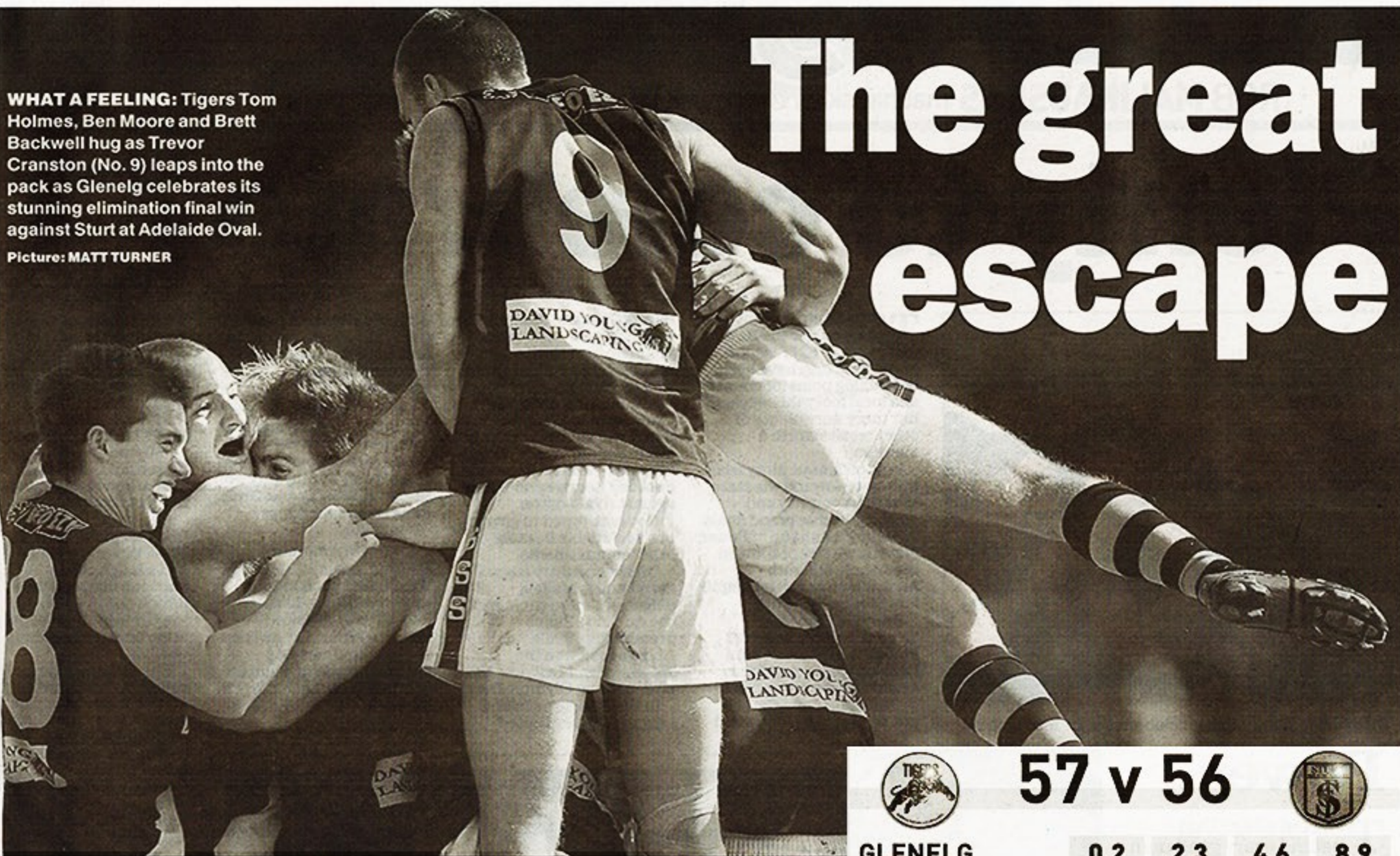


COURAGE | Tigers run over top of Sturt in last minutes

**WHAT A FEELING:** Tigers Tom Holmes, Ben Moore and Brett Backwell hug as Trevor Cranston (No. 9) leaps into the pack as Glenelg celebrates its stunning elimination final win against Sturt at Adelaide Oval.

Picture: MATT TURNER



# The great escape



57 v 56



**GLENELG**  
**STURT**

**0.2** **2.3** **4.6** **8.9**  
**3.5** **4.5** **5.7** **8.8**

**BEST**

Kirkby, Allen, Fisher, Kane, Hinge, Mahoney.

**SCORERS**

Rudolph 3.0, Mahoney, Moore 2.0, Holmes 1.0, Backwell, Fisher, Allen, Ruwoldt, Sugars, Sellar, Douglas 0.1, rushed 0.2.

**BEST**

Whiteman, Feast, Sheedy, Chambers, Deluca, Mattner.

**SCORERS**

Chambers 6.2, Whiteman, Hurse 1.0, Crane, Gum, Feast, Thomson, Sharples 0.1, rushed 0.1.

**REPORT**

Crane, by umpire Rowston, for allegedly striking Backwell.

**UMPIRES** - T. Dey, G. Fila, C. Rowston. **CROWD** - 11,476 at Adelaide Oval.

**WARREN PARTLAND**

**EVEN** Glenelg coach Mark Mickan had to admit his side got out of jail against desperately unlucky Sturt in yesterday's elimination final at Adelaide Oval.

Behind on the scoreboard for almost all of the do-or-die confrontation, the Tigers did not hit the front until the dying minutes when Ben Moore nailed his second goal in three minutes. Blues ruckman Simon Feast, a gun for most of the game, had a chance to regain the lead in the final minute but his set shot from 20m could manage no better than a point.

The tense one-point victory has earned the Tigers a first semi-final clash with the Eagles while the Double Blues are out of the premiership race after a season of resurrection.

It was a cruel end to their title bid after having the ascendancy for so much of the contest - not to mention the disgraceful umpiring which did Sturt absolutely no favours.

"No doubt we got out of jail," Mickan said. "But we showed tremendous courage to keep scoreboard pressure on them. They were unlucky because they missed that shot at the end and the match could have gone either way. My heart goes out to Sturt because they were unlucky. At the same time I have to give credit to our group for lifting its game in the second half when we needed to."

Glenelg has been guilty of tardy opening quarters this year and the pattern stretched into the finals with Sturt claiming the early edge. Sturt's champion full forward Brant Chambers established the tone for his side midway through the opening quarter when he charged down Tiger Brad

Sugars, won the free kick and goaled from 50m after playing on quickly. It was that sort of pressure which had the Tigers struggling to find cohesion and enabled Sturt to secure a 21-point buffer at quarter-time.

Both sides lost a key player in the first term with Sturt on-baller Luke Crane carried off on a stretcher after a collision with team-mate Tristan Gum, while Tiger Samuel Rudolph limped off with an ankle problem.

Rudolph returned to the action in the second period but the defender was used as an attacking weapon. He finished with three goals, including two crucial majors in the final term.

Crane was also able to get back on the paddock, thrown back onto the ball in the third quarter.

As the game lengthened Glenelg lifted the intensity to gain momentum, only to be let down in the third with a swag of skill errors which plagued both sides.

Ruory Kirkby became a highly influential avenue to goal for Glenelg while Ty Allen's tireless efforts and Adam Fisher's ball-winning ways had a major impact. So did a 9-2 free kick count to the Tigers in the third term.

The final quarter was a battle of composure. Twice the Tigers had to retrieve a 12-point deficit to survive in the race for the flag.

Mickan talked about the courage of his side. That is a term that most definitely describes Sturt veteran Andrew Whiteman. He is an inspiration, attacking the body and ball with no concern for his wellbeing. Feast belied hamstring concerns which had him in doubt for the game to smash the Tigers at the stoppages. Then there was Jade Sheedy, consistent and classy.

Sturt coach Rick Macgowan lamented the fact his side became too cautious in the second half, rather than being the aggressor.

"We were too cautious in our movement in the second half," he said. "We probably looked at the scoreboard too much and played within ourselves. The big stage got to us. We were too frightened to take the game on and too frightened to make mistakes - we were too careful."



**GLENELG**

	Kicks	Mks	Hbl	F/for	F/ag	Gls	Pts	H/O	Tkl
ALLEN	5	3	8	0	0	0	1	0	3
MCCONNELL	4	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
RUWOLDT	6	0	3	3	1	0	1	0	2
MAHONEY	9	7	10	3	0	2	0	0	2
KIRKBY	12	10	4	2	0	0	0	2	0
SUGARS	12	4	4	2	1	0	1	0	1
HOLMES	7	3	6	2	0	1	0	0	0
DOUGLAS	9	3	11	2	0	0	1	0	3
MOORE	4	1	3	2	3	2	0	0	0
MULES	2	5	13	0	2	0	0	0	3
SHERWOOD	3	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
KANE	11	4	6	3	1	0	0	0	0
SMITH	6	3	2	2	2	0	0	1	3
RUWOLDT	6	2	4	1	0	3	0	0	1
HINGE	11	2	7	2	0	0	0	0	1
KIRK	2	0	3	0	1	0	0	2	0
FISHER	16	8	13	2	3	0	1	0	4
BACKWELL	10	3	15	4	0	0	1	0	0
MURPHY	3	2	2	0	1	0	0	0	3
SELLAR	3	2	1	0	0	0	1	2	1
CRANSTON	5	4	8	1	2	0	0	5	0
Totals	146	69	131	31	17	8	9	12	27



**STURT**

	Kicks	Mks	Hbl	F/for	F/ag	Gls	Pts	H/O	Tkl
WEATHERALD	5	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	1
CHAMBERS	7	6	4	1	2	6	2	0	2
THOMSON	4	2	5	1	4	0	1	0	2
BENTLEY	7	2	6	1	1	0	0	1	1
AVERY	7	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
O'KEEFE	5	5	3	0	1	0	0	0	1
HURSE	4	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
SHEEDY	18	2	9	2	2	0	0	0	3
GUM	10	2	3	0	0	0	1	0	2
WHITEMAN	8	4	9	2	1	1	0	0	4
MCLAY	5	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	2
MATTNER	9	3	6	1	4	0	0	1	4
BUTTON	2	1	6	1	2	0	0	0	0
WARK	6	3	6	2	0	0	0	0	1
NELSON	7	3	9	1	1	0	0	0	2
FEAST	6	5	8	1	1	0	1	15	2
EVANS	8	3	6	1	3	0	0	1	5
CRANE	7	1	4	1	2	0	1	0	2
DELUCA	4	3	1	1	2	0	0	9	1
SHARPLES	7	1	2	1	4	0	1	0	1
KURTZE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
Totals	136	57	96	17	31	8	8	29	38

## Free kick count costs Blues

**WARREN PARTLAND**

**STURT** coach Rick Macgowan was confident the club could be competitive from "day one" when he took on the job for this season.

He knew he had inherited a core group of talented performers. It was, however, a group devoid of enthusiasm and spirit. Macgowan put the players through a strenuous pre-season and since October the Double Blues have worked tirelessly.

"I was fortunate the whole group embraced that training - we tried to fit a couple of years into one," Macgowan said.

"I'm proud of them and I just wish they could have been rewarded at winning a final. I thought we could have had an impact in the finals. I'm disappointed but, no doubt,

if it doesn't kill you it is going to be better for you experience-wise."

Given the committed effort of Sturt to resurrect the club, it is a shame poor umpiring played such a massive role in ending its season. The final free kick count in favour of Glenelg was 31-17. In the third term the Tigers were given nine free kicks to just two to Sturt. Macgowan admitted his side did lapse into some moments of ill-discipline. Macgowan was being diplomatic.

The umpiring was a disgrace and it is a shame the men in white had such a heavy influence on a game of such importance.

Colin Rowston's attempt to take control in the second quarter at times made a mockery of the game. He was too busy trying to stamp his authority on it.

**LEADING GOALKICKERS**

	Yest	Total
B. Chambers (Sturt)	6.2	112.35
J. McConnell (Glenelg)	0.0	63.30
J. Viatko (Norwood)	-	60.34
I. Callinan (Central)	-	53.18

**RESERVES**

Qualifying final: South Adelaide 16.13 (109) d Norwood 8.5 (53).
Elimination final: North Adelaide 12.14 (86) d Central 8.7 (55).

**UNDER-19**

Qualifying final: Sturt 16.19 (115) d Central 8.8 (56).
Elimination final: Glenelg 7.20 (62) d West Adelaide 8.9 (57).

**UNDER-17**

	Second semi-final			
North Adelaide	3.5	11.5	14.6	20.11 (131)
Sturt	1.5	4.9	7.12	9.13 (67)
First semi-final: Port 19.16 (130) d Norwood 11.4 (70).				