





# Nerve factor tests young aces

**W**OODVILLE-West Torrens and Glenelg are confident of overcoming early nerves in today's qualifying final — the biggest game in seasons for both clubs.

With a host of young players driving the Eagles to their first finals appearance since 1996 and a new-look Glenelg back in the major round after a five-year absence, the qualifying final pits the two least experienced sides in the five against each other.

But both coaches are talking up their chances of a bold showing — and moving to within one win of a grand final berth.

"I wouldn't expect anything to be any different from what we've shown this year in the minor round," Glenelg coach Tony McGuinness said.

"I think all sides in the five are pretty tight. There's not a great deal of difference between them.

"It's now a matter of us playing at the level we can."

Eagles coach Mark Mickan has talked to his young charges about nerves, but only to tell them they are a part of any final, regardless of experience.

"Even people who play a lot of finals say there is a nervous factor early in the game," he said.

"It's important for our players to come to terms with that early and understand it when it happens and deal with it.

"It's something we've discussed, but not something anyone's worried about."

After years on the sidelines in September, there is a sense of excitement and expectation surrounding both clubs.

With stellar minor rounds earning them the double chance, the Eagles and Tigers can put themselves within one game of the grand final with victory today.

For teams that finished sixth and last in 1999, it is heady territory.

For the Eagles, which went within a whisker of winning the minor premierships this year, "the Glenelg hurdle" has been the only one it has not been able to overcome this season.

■ EAGLES v GLENELG

PAUL KERMODE



Ken McGregor

Glenelg has won three tight contests between the teams this year, posing the only slight question mark on the Eagles' growing self-confidence.

"I think we've come a long way with our level of self-belief and I think we've earned the right to have a reasonable level of self-belief," Mickan said.

"We still have to get over that Glenelg hurdle and that's a self-belief factor. But our young side has started to mature — we've become a lot more consistent."

The Tigers are fielding almost their strongest side of the season today, welcoming back Matthew Golding, Rod Jameson and Chad Cornes into the side which beat West in the last minor round to secure the double chance.

The Eagles also look stronger for the inclusion of key forward Ken McGregor, ruckman Rhett Biglands and onballer Gavin Colville.

The battle between the Eagles' Colville, Justin Cicolella and Adam Pearce and Glenelg's Lance Picoane, Nick Chigwidden and Richard Kelly in the midfield looms as the most important.

With Matthew Bode, Brett Higgins, Josh Carr and Sudjai Cook as back-up, the Tigers look to have a more even spread of runners across the ground.

● Tip: Glenelg (13-24).



Chad Cornes ... returns to full forward

Coaches

■ MARK MICKAN (Eagles): "I think we've come a long way with our level of self-belief. It's something that you earn and I think we've earned the right to have a reasonable level of self-belief."



■ TONY MCGUINNESS (Glenelg): "I don't think there's a lot of difference between the sides in the finals — it's now a matter of us playing at the level we can play at. I wouldn't expect anything to be any different from what we've shown this year."



**QUALIFYING FINAL - Eagles v Glenelg**  
at Football Park, today 3.20pm

**THE TEAMS**

Eagles	Glenelg
<b>Interchange:</b> M. Kluzek 27, Barnes 6, Holland 25,	<b>Interchange (from):</b> Scripps 13, Tipuamantamerri 49, Bartlett 14, Winstanley 11, Cook 44, Gigney 33.
<b>Ruck:</b> Wiggins 38, Colville 23, Cicolella 51.	<b>Ruck:</b> Golding 26, Picoane 36, Chigwidden 21.