

# Blackburn Men's Soccer Team Plays In Spring - Again

by Tom Emery  
March 22 2021 1:41 PM



CARLINVILLE - After months of delay from the pandemic, the Blackburn College men's soccer team is playing a limited schedule this spring. While it's unusual, it's not unprecedented.

The first games in the history of men's soccer at Blackburn were spring games, part of a two-game schedule in the second semester of the 1954-55 academic year. Blackburn beat Greenville 3-1 in the program's inaugural contest in April 1955, then won a rematch 2-1 the next month.

Blackburn actually faced Greenville in the first seven games in program history, winning six. The head coach was Charles Gray, a beloved figure on the Blackburn campus during his time in Carlinville, which lasted until 1963.

This year's edition of the Beavers opened their season with a 2-1 win at Principia on March 13 as freshman forward Luke Atkinson (Alton / Marquette Catholic) scored the game-winner with 21 seconds remaining.

It was the second goal of the game for Atkinson, who earned Offensive Player of the Week honors from the St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference. The Defensive Player of the Week award went to Blackburn sophomore goalkeeper Dawson Klunk (Roxana), who stopped ten of eleven shots on goal, including two penalty kick saves.

Atkinson added another goal as five different players scored for Blackburn in a 5-0 victory at Eureka on March 17.

The Blackburn head coach is Rob Steinkuehler, a Jerseyville product who is in his eighth season at the helm. A 2004 Jerseyville graduate, Steinkeuhler played at Lewis and Clark Community College before transferring to Blackburn, where he was a two-time Most Valuable Player.

Blackburn collected National Small College Athletic Association titles in both 1981 and 1983, as well as nine championships in the old Prairie College Conference between 1964-87.

*Tom Emery is a freelance writer and historical researcher from Carlinville. He may be reached at 217-710-8392 or [ilcivilwar@yahoo.com](mailto:ilcivilwar@yahoo.com).*