

North Have Dazzling Prospects in League Football

SIX TEAMS EVEN NORTH, STURT, TORRENS, GLENELG SHOULD WIN OPENING GAMES CHANCES REVIEWED

O'GRADY SAYS—

WITH the opening of the football season next Saturday four interesting games are set down for decision. The engagements are:—

North v. Norwood, at Prospect. Port v. Torrens, at Alberton.
South v. Sturt, at Adelaide. West v. Glenelg, at Wayville.

North appear sure to defeat Norwood, but the winners of the other three games are fairly well concealed. It is probable that Sturt, Torrens, and Glenelg may be on top at the close of play, but each of these teams is playing on the opponent's ground, and it may be expecting too much for them all to win.

ALTHOUGH the football public would like to see the game played under the old rules it is generally realised that the South Australian Football League has done all it can to place the game back on its former attractive basis.

North were unquestionably the best team of last season, and, whereas their most serious rivals, Port and Sturt, have had their ranks seriously depleted, North not only enter the fray with their champion side almost intact, but appear to have acquired fresh talent. On paper, therefore, North overshadow all other teams in the competition.

Norwood appear to be of about the same strength as last season, but Torrens, South, and Glenelg have distinctly brighter prospects. West also have improved, but the Wayville team may not be equal to gaining a place in the final four.

TEAM OF STARS

Dealing with the North and Norwood match at Prospect, it is difficult to see how the redlegs will be able seriously to extend last season's premiers.

Of course, the result of any match is always subject to doubt, as the West Torrens team of 1925 well remember. In the first match of that season West Torrens, fresh from their first premiership victory of 1924, met Glenelg, which up to then had not won a match in league football, having suffered 56 consecutive defeats. Some such surprise may be in store for the football public next Saturday.



North Goalsneak—K. Farmer.

North will field much the same team as carried them to victory last season, although it is reported that R. Drew, a brother of the State wingman, is sure of inclusion in the side as rover. It is difficult to find fault with the North side. With such star performers as Farmer, Burton, Drew, Mackay, Hawke, and Hamilton, and with promising juniors like Burns and Phillis, North appear to have the best team seen in the league since the Norwood combination of 10 years ago. Norwood can never be taken cheaply. Considerable improvement can be expected in the form of several of the juniors of last year.

In the circumstances Norwood do not look like a team capable of rising to any great height, although local supporters expect much from Curver, a half-forward of great promise. Norwood appear to have about the same prospects as last year. The teams that finished lower on the list than the redlegs appear to have been strengthened this season.

The game between South and Sturt at Adelaide should be keen. Sturt have lost Martin, Whitehead, Simon, and R. Green. They therefore must find juniors of exceptional ability to make the team as strong as that of last season. It is possible that these men may be successfully replaced, but in the first few matches Sturt probably will not be as strong as they will be later in the season. On the other hand, South are a team that may show great improvement on their form of last year.

McGregor will captain the team. That must have a steadying influence. In their game in the last two seasons South have shown good football, and none of their opponents has been able to take them cheaply. What South really need are two or three first-class players capable of dominating the key positions of the field.

GOOD GAME

A good game should be witnessed at Alberton, where a strengthened Torrens 18 will meet a reconstructed Port side. Port have lost several stars, including Dayman, V. Johnson, and Waye. These three players were the backbone of the side last year. Last season Port had a serious ruck weakness, and the departure of V. Johnson and Waye may have weakened it still further. In losing Dayman, the Port attack is a doubtful quantity. Hopes are entertained that Wightman may fashion into a champion. He was brought into the finals last year, but in his first appearance he did little. He showed style, however, and when more at home may produce good form.

On the other hand, Torrens will be stronger. For two or three seasons the Thebarton team has relied upon vigor, and has disregarded skill to a large extent. This year many of the players having gained experience, and the acquisition of two or three new men, Torrens appear likely to field their best team since 1925.

Early in last season Torrens' ruck, led by Bridgman and McKenzie, carried all before them, but an injury to the latter crippled the team in this direction. Williamson, the young captain of the side, showed brilliant form last season, and if he again plays in the ruck Torrens will probably have the strongest combination of followers in the game, and with two good rovers in Bertam and Drury, must gain many scoring opportunities. During the week a brother of McKenzie has trained with the team, and hopes are entertained about him. It is thought that he may prove ideal for the centre half-back position.

In attack much is expected from Tabe, who formerly played for South, and will be entrusted with the centre half-forward position.

Despite the wonderful record of Port at Alberton, Torrens appear to have a good chance of success.

The fourth game of the series, that between West and Glenelg at Wayville, also promises to be even. The return of Snell must assist West. If Snell reproduces his best form he should improve the Wayville

team by two or three goals at least. The return of Stokes, and the acquisition of McInerney and Callier from Port will give the team mer of experience.

West appear to me to be the weak side of the competition and I do not anticipate that they will finish high on the list. The match will be played at Wayville. This, no doubt will give West a better chance, but I anticipate that Glenelg will win.

The seaside team is one of possibilities. If Sallis can be retained, and this is quite on the cards, Glenelg will win many games, particularly on the home ground. Although they might not quite get there, Glenelg must be given a chance of getting into the final four. It looks as if Owens has retained his goalgetting ability, and it only remains for Handby to show his best form for Glenelg to be a well-balanced side.



Returning to West—R. Snell.

OWENS' GREAT KICKING—21 GOALS, 10 IN ONE TERM

WITH 25 shots, Owens, the Glenelg goalsneak, kicked 21 goals in the practice game at Glenelg today. He kicked 10 of them in the second quarter.

Morton (Sturt) kicked 7 goals, and Farmer (North) 6.

OWENS is in wonderful form. He kicked 10 goals in another trial game recently.

The seashiders' attack worked like a machine. Link and L. Griffiths, who scouted for the ruck, gave Owens many chances. So uncanny was his judgment with his left foot screw punt that he missed only four times in 25 shots.

P. Winkler, who has played forward and goalkeeper for the team in the past, was given a trial at centre. He should keep this position in league matches. Sound position play, safe marking, and accurate kicking make him a very effective player.

Stott, a B Grade wingman, played well. He always finds a man with his kick, and is a fine battler. Percy, a much improved ruckman, should be an outstanding player this season. On his form at present Link looks like a State candidate. He has plenty of speed from the crushes.

Dunbar, at half-back, showed a return to his form of several seasons ago.

GLENELG AT GLENELG

Final—Glenelg A, 26—17; Glenelg B, 11—4.
Goalkeepers.—Glenelg A—Owens (21), Link (3), L. Griffiths, Wunderaltz. Glenelg B—C. Rosewarne (4), Vertue (3), Cuygenven, Sugars, T. Scott, Hart.

Best Players.—Glenelg A—Owens, Link, L. Griffiths, Dunbar, Percy, Winkler. Glenelg B—Sugars, Stott, Gregory, Brock, Power, Morley.

STURT AT UNLEY

Final—Sturt A, 16—15; Sturt B, 10—7.
Goalkeepers.—Sturt A—Morton (7), Wunderaltz (3), A. G. Smith (2), Rosenthal, Green, G. Heaton, Leak. Sturt B—Hayes (4), King (3), Margittich, J. Golding, Toms.

Best Players.—Sturt A—Mussman, Dunn, Wunderaltz, Bateman, Morton, Parsons, Sims. Sturt B—Beeching, King, Reeves, Alstrop, Morzan, Klinear.

WEST AT WAYVILLE

Final—West A, 17—17; West B, 6—13.
Goalkeepers.—West A—Kempster, Parry, Golding (each 3), Bottomley, A. Williams (each 2), Roberts, D. Williams, Jarvis, McGrath. West B—Rooney (4), Jennings, Thomas.

Best Players.—West A—E. Mason, Parry, A. Williams, Callier, Bottomley. West B—Cahill, Hamilton Molan, Rooney, M. Keane, Walsh.

NORTH AT PROSPECT

Final—North A, 16—11; North B, 9—9.
Goalkeepers.—North A—Farmer (6), P. Lewis (2), B. Burns, Munn (each 2), Hardwick, N. Drew, Taylor. North B—Symons (4), R. Drew (3), Hopgood, Hammers.

Best Players.—North A—R. May, McNamara, D. McInnes, N. Drew, McKay. North B—Munn, Knuckey, Slattery, R. Drew, Tompkins, Melvin.

TORRENS AT THEBARTON

Final—Blues, 11—14; Browns, 7—10.
Goalkeepers.—Blues—Thornton (3), Read (2), N. Head, Bertram, Loughlin, Bridgman, Tabe, Blight, Browns—Riley (3), MacKenzie, Quick, Horsborough, Shaw.

Best Players.—Blues—Hine, Tabe, Pontifax, Bertram, Conroy, N. Head, Quinn, Browns—Bray, Quick, Horsborough, Riley.

NORWOOD AT NORWOOD

Final—Norwood A, 14—15; Norwood B, 14—10.
Goalkeepers.—Norwood A—P. McCallum (4), Plumstead, Medlin, Krome, Curver (each 2), Sorrell, Woods. Norwood B—Lyon (6), Mutton (5), Biddell (2), Bertram.

Best Players.—Norwood A—Page, Hall, Madern, Johns, Sorrell, Medlin, W. McCallum, Pike. Norwood B—Plunkett, Sawley, Watt, Philcox, G. Paze, Allington, Mutton.

PORT AT ALBERTON

Final—Port A, 14—8; Port B, 11—6.
Goalkeepers.—Port A—N. Hender (3), Kella-way, Jones, Ritch, Jennings (each 2), Logan, Thompson, and Bampton. Port B—J. Johnson (5), Ede, and West (each 2), Hyde, Hooper.

Best Players.—Port A—Mott, Jones, R. Johnson, Jennings, Eden, N. Hender. Port B—Mucklow, Richards, J. Johnson, Franson, Elme, West.

SOUTH AT ADELAIDE

Final—Blues, 20—28; Reds, 5—10.
Goalkeepers.—Blues—Gardiner, Hebbard (each 4), Hall, Masters, Frith (each 3), McGregor (2), Venning. Reds—Munro (2), Sullivan, Bloustein, Forrester.

Best Players.—Blues—Jaffer, Masters, Tully, Vedung, Gardiner, C. Rose, Hall. Reds—Hannan, Bloustein, Dayman, Baxter, Sisson, R. C. Dunn.

Footballers Put on Full Pressure in Trials

10 GOALS TO OWENS

Selectors Watch Play of Many League Aspirants

SNELL IN GOOD FORM

(By O. J. O'GRADY)

RECENT rains have put all football grounds in good shape for practice. Players of the eight league teams were able to put on full pressure in to-day's trials, and selectors closely watched the form displayed. Many unsuccessful aspirants will be retired from the training lists in the coming week.

At Glenelg Owens showed he can still kick goals. After getting his tenth goal he retired from the ground. Snell, who played in Tasmania last season, reappeared for West, and showed that he is still a force to be reckoned with.

North players took things quietly, but R. Drew, a brother of N. Drew, showed great form. He also plays at centre wing.

TEN GOALS—RETIREES

The feature of the game at Glenelg was the goalkicking of Owens, who registered 10 goals in first-class style. Even when the ball was wet he held it safely. After he had kicked his tenth goal towards the close of the last quarter he ran off the field to change.

An excellent impression was made by Power, a big, fast boy who is only 18 years of age. He was the best ruckman on the ground. Goldsworthy was not as promising as last week. James, a local jumper, did well in goals. Colman shone with clever play at centre, and Winkler gave a polished exhibition of forward work.

DETAILS OF PLAY

Football scores and details were:—

PORT ADELAIDE (Alberton)

Final—Port A, 14—10; Port B, 8—11.
Goalkickers.—Port A—Ritch (5), Kellaway (3), Logan, Whitaker (each 2), Jones, and Ween. Port B—J. Johnson (3), Sax (2), Brown, Eds, J. Allingham.

Best Players.—Port A—Kellaway, Jennings, Logan, Ritch, C. Whicker, Eden. Port B—Brown, J. Doyle, West, Robertson, Elme, Richards.

WEST ADELAIDE (Wayville)

Final—Black-and-whites, 11—12; Red-and-blues, 10—13.

Goalkickers.—Red-and-blues—Elliott, Whelan, H. Graham (each 2), Rooney, Golding, Janis, and Adey. Black-and-whites—Parry (4), A. Williams (3), Bellhouse (2), Bottomley, Roberts.

GLENELG (Glenelg)

Final—Reds, 17—17; Blacks, 8—13.
Goalkickers.—Reds—Owens (10), Cirgeven (4), Goldsworthy, Link, and Veale. Blacks—Hart and Moyle (each 2), Wright, Jansen, Power, L. Griffiths.

Best Players.—Reds—Owens, James, K. Olliver, Winkler, Stott, W. Scott. Black—Power, L. Griffiths, Curnow, Colman, Dunbar, W. Griffiths.

NORWOOD (Norwood)

Final—Blues, 10—12; Reds, 9—15.
Goalkickers.—Blues—Phillips (4), W. McCallum (3), Larson, Cock, Woodroffe. Reds—Krome (3), Mutton (2), Window, P. McCallum, Bertram, Lyon.

Best Players.—Blues—Woodroffe, Woods, Hickman, Phillips, G. Page. Reds—Curryer, H. Page, Maddern, Johns.

WEST TORRENS (Thebarton)

First Game.—Final—Blue No. 1, 6—7; Brown No. 1, 3—9.

Goalkickers.—Blue—Shaw (4), Tink (2). Brown—Munn, Kersley, and Horsborough.
Best Players.—Blue—O'Leary, Shaw, Reed. Brown—Kersley, Jones, Perkins.

Second Game.—Final—Brown, 5—8; Blue, 5—2.

Goalkickers.—Brown—Maddern, Bertram, Horsborough, Tabe, N. Head. Blue—McKenzie (2), T. Head, Thornton, Quinn.

Best Players.—Brown—Bertram, N. Head, Drury, Washington, Frogley. Blue—Quinn, Buckton, Bray, T. Head.

STURT (Unley)

Final—Blues, 9—17; Reds, 7—9.

Goalkickers.—Blues—Hayes (4), Hoaking (3), Walsh, Johnson. Reds—Hannan, Headon (each 2), Blakeway, W. Smith, Heath.

Best Players.—Blues—Mussman, Sims, Hayes, Wadham, Wunderwitz. Reds—Rosenthal, Fisher, Alstrop, Johnston.

SOUTH ADELAIDE (Paysonham)

Third Quarter—Blues, 11—13; Reds, 4—10. (Match postponed because of rain.)

Goalkickers.—Blues—Tully, C. Munro, McCarthy (each 3), Hillier, and Gardner.

Reds—Pitcher (3), McGregor.
Best Players.—Blues—Tully, Jaffer, McCarthy, Gardner, Mutch, Masters. Reds—Hassett, O'Connell, W. Munro, Croft, Baxter, Murlie.

O'Grady Says

NORTH'S BRIGHT PROSPECTS FOR PREMIESHIP

IN 1914 Port went through the season with an undefeated record. North enter the coming season with excellent prospects. Can they do what the magpies did?

Port had to win 14 games for their record. Nowadays it is necessary to win 19 successive games to go through the season undefeated.

The league competition will begin on Saturday April 30. Although the vexed rule question still casts its shadow over the game, the coming season should at least be as successful as last year.

Most clubs are faced with team building tasks. North, last season's premiers, should again field a strong eighteen. On paper North have a great chance of heading the list again. No post-war team has entered the season with such bright prospects.

With such a galaxy of talent still available, and with other teams weakened, North face the coming games with confidence. The team will probably have a dull patch at some period of the season, but for the first part North should win their games comfortably. Later on some of the other teams may mould into solid combinations and North's progress would then be seriously challenged.

Of the many factors that might put North out of gear, there is one that is outstanding. How would the red-and-whites get along without Farmer? His ability to get the ball for himself makes North's method of attack quite simple.

Port have suffered more than any other team by the loss of prominent players. Sturt also have to find several new stars.

Norwood have about equal prospects to 1931, but Torrens, a young, vigorous side, South under McGregor, and Glenelg may do better than last year.

It is difficult to see West retrieving their fortunes in 1932.

Muddle Over the Rules

Should the South Australian Football League defy the Australian Football Council and revert to the 1924 rules of the game?

It is a step that may eventually have to be taken, but I would advise patience for a little while. The council should be given a chance to redeem its mistakes, but if a narrow coterie of officials can block the desires of an overwhelming majority of supporters, then there is only one thing to do.

In the interests of the game the South Australian league would be justified in taking almost any step to achieve its objectives.

In any case the application of the old boundary and handball rules for the coming season seems a possibility too remote for consideration. There may be much noise, but there will be little action.

Two years ago in "The Mail" the football public of South Australia voiced its opinion in favor of the old rules.

Since the close of last season, eight Victorian league clubs have taken a vote on the subject. No fewer than 5,920 members plumped for the old rules against 329 in favor of the new.

A Melbourne newspaper recently conducted a plebiscite on the question, and the public by 10,725 votes to 1,290 favored the old rules.

In the face of all this it is difficult to imagine why those in power cannot see their duty clearly.

South Australian officials made a mistake in 1924, and are quite prepared to admit it. If the officials in other States do not quickly fall into line the disintegration of the Australian Football Council may follow.