

SIX FIGHT FOR THE FOUR

Sam Gallagher's football review

Wins to Torrens, Norwood, and Sturt in today's league football have made the fight for the final four the most open for years.

The widest margin was Sturt's 27-point win over North. Torrens had 10 points to spare from Port while Glenelg and Norwood scraped in by a point.

With seven games to the finals, only three points separate Torrens in first place from Sturt, sixth.

Port, Norwood, and Sturt are level on 14 points for fourth, but Port's percentage is far superior and this is as good as a two-point margin over the Redlegs and the Blues.

Converted

Grounds for today's matches were still heavy, but the weather held and the four games deserved a far better attendance than the 33,000-odd recorded.

On the heavy Thebarton Oval, Torrens broke Port's drive to the finals when they held the Magpies scoreless in the last quarter and converted a 21-point deficit into a 10-point win.

However, Port seemed to have the game won at the last change so ground conditions cannot be held entirely responsible for their defeat.

Stan Wickham, reporting this game, said Torrens won the wings, which gave them the balance across centre, and their defence played right up to its reputation as the safest in the league.

At Unley, in spite of the loss of Hill, Sturt's ruck strength was sufficient to bring their rovers into the game and this hit North,

where they were most vulnerable.

With so much at stake, tempers were close to boiling point throughout and there was a wild melee in the third quarter when Lindner clashed with Wiebusch.

At Kensington, too, Norwood and West turned on a fiery exhibition.

The Redlegs, full of determination to recover prestige, gave West no chance to break away in the first half.

Helped by position changes, West played a commanding third quarter but were unable to go on with it.

They kicked 8-2 of their match tally of 11-8 in the third quarter, and went down by a point to Norwood's strong finish.

At Adelaide, Glenelg and South fought out another one-point decision.

Glenelg's rovers, playing strongly throughout, had a large share in the Bay's narrow win, Howard's six goals being a particularly valuable contribution.

South labored under the self imposed handicap of inaccurate shooting for goal. They had 31 scoring shots to Glenelg's 22.

For Norwood and Sturt, the pressure next week will be undiminished. Both are away from home, Norwood at the uncongenial Pros-

pect Oval and Sturt at Richmond.

With Port likely to win at Alberton against South, Norwood and Sturt must win to keep in touch with the top four.

At Prospect, North will be all out to return to winning form and avenge their decisive defeat at Norwood's hands earlier this season.

With Amery fit and Oatey roving in great style, the Redlegs have the roving strength to put North off balance.

However, the Red-and-Whites are notoriously hard to beat at home and Norwood can expect no easy passage.

West were beaten today by sheer determination. Their big win last week and Norwood's defeat by Sturt may have induced a feeling of complacency about today's game.

That West have skill to burn was shown clearly in their third quarter today, but they will meet a very determined and co-ordinated Sturt.

Today the Blues stopped North's power at its main source, on the wings.

If they can do the same to West they could well make up the one game leeway to the Red-and-Blacks.

In the remaining game, Torrens should retain top place by beating Glenelg at Thebarton.

KICKING GAINED 1-PT. WIN

By BOB HANK

Glenelg and South topped off a splendid game at Adelaide Oval with a thrilling see-saw finish that saw Glenelg one point in front.

	1st	2nd	3rd	Final	Pts.
Glenelg	4-2	8-4	12-7	15-7	97
South	2-2	9-8	10-14	13-18	96

The Tigers' straight kicking at goal had kept them in touch, and it was fitting that rover Frank Howard should kick the winning goal and thus give him a match-winning tally of six goals without a miss.

South, on the other hand, missed several relatively easy shots. And what proved the costliest error of all was the absolute sitter missed by Lindsay Backman in the final quarter.

On the day South had far more play than Glenelg, and even the Tiger supporters would have acknowledged the Panthers as superior had they just held their slender lead instead of losing it right on the siren.

Accurate

The game began with accurate scoring, five goals without a miss coming in the first 12 minutes of play. This was good football considering the still churned-up surface of the oval.

Wingman Gerry O'Brien gave South tremendous drive from his sector, but with Linke and Richens solid in defence the Panthers' scoring opportunities were kept in check.

Howard and Fraser were already exerting an influence with their smart scouting on the fringes, and this became even more marked as the game went on.

South had gone into the crosswind first up, and with the help of the breeze in the second term did most of the attacking.

Darley and Kantilla were winning most of the ruck duels, but although skipper Ian Day was striving hard, Fraser was the smartest thief around the fringes.

A goal to new Tiger full-forward Westley just before half-time cut South's lead to 10 points.

Had South flanker Peter Wilson not missed a couple of snaps at goal, their lead would have been more in keeping with their superior play.

Glenelg replaced Button at centre with Anesbury, and with O'Brien and Ploenges winning well on the wings for South, the Tigers needed someone to match Walker at centre so as to give Glenelg some share of the midfield play.

Still South were getting to the ball first, and, playing with plenty of confidence, they had opportunities to go right ahead.

But they raised five behinds straight.

Glenelg, with Howard (2) and Button getting goals from limited chances, clung to their narrow lead.

When Ross, who was now getting value from his second-half dogged play, goaled soon after the last term began, South had regained the lead and the battle was really on.

Then South suffered a body blow that may have cost them victory.

Darley unfortunately and quite accidentally collected Blackburn's knee on the side of the head as he vainly tried to gather the ball on the ground.



Howard O'Brien

He was carried off in a very dazed state, and from then on the Glenelg ruckmen grasped the initiative that finally helped them to their narrow and belated victory.

Howard's six goals were, as I said earlier, a match winning effort, although yellow-rover Fraser was more under notice in the field play.

South had more winners than the Tigers, noticeably across centre where O'Brien and Walker all day, and Ploenges in the second half in particular, gave their side attacking impetus.

QUICK LOOK AT LEAGUE GAMES

Ground: Very heavy. Weather: Fine

AT ADELAIDE

	1st	2nd	3rd	Final	Pts.
Glen'lg	4-2	8-4	12-7	15-7	97
South	2-2	9-8	10-14	13-18	96

BEST PLAYERS—GLENELG: Howard, Fraser, Richens, Linke, Blackburn, Hunt, Anesbury, J. Long. **SOUTH:** O'Brien, Darley, Walker, Ploenges, Day, Backman, Jackson, Shaw, Kantilla.

SCORERS—GLENELG: Howard 6.0, Fraser 2.2, Westley 2.0, Tucker 2.0, Payne 1.1, Anesbury 1.0, Button 1.0, Kernahan 0.1, Blackburn 0.1, Cutten 0.1, rushed 0.1. **SOUTH:** Backman 3.4, Ross 2.2, Day 2.1, Darley 2.1, Jackson 2.0, Wilson 1.4, Ploenges 1.0, Skuse 0.2, O'Brien 0.2, Christie 0.1, rushed 0.1.

REPLACEMENTS—GLENELG: Beal (groin) replaced by Peek during the second quarter. Staite (knee) replaced by Tucker in the third quarter. **SOUTH:** Darley (concussion) replaced by Gibbs in final quarter. Jackson (hip) replaced by Roennfeldt during last quarter.

UMPIRE—W. A. Henderson.

AT THEBARTON

	1st	2nd	3rd	Final	Pts.
Torrens	0-2	3-4	5-5	10-6	66
Port	2-0	4-1	9-2	9-2	56

BEST PLAYERS—TORRENS: Head, Kingston, Bills, Pill, Howell, Blight, Shearman, Graham, Cowling, Gibson. **PORT:** Potter, Philp, Hannaford, Motley, Elleyway, Fabian, Mead.

SCORERS—TORRENS: Head 3.2, Hawke 2.2, Gould 2.0, Shearman 1.0, Dix 1.0, Russell 1.0, Pill 0.1, Isaac 0.1. **PORT:** Philp 2.0, Johns 2.0, Potter 2.0, Matters 1.1, Traynor 1.1, Hannaford 1.0.

REPLACEMENTS—TORRENS: Connolly replaced by Russell at three quarter time. Gibson replaced by Lucas during last term. **PORT:** Matters replaced by Nyland during last term.

UMPIRE—K. G. Cunningham.

AT UNLEY

	1st	2nd	3rd	Final	Pts.
Sturt	2-0	4-3	9-8	12-10	82
North	0-1	3-3	6-4	8-7	55

BEST PLAYERS—STURT: Halbert, Dunn, Jarrett, Wiebusch, Langridge, Rigney, Hicks, Sadlington. **NORTH:** Pascoe, Hammond, Knuckey, Thomas, Sutter, Hill, Mitchell, Dixon.

SCORERS—STURT: Dunn 5.2, Langridge 4.1, M. Jones 2.1, Gunn 1.0, Rigney 0.2, Halbert 0.1, Schoff 0.1, rushed 0.2. **NORTH:** Potts 2.1, Thomas 2.1, Hill 2.0, D. Lindner 1.1, Pascoe 1.0, Mitchell 0.3, Hammond 0.1.

REPLACEMENTS—STURT: Hicks (heavy knock) replaced by Whicker in the last quarter. **NORTH:** Pascoe (leg injury) replaced by Coppins in the last quarter.

UMPIRE—N. L. G. Mackay.

AT KENSINGTON

	1st	2nd	3rd	Final	Pts.
Norwood	1-2	6-6	7-8	11-9	75
West	2-3	2-5	10-7	11-8	74

BEST PLAYERS—NORWOOD: Oatey, Johnson, Kneebone, Kelly, Wedding, Bowe, Sawley, Graham, McMahon. **WEST:** Bray, Kerley, Bennetts, Roach, Thompson, Eustice, Day, Sara.

SCORERS—NORWOOD: Skinner 3.0, McMahon 3.0, Oatey 2.1, Modra 1.3, Sawley 1.0, Curtis 1.0, Kite 0.1, Wedding 0.1, rushed 0.3. **WEST:** Garnett 3.2, Hooper 2.1, Shrubsole 2.0, Ryan 2.0, Thomas 1.0, Benton 1.0, Eustice 0.1, Kerley 0.1, Sara 0.1, rushed 0.2.

REPLACEMENTS—NORWOOD: Gimm (ankle) replaced by Wiesner at three quarter time. Modra (pulled thigh muscle) replaced by Curtis last quarter. **WEST:** Nil.

REPORTS—D. Thomas (WEST) reported by boundary umpire O'Malley for allegedly kicking B. A. Johnson (NORWOOD) in the last quarter.

UMPIRE—B. A. Lees.

PREMIERSHIP TABLE

	W.	L.	D.	For	Agst.	Pts.	Prem.	%
Torrens	8	4	1	922	723	17	56.04	
North	8	4	1	969	984	17	49.61	
West	8	5	—	996	811	16	55.11	
Port	7	6	—	1074	800	14	57.31	
Norwood	7	6	—	938	984	14	48.80	
Sturt	7	6	—	910	956	14	48.76	
Glenelg	5	8	—	946	1207	10	43.93	
South	1	12	—	811	1101	2	42.41	

ATTENDANCES

Thebarton	14,754
Unley	8,434
Kensington	6,971
Adelaide	3,403

Total 33,562

HIGHEST, LOWEST

LEAGUE	SECONDS
Glenelg 15-7 (97 pts.)	North 8-7 (55 pts.)
Torrens 19-20 (134 pts.)	Centrals 0-4 (4 pts.)

LEADING GOALKICKERS

	Today	Matches	Total
R. Johns (Port)	2.0	13	39.26
W. Thomas (North)	2.1	13	27.25
Skinner (Norwood)	3.0	13	27.18
Potter (Port)	2.0	12	27.16
Head (Torrens)	3.2	12	26.25

NEXT WEEK

Port v. South at Alberton.
North v. Norwood at Prospect.
West v. Sturt at Richmond.
Torrens v. Glenelg at Thebarton.