackburn with 20 points, while junior guard Bryson Kirby (Lincoln, Ill.) finished with ten points, eight rebounds and a game-high seven assists.

Sophomore forward Christian Wagner (San Diego, Calif.) added 17 points and seven rebounds for Blackburn, which shot 42.4 percent from the field and 11-of-29 from three-point range. Junior wing Jaron Stovall (Canton, Ohio) scored 13 off the bench for Blackburn (13-13).

Josh Johnson led Webster (18-8) with 25 points.

It was Blackburn's third consecutive appearance in the SLIAC tournament. The top four regular-season finishers qualify for the conference tournament.

The Beavers reached double digits in victories for the fifth straight year in 2019-20.



**Blackburn Men's Basketball Team Qualifies For SLIAC Tournament**

The Blackburn College men's basketball team will open play in the St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference tournament Thursday evening, Feb. 27 at Webster at 7:30 p.m.

It is the third straight SLIAC tournament appearance for Blackburn, which finished in a three-way tie for second place in the conference at 12-6 (13-12 overall). The top four regular-season finishers qualify for the SLIAC tournament, where the winner receives an automatic bid to the NCAA Division III tournament.

Blackburn clinched its spot in the tournament with wins in its final two games, beginning with a 133-129 victory over Greenville at home on Wednesday, Feb. 19.

The Beavers shot a blistering 65.8 percent in the game and held a massive 58-31 advantage in rebounds. Blackburn also dished out a season-high 45 assists.

Eight Blackburn players finished in double figures, led by senior guard Karson Hayes (Little Rock, Ark.) with a game-high 23 points and junior Jaron Stovall (Canton, Ohio) with 22 points. Sophomore guard Chanz Aldridge (Hillside, Ill.) finished with 20 points and 11 assists.

The 262 total points set a record for most points scored in a Blackburn men's basketball game, breaking the old mark of 258, set against Greenville on Jan. 18, 2017.

The game also marked the 154th all-time meeting between Blackburn and Greenville. Blackburn then concluded the regular season with a 70-58 win at Spalding University in Louisville, Ky. on Saturday afternoon, Feb. 22. Playing without Hayes, the team's leading scorer, Blackburn allowed Spaulding to score the first twelve points of the game before trimming the deficit to 40-33 at halftime.

The Beavers then trailed 54-41 with 11:03 remaining in the game before going on a 16-0 run to take a lead they never relinquished.

Aldridge tossed in a career-high 32 points, while Stovall finished with 20 points and a team-high seven rebounds. Blackburn was 11-of-23 from three-point range in the game.