

Finals race goes down to wire

By Ashley Porter and Gordon Campbell

Glenelg yesterday took top position on the SANFL ladder from North Adelaide—and the scene now is set for a magnificent last round.

The top six places on the premiership table could alter next Saturday and Central District is still a chance to compete in the elimination final.

North Adelaide yesterday lost its sixth match in seven weeks — to a powerful Norwood by 87 points — and have dropped to second spot after heading the table since round two.

And Rooster coach Mike Nunan was bitterly disappointed with his players' effort, declaring:

"We weren't good enough and Norwood wanted to win more than us.

"Norwood played pretty well... there's no doubt about that.

"We looked tired but there'll be no panic but-ton being pressed."

Norwood coach Neil Balme was impressed

with his players' better form which guaranteed them a double chance in the finals.

Round 21 also saw:

●Central boot its biggest score and record its biggest win against Port Adelaide.

●Malcolm Blight kicked 12 goals to take his season tally to 120 and 34

against West Adelaide this year. Woodville still lost by 14 points.

●Sturt keep its place in the five by beating South Adelaide by 58 points with champion Peter Motley playing a sensational game.

●Glenelg forward Stephen Copping move back into top form with nine goals to steer his side to an 81 point victory.

Central coach Kevin Neale needed no reminding that his side could beat West next week and still miss out on the finals on percentage.

"It would be disappointing but that's the penalty for not playing

well enough earlier in the season," he said.

Sturt coach Mervyn Keane said yesterday was a "do-or-die" game for his team and his players responded well.

"But we still haven't got to the heights we know we can," he stressed.

Next week

The draw for next week's vital round is: Port v Norwood (Football Park); Central v West (Adelaide); Sturt v Glenelg (Unley); Torrens v South (Thebarton); North v Woodville (Prospect).

Glenelg goes top but...

Bays storm to top spot



Neil Hawke

It was a question of sending boys to do a man's job at Glenelg Oval yesterday when an accomplished Tiger line-up maintained their surge towards the premiership with a convincing 81-point margin over a young Eagles line-up.

Torrens tried all day — how they tried — but in the end to no avail, because the home team always had the answers.

Whenever the Eagles shut down a powerpoint, an alternative was readily established.

It was akin to a water-filled plastic bag with 10 leaks, and only five fingers to stem the flow of water.

The Eagles had first use of a strong breeze, but too much time elapsed before they started to get majors on the scoreboard.

Whenever they went forward, they were confronted by defenders who judged the flight of the ball perfectly to either mark or punch away.

There was always a teammate waiting for the ball off hands, and they used handball effectively to get the ball out to the numerous running players who worked the ball cleverly into attack by passing low and accurately.

The good things the visitors did in scoring five goals in the first term were nullified by goals from Copping and the giant Thomson (2), which left the Bays only 12 points in arrears.

Two more majors early in the second term by a menacing Copping and a point to McGuinness saw the Tigers in front and looking capable of progressing to a big win.

The Eagles showed their fighting qualities in this term, however, and kept the Tigers in check when they could easily have run riot.

Had it not been for some puzzling umpiring decisions by Stephen Semmler, in particular, and occasionally Laurie Argent, with styles as contrasting as chalk and cheese, Torrens may well have kept in touch.

It seems they resented John Roberts getting a touch of the ball.

Glenelg raced the ball away to goal at the other end to make a 12-point turnaround.

These things seem always to happen to teams that need every bit of good fortune to remain competitive, yet a similar situation would go unnoticed for a team with form and confidence.

Defenders 'perfect'

Robson and Cox in the key defensive positions played well for the Eagles, but I suppose it was the sheer weight of opportunities that saw Copping finish with nine goals and Stephen Kernahan with five.

Once again, Peter Carey and Jeff Sarau, made it quite clear they would not be going across to the Holdfast Hotel for a social drink after the game, but on the day Carey was a big winner with Sarau leaving the field with a pulled hamstring muscle that ends his football for the season.

It would have been a little too much for the Bay supporters who wake from their siesta at this time of the year to see their team once more with finals aspirations.

It is, of course, something they have lived and mourned in the past, but there is good reason for optimism.

All things have come good at the right time and the roar of the Tiger can be heard everywhere but the dressing room, where Graham Cornes continues to play things low key.

In fact, he was more interested in my health rather than the result or his better players, so one can only imagine that his times of disappointment have mellowed his expectations.

There is a professionalism in this Tiger team and the stiff run-up to the finals has provided the right stimulation for a concerted challenge.

Respond

Copping, after a trough mid-season, is blooming again up forward and his chances are being provided by fast-moving players who have excellent disposal and do not leave you stranded when you have created open space.

Steven Kernahan, quiet for much of the first half because of the close attention his skills attract, could not be contained in the last half.

He reads the game terribly well and is like the icing on a cake.



Peter Carey



Stephen Copping



Stephen Kernahan

Left to last, it is the sweetest part of a treat.

But it is in the performance of the lesser lights like Maynard, Alan Stringer, Tony Hall, Chris Duthy, David Kernahan and perhaps John Seeborn the premiership will be won.

They have shown they can respond to responsibility and be stars in their own right.

It has not been easy for the Eagles to keep their heads above water in recent weeks after much early promise.

To their credit, they are continuing to make life as difficult as possible for their opponents and respectable gains have been made in the terms of development of the younger players.

FOOTBALL PARK

	1st	2nd	3rd	Final	Pts.
Central	4-3	11-4	18-7	26-15	171
Port	4-6	9-8	10-10	12-12	84

BEST—CENTRAL: Cousins, Krieg, P. Bubner, van Dommelle, Prior, Thomas, Platten. **PORT:** G. Boyd, Clifford, Johnston, Russell, A. Kennedy.
SCORERS—CENTRAL: Wilson 4.3, Cousins 3.2, P. Bubner 3.2, Fraser 3.1, Krieg 3.1, Collins 2.1, Robertson 2.1, Shields 2.0, Hurn 2.0, Platten 2.0, Connelly 0.1, rushed 0.3. **PORT:** Evans 4.4, G. Boyd 2.0, R. Smith 2.0, Gotch 1.2, Russell 1.2, Clifford 1.0, Ebert 1.0, Ginever 0.2, Johnston 0.1, rushed 0.1.
INJURIES—CENTRAL: Hull (driving muscle). **PORT:** Bradley withdrew from side with groin injury; Ginever (ankle), Johnston (shoulder).
UMPIRES—Steve Ardlie, Jim Field.

ADELAIDE OVAL

	1st	2nd	3rd	Final	Pts.
Sturt	1-3	7-9	13-12	19-18	132
South	2-5	5-7	9-9	11-10	76

BEST—STURT: Motley, Paynter, Whittlesea, Craig, G. Martin, McKechnie, Smith. **SOUTH:** Bennett, P. Martin, David Kappier, Palmer, Davies, Christie.
SCORERS—STURT: Wilmoit 5.2, Motley 4.0, Martin 3.2, Fielke 2.2, Hollis 2.0, Keane 1.0, Fry 1.0, Whittlesea 1.0, Paech 0.2, Paynter 0.1, Smith 0.1, rushed 0.8. **SOUTH:** Davies 4.0, Naley 2.1, P. Martin 2.1, Campbell 1.1, David Kappier 1.0, Brockhurst 1.0, Lockman 0.1, rushed 0.1.
INJURIES—STURT: Fry (bruised eye). **SOUTH:** Schnetbichler (twisted ankle).
UMPIRES—Rick Kinnear, David Trembath.

WOODVILLE OVAL

	1st	2nd	3rd	Final	Pts.
West	5-8	10-11	19-15	21-19	145
Woodville	4-5	9-10	13-14	19-17	131

BEST—WEST: D. Herbert, Fielke, Mickan, Lamb, Bennett, C. Herbert, Grosser. **WOODVILLE:** Blight, R. Fuller, Jones, Jolly, Sewer, Harris.
SCORERS—WEST: Andrews 5-3, D. Herbert 4-0, Burton 2-3, Bennett 2-2, Lamb 2-1, Fielke 2-1, Grosser 2-1, McIvor 1-0, McKinnon 1-0, Williams 0-1, C. Herbert 0-1, Mickan 0-1, rushed 0-5. **WOODVILLE:** Blight 12-0, Sewer 2-5, Harris 2-2, R. Fuller 2-1, Jackson 1-0, Lunn 0-2, Dettmann 0-2, Grant 0-1, rushed 0-4.
INJURY—WOODVILLE: Bob Beecroft (thigh).
UMPIRES—Darryl Schramm, Neville Thorp.

NORWOOD OVAL

	1st	2nd	3rd	Final	Pts.
Norwood	5-0	14-5	18-6	28-10	178
North	1-3	4-6	9-10	13-13	91

BEST—NORWOOD: Aish, Taylor, McIntosh, Neagle, K. Thomas, Warhurst, Winter. **NORTH:** Wildy, Dietrich, Antrabus, J. Riley, Campbell, Phillips, Armfield.
SCORERS—NORWOOD: Neagle 5-2, Michalannev 5-1, Aish 4-0, G. Thomas 4-0, Roberts 3-2, Ross 2-0, Gallagher 1-4, Hein 1-0, K. Thomas 1-0, O'Dwyer 1-0, Foadike 1-0, rushed 0-1. **NORTH:** Dietrich 3-6, Arnold 2-1, Antrabus 1-1, Jarman 1-1, Rodden 1-1, Fill 1-0, Sanders 1-0, Campbell 1-0, Phillips 1-0, Robertson 1-0, Hart 0-1, Bennett 0-1, rushed 0-1.
REPORT—NORTH: David Robertson, by field umpire John Hylton and boundary umpire T. Checker for allegedly charging Greg Thomas (Norwood) deliberately.
UMPIRES—Graham Hilton, John Hylton.

GLENELG OVAL

	1st	2nd	3rd	Final	Pts.
Glenelg	3-3	9-7	13-11	24-20	164
Torrens	5-3	6-4	11-5	13-5	83

BEST—GLENELG: Maynard, A. Stringer, Copping, S. Kernahan, Henwood, Murphy, Hall, McGuinness, Carey. **TORRENS:** Sims, Payze, Cox, Robson, Turner, Hank, Cunningham, Foote.
SCORERS—GLENELG: Copping 9.3, S. Kernahan 5.2, Thomson 3.0, Kidney 1.2, Henwood 1.1, Carey 1.1, Symonds 1.1, Marshall 1.1, Murphy 1.0, A. Stringer 1.0, Maynard 0.1, Donovan 0.1, rushed 0.4. **TORRENS:** Johnston 3.1, Roberts 2.2, Cunningham 2.0, McCarthy 2.0, Lindsay 1.1, Payze 1.0, Hank 1.0, Stretch 1.0, Sarau 0.1.
INJURIES—TORRENS: Sarau (hamstring). **GLENELG:** Gibbs (ankle), withdrew from Glenelg line-up.
UMPIRES—Laurie Argent, Steve Semmler.

LEADING GOALKICKERS

	Games	Yesterday	Total
BLIGHT (Woodville)	20	12.0	120.67
WILLMOTT (Sturt)	20	5.2	108.34
DAVIES (South)	20	4.5	83.11
ROBERTS (Torrens)	18	2.2	76.34
EVANS (Port)	15	4.4	71.33
BEECROFT (Woodville)	20	0.0	66.17
COPPING (Glenelg)	18	9.3	65.21

PREMIERSHIP TABLE

	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	%
Glenelg	14	—	7	2598	2123	28	55.03
North	14	—	7	2586	2316	28	52.48
Norwood	13	1	7	2468	2193	27	52.95
West	12	—	9	2689	2454	24	52.28
Sturt	11	1	9	2541	2361	23	51.80
Central	11	—	10	2512	2379	22	51.36
Port	8	—	13	2355	2652	16	47.03
South	8	—	13	2194	2521	16	46.53
Torrens	7	—	14	2309	2825	14	44.97
Woodville	6	—	15	2638	3033	12	46.52

CROWDS

NEXT WEEK

Football Park	9763	Port v Norwood (Football Park); Central v West (Adelaide); Sturt v Glenelg (Unley); Torrens v South (Thebarton); North v Woodville (Prospect).
Adelaide	6497	
Glenelg	8689	
Norwood	9181	
Woodville	Unavailable	