

You can't keep old Dogs down

Doggies savour their seventh heaven

CANDICE KELLER

IT IS a well-rehearsed routine for Central District officials, friends and family. After all, winning seven premierships from nine consecutive grand finals extends itself to a sense of familiarity.

Yet the club was anything but cocky or blaze about adding another flag to its collection. In fact, there was an overwhelming sense of gratitude and elation that emanated from the rooms after the game.

The players took almost half an hour after the final siren to make it back into the arms of loved ones - they clearly enjoyed the chance to thank supporters and relish the victory.

However, once back in the dark depths of AAMI Stadium it was time to celebrate with those who had been through the good and bad. The players made sure no one was left out and happily posed for photos with young fans and hugged the families of fellow players.

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See all the Central District grand final celebrations in pictures and video.

The team song was performed with gusto, champagne spraying over the top like a spring shower.

SANFL executive commissioner Leigh Whicker stood among the hub of activity and even had a kick of the footy with some reserve players prior to the winning team's arrival.

Esteemed South Australian cricketers Darren "Boof" Lehmann and Greg Blewett joined in the chorus of congratulations. The smile could not be wiped off Boof's face and he looked like the proud parent of 21 burly blokes.

Former premiership players Brad Symes and Daniel Healy were also seen in the rooms, mixing with current players and remembering their own wins.

But the one thing that was missing was a sign of mere contentment. Bulldogs chief executive Kris Grant said it best when asked when the dynasty would end.

"Hopefully never," he replied with a coy smile.

How Central District blew the Bays away in the third quarter, stretching its lead from 10 points to a match-winning 37 at the final change.

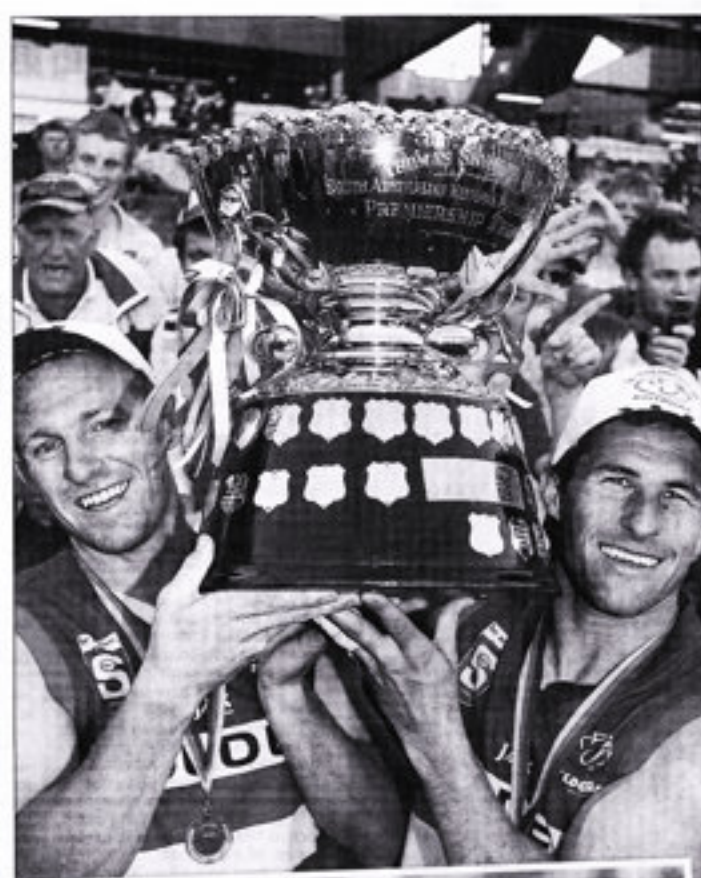
■ **13TH MINUTE:** Matthew Slade kicks truly. +16.

■ **14TH MINUTE:** Daniel Schell goals. +22.

■ **18TH MINUTE:** Trent Goodrem joins in the party with a quick snap. +28.

■ **25TH MINUTE:** Chris Gowans converts a set shot. +30.

■ **28TH MINUTE:** Veteran Luke McCabe sneaks a goal in his last game. +37.



GRAND FINAL GLORY: Bulldog co-captains Paul Thomas and Matthew Slade show off the Thomas Seymour Hill premiership cup to their adoring fans while, inset, Central handruts James and Chris Gowans tangle with Glenelg's Todd Grima. Pictures: CALUM ROBERTSON.

	Kicks	Mks	Hbl	F/for	F/og	Gls	Pts	H/O	Tkl
MCCABE	7	4	2	1	0	1	0	0	1
SCHELL	7	6	3	1	1	2	0	1	2
CALLINAN	17	9	9	1	3	1	1	0	3
O'SULLIVAN	9	3	6	1	0	1	2	0	1
WESTHOFF, M	5	2	0	0	1	3	0	2	1
GOWANS, C	8	5	8	2	0	1	2	0	2
O'HARA	15	8	5	2	1	2	0	0	5
GOWANS, J	12	9	11	1	3	1	1	0	6
WARE	14	4	2	1	2	0	0	0	1
HAYES	7	7	5	0	1	0	0	0	1
AUFDERHEIDE	6	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
WILLIAMS	4	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	2
GOODREM	6	3	2	0	3	1	0	0	3
SIBENALER	5	4	4	0	1	0	0	0	3
COCHRANE	9	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
MACKENZIE	11	2	1	0	0	1	0	13	3
THOMAS	13	6	6	1	1	0	0	0	5
SLADE	16	3	7	1	1	1	1	0	0
DUTSCHKE	8	5	1	0	3	2	0	0	5
GILES	2	0	1	2	0	0	0	6	1
MOSS	7	5	2	2	0	0	0	0	2
Totals	188	94	79	19	21	17	11	22	52

	Kicks	Mks	Hbl	F/for	F/og	Gls	Pts	H/O	Tkl
BODE	17	2	5	1	1	1	1	0	2
DULDIG	4	1	3	1	1	1	1	0	0
KIRK	7	6	2	1	0	3	2	4	0
KIRKBY	2	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
GRIMA	8	6	2	1	3	1	2	0	1
BACKWELL	5	0	5	0	1	1	1	0	1
KANE, B	7	0	9	2	2	0	0	0	1
BLOCK	8	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	3
HOLMES	8	5	3	0	0	0	1	0	2
MILES	11	6	12	1	0	0	0	0	3
SHERWOOD	11	7	6	3	0	0	0	0	2
PANOZZO	10	5	9	4	0	1	1	0	1
HINGE	7	7	6	0	1	0	0	0	2
RUDDOLPH	8	5	4	0	1	0	0	0	3
MURPHY	11	9	15	0	1	1	0	0	1
CRANSTON	2	2	10	0	2	0	0	25	0
ALLEN	6	1	10	1	2	1	0	0	1
FISHER	14	5	8	2	1	0	0	3	3
KANE, C	2	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	1
WILLOUGHBY	6	1	6	2	0	0	0	0	2
RUWOLDT	8	4	5	0	2	0	0	0	0
Totals	162	75	128	21	19	10	11	32	29

RESERVES GRAND FINAL

STURT 3.4 4.13 9.16 13.18 (96)
EAGLES 2.1 4.4 6.5 10.6 (66)

BEST - Sturt: Martin, Herring, Bartlett, Bratton, Eckermann, Kay. Eagles: Klun, Fiacchi, Lee, Allmond, Giuffreda, Williamson.

SCORERS - Herring 6, Trengove 3, Fitzgerald 2, Johncock, Martin. Eagles: Klun 3, McEntee 2, Staple, Couch, Fitzgerald, Goldsworthy, Lane.

UNDER-19 GRAND FINAL

GLENELG 4.0 8.3 11.9 17.15 (117)
STURT 4.7 6.12 11.18 13.21 (99)

BEST - Glenelg: Drew, Sverdlhoff, Redden, Ramsey, Hitchcock, Bosley, Clayson, Noonan, Cane, Urwin. Sturt: Jones, Twopeny, Thompson, Wilson, Brimacombe, Eckermann, King.

SCORERS - Glenelg: Trembath, Clayson 3, Clayfield, Hitchcock 2, Snook, Redden, Hartigan, Drew, Sverdlhoff, Ramsey, Noonan. Sturt: Eckermann 4, Cahill 3, Twopeny, Weir 2, Hughes, Wilson 1.

WARREN PARTLAND

TOO old and too slow and far "TOO" good.

All season Central District has been written off, earbashed with negativity and bombarded with hate mail.

Yesterday the Bulldogs delivered the most emphatic message possible to the critics - a convincing 42-point triumph over Glenelg in the grand final at AAMI Stadium.

The reign of the Elizabeth mob was supposed to be over. Try telling the 21 players who claimed glory to equal the Port Adelaide Magpies' record of seven premierships in a decade.

"This is certainly one of the most satisfying wins because we were the outsiders for much of the season," Bulldogs coach Roy Laird said. "We have probably had some question marks the way we were going."

"Glenelg and Sturt were seen as the benchmark and everyone else was seen to be a long way off. So we were honest with our players and thought there were some areas we were not going to match them."

"So we had to adjust and you have to be super fit and strong. That is what we have seen as our most important ingredients - aggression at the ball and body. If you top that up with a bit of good ball use through the game you are a chance."

Laird is the epitome of the Bulldogs. This was his fifth premiership as coach but there is no complacency, no arrogance.

He is simple in his approach but demanding in his requests. And he has a group so willing to adhere to the message because they know the rich prize at the end.

This was a performance so typical of the Bulldogs since their first premiership cup in 2000. They took no prisoners, adopting a relentless work ethic and ferocious approach to force the Tigers into submission.

The two clubs stood toe-to-toe trading blows in the first half with the Tigers giving as good as they got.

It was familiar names such as Matthew Bode, Adam Fisher and Ty Allen who were sparking the Tigers.

When Daniel Kirk kicked his second goal eight minutes into the second term the Tigers had slipped to a nine-point buffer.

After answering the challenge to scramble to a four-point lead at half-time, the Bulldogs repeated their second semi-final effort when they beat the Tigers by taking the high ground in the third term.

Ruckman Jason Mackenzie ignited the Bulldogs charge in a brilliant display which earned him the Jack Oatey Medal as the best on ground.

Co-captain Paul Thomas was an inspiration and defender Yves Sibenaler kept potent Tigers forward Todd Grima to just one goal.

The Bulldogs went on the rampage to bag seven goals for the third quarter.

The Bulldogs amassed a whopping 83 tackles.

"Our first half was as good or even better," Tigers coach Mark Mickan said. "Then they just switched to another level in the third quarter and we could not go with them."

"We came here today expecting to take it. Once the dust settles we may be able to realise we have made some progress."

"It is a lesson for everyone. You have got to make that crucial tackle, take that one ball clean - it is a fine line."

	Kicks	Mks	Hbl	F/for	F/og	Gls	Pts	H/O	Tkl
MCCABE	7	4	2	1	0	1	0	0	1
SCHELL	7	6	3	1	1	2	0	1	2
CALLINAN	17	9	9	1	3	1	1	0	3
O'SULLIVAN	9	3	6	1	0	1	2	0	1
WESTHOFF, M	5	2	0	0	1	3	0	2	1
GOWANS, C	8	5	8	2	0	1	2	0	2
O'HARA	15	8	5	2	1	2	0	0	5
GOWANS, J	12	9	11	1	3	1	1	0	6
WARE	14	4	2	1	2	0	0	0	1
HAYES	7	7	5	0	1	0	0	0	1
AUFDERHEIDE	6	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
WILLIAMS	4	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	2
GOODREM	6	3	2	0	3	1	0	0	3
SIBENALER	5	4	4	0	1	0	0	0	3
COCHRANE	9	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
MACKENZIE	11	2	1	0	0	1	0	13	3
THOMAS	13	6	6	1	1	0	0	0	5
SLADE	16	3	7	1	1	1	1	0	0
DUTSCHKE	8	5	1	0	3	2	0	0	5
GILES	2	0	1	2	0	0	0	6	1
MOSS	7	5	2	2	0	0	0	0	2
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DULDIG	4	1	3	1	1	1	1	0	0
KIRK	7	6	2	1	0	3	2	4	0
KIRKBY	2	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
GRIMA	8	6	2	1	3	1	2	0	1
BACKWELL	5	0	5	0	1	1	1	0	1
KANE, B	7	0	9	2	2	0	0	0	1
BLOCK	8	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	3
HOLMES	8	5	3	0	0	0	1	0	2
MILES	11	6	12	1	0	0	0	0	3
SHERWOOD	11	7	6	3	0	0	0	0	2
PANOZZO	10	5	9	4	0	1	1	0	1
HINGE	7	7	6	0	1	0	0	0	2
RUDDOLPH	8	5	4	0	1	0	0	0	3
MURPHY	11	9	15	0	1	1	0	0	1
CRANSTON	2	2	10	0	2	0	0	25	0
ALLEN	6	1	10	1	2	1	0	0	1
FISHER	14	5	8	2	1	0	0	3	3
KANE, C	2	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	1
WILLOUGHBY	6	1	6	2	0	0	0	0	2
RUWOLDT	8	4	5	0	2	0	0	0	0
Totals	162	75	128	21	19	10	11	32	29

BEST: Mackenzie, Thomas, O'Hara, Callinan, J. Gowans, Sibenaler, Dutschke, C. Gowans.
GOALS: M. Westhoff 3.0, Dutschke, Schell, O'Hara 2.0, O'Sullivan, C. Gowans 1.2, Callinan, J. Gowans, Slade 1.1, McCabe, Goodrem, Mackenzie 1.0, rushed 0.4.

JACK OATEY MEDAL: Jason Mackenzie (Central)
UMPIRES: T. Pfeiffer, S. Hay, C. Bowen.

'Buckets' gets honours in spades

CANDICE KELLER

AS FAR as the stature of a typical footballer goes, hardened Central District ruckman Jason Mackenzie couldn't be further off the mark.

At 196cm and 110kg, elegance and agility are certainly not his strengths. Determination is.

Yesterday his persistence and willingness to throw himself into a tough competition paid off when he was named the Jack Oatey medallist, putting in a best on ground performance to get his Bulldogs to yet another flag.

But when he should have been resting on his medal laurels, he played the humble giant. He took the chance to talk up his fellow soldiers and think of a bright future with the

club. "It's pretty hard to leave a winning environment," he said.

"The boys are fantastic, it's a great bunch of guys. I'm really privileged to win the medal in a group like this."

"I'm almost a bit embarrassed, compared to the previous winners of the Jack Oatey, they've been fantastic players. I'm sure there were a lot of other guys that played really well for us, too, that deserved it." Yet there were no doubts that 28-year-old Buckets - as he's affectionately known - was a deserving winner. He had one of the toughest jobs on the field, taking on the league's best ruckman, Trevor Cranston. Mackenzie said he genuinely respected Cranston's dominance this season and said he still

"won his share" of it early.

However, by applying his renowned work ethic and determined attitude, Mackenzie managed to overrun the big guy in black and gold to feed the ball to his sturdy team of onballers.

"It certainly helps with the support we've got with our on-ballers, because they're super-hungry for the footy. They don't get it laid to them on a platter by me, they certainly have to work for it and they do such a great job."

This was Mackenzie's fifth grand final and fourth premiership medal.

He rated yesterday's win one of the best yet, because of the lacklustre season the team had to get into the finals series.

Tigers promise a bright future

ZAC MILBANK

NOW is the time for the Glenelg Football Club to show plenty of heart.

Having fallen at the last hurdle to the mighty Central District machine at AAMI Stadium yesterday, the Tigers' challenge is to take the next step in 2009.

As the distraught Tiger players hung their heads in an emotional dressing-room, their club leaders, president Gary Metcalf and chief executive Darren Chandler, took on a steely resolve in the face of adversity. Before yesterday Glenelg had not played in a grand final for 18 years, something the club wants to ensure does not happen again.

"It's a very disappointing time," Metcalf said.

"A lot of hard work's gone into this club on and off the field and we came in with high expectations and we let ourselves down."

Metcalf, the strong figurehead at Brighton Rd largely responsible for the Tigers' turnaround, promised he was there for the long haul.

"I reckon the rise has been the easy part but now it's important the club as a whole doesn't drop its bundle," Metcalf said.

"It's a very empty feeling but it's something I'm not shying away from. It's something I'm ready to pick up the bat and get on with, I want us to go that bit further."

Equally-determined Chandler pointed to the Tigers' success in the lower grades - including the under-19 premiership yesterday - as a pointer to the club's fifth flag.

"This footy club's here to stay," he said.

"We've spent a lot of time and effort making sure we've got solid kids coming through the grades. But we've got to go back and review it all, there's no doubt about that, because we've got to get better."

"We're confident we've got a strong footy club and we're going to build on every area next year. We want to play better footy, win more finals, have another crack at it and go one better next year."

Coach Mark Mickan kept his men in the meeting room to soak up the emotion of the loss and once the playing group emerged, the pain of defeat was obvious. Players struggled to speak to one another at the realisation their premiership dream had been shattered.



Knockout blow shatters Tigers

By REECE HOMFRAY

IT was the knockout blow Central District had delivered so many times before.

Seven goals to two in a blistering third quarter gave the Bulldogs their seventh premiership and left Glenelg players lying on the canvas.

The Tigers, minor premiers and front-runners most of the season, succumbed to an awesome Central District side in front of 34,128 people at AAMI Stadium on Sunday, 17.11 (113) to 10.11 (71).

While most Glenelg players could hold their heads high after the game, coach **Mark Mickan** said it was little consolation to simply make it to an SANFL Grand Final.

"I said to the players after the game, at the moment we find very little solace in that. We came here today expecting to take it and as the dust settles we'll realise we made some progress.

"But just at the moment it's a little bit hard to see that."

Mickan said the loss was a

thescore

Central District v Glenelg

Central	3.2	5.4	12.8	17.11	(113)
Glenelg	3.1	4.6	6.7	10.11	(71)

Best: Central: Mackenzie, O'Hara, Thomas, C. Gowans, J. Gowans, Callinan, Slade. Glenelg: Allen, Fisher, Mules, Willoughby, Ruwoldt.

Goals: Central: Westhoff 3; Dutschke, Schell, O'Hara 2; O'Sullivan, C. Gowans, J. Gowans, Callinan, Slade, McCabe, Goodrem, Mackenzie. Glenelg: Kirk 3; Grima, Backwell, Panozzo, Duldig, Bode, Allen, Murphy.

"lesson for everybody" in his team. "We were relying on our form and the season we'd had, and the fact that we'd played very well the previous week.

"Just no excuses, we're very disappointed with the outcome."

As expected it was a tense opening to the Grand Final - the Tigers looking for their first flag in 22 years and the Dogs hoping to prove the doubters wrong.

Glenelg big-man **Daniel Kirk**, who returned from a Queensland kayaking stint mid-season, booted two goals in the first term.

But the experienced **James Gowans** found his range, as did

Matthew Westhoff and **Daniel Schell** to give the Dogs a one-point lead at quarter time.

Glenelg's **Ty Allen** went into the game with his right shoulder heavily strapped but it didn't slow him down.

He swooped on a loose ball and kicked a brilliant goal to get the Tigers up and running in the second term. **Josh Willoughby** and **Adam Fisher** also worked hard and **Ben Mules** was good under pressure in defence.

The Tigers were right in the game at half time, trailing by just four points, but obviously weren't prepared for the on-

slaught that arrived after the break. Dogs co-captains **Paul Thomas** and **Matthew Slade** were sensational, young guns **Brayden O'Hara** and **Trent Goodrem** had an impact up forward and ruckman **Jason Mackenzie** got the better of **Trevor Cranston**.

A blistering quarter saw the Dogs lead by 37 at three quarter time and they were never troubled in the final term, on their way to a 42-point victory.

Mickan said his players couldn't match it with Central District when the heat was on.

"They just took it to another level in the third quarter and we couldn't go with them," he said.

"They got centre clearance goals very quickly and when we took it down we couldn't score.

"We had trouble getting our hands on the ball which made it very difficult."

■ (Picture above) Glenelg's **Matt Bode** despairs after the siren blows in this, his final SANFL game, while (inset) **Mark Ruwoldt**, looks equally despondent. Picture: **Stephen Laffer**

factfile

Moments that mattered

□ The Surprise

Two months ago he was a retired footballer, kayaking in Queensland. But on Sunday, **Daniel Kirk** booted Glenelg's first two goals of the game.

□ The Goal

Something for the Tigers to smile about. **Ty Allen** swooped on a loose ball across half forward early in the second quarter. He broke two tackles and snapped the ball over his shoulder for a miracle goal.

□ The Clanger

Tiger **Todd Grima** sprays a set shot out on the full from 20 metres, at a crucial time mid-way through the second term.

□ The Mark

Sprinting blind into an on-coming pack of players, Central's **Andrew Hayes** had eyes only for the footy above his head on the half back flank. Miraculously he took the ball, avoided a collision and kept running.



NOT OUR DAY: Glenelg players after the siren, fans at AAMI Stadium and captain Ben Mules and coach Mark Mickan address their opposition after the game.

Bays sounds of silence

By KYM MORGAN

THE day Glenelg fans waited 16 years for was ruined in just minutes on Sunday.

It took a 10-minute burst by the Bulldogs at the start of the third term to silence loyal Bay fans who had flocked in their thousands to AAMI Stadium, making up more than half of the 34,128 strong crowd.

Earlier, as **Ty Allen** snapped truly to give the Tigers an eight point lead in the second quarter, Glenelg supporters had erupted.

Even during the half-time break with the Bays trailing by four points, a Tiger chant drowned out the "you dogs" descant at the bar in the outer.

But midway through the third quarter as **Trent Goodrem** slammed through the Dogs' fifth goal in nine minutes, Glenelg fans could only sit and watch on in



stunned silence. "They just piled on so many so quickly," lamented **Tony Phillips**, a third generation Bay diehard from Mawson Lakes.

"My biggest fear coming to the ground today was that they were going to blow us away in the first quarter because they're seasoned pros on Grand Final day. But when we

were with them at half-time I honestly thought we had a real show. I'm just absolutely devastated."

The Snouts Louts, a Bay supporter group formed during the club's dark days in 2004, transformed the stadium's southwestern pocket into Snouts Hill. The group roared as one when **Matthew Duldig** kicked

a goal in front of them to bring Glenelg within a point just before quarter time, but by the third break, with their side trailing by 37 points, their fading voices told the story.

"We are just shattered," said one of the group's founding members **Joel Bayliss** after the match. "Obviously we are all taking it differently but some of the guys are just absolutely devastated."

Peter Campbell, of Sturt, a Bay supporter since the 1960s and a member of the Glenelg banner squad, pondered an all too familiar feeling after the loss.

"It's disappointing," he said from the member's car park which was quickly overtaken by jubilant Dogs supporters.

"I thought we were a huge chance today but once again we're the bridesmaids."

MATCH DAY

With Brenton Honor
GRAND FINAL



History

Central and Glenelg have played in only four finals against each other with the Tigers winning three of them. The Bulldogs have the SANFL's best all-time winning percentage in Grand Finals, 60 per cent (won 6 of 10), while Glenelg has the worst, winning just 4 of 16 at 25 per cent.



Record

These two clubs have met four times this year with the tally standing at two all. The Tigers won the first two clashes narrowly in tight contests then the Bulldogs easily accounted for the Tigers in Rd 18 before causing a 30 point boil-over in the second semi final.



Finals form

Central: The Bulldogs looked out of sorts for most of the qualifying final against Sturt but somehow got themselves off the canvas to score a famous victory against the odds. In the second semi-final they again went in as underdogs and showed the young Tigers side what it takes to win a final.

Glenelg: The Tigers failed to cope with the added pressure of finals football in the second semi-final, looking nervous and tentative to lose by 30 points to a finals hardened Bulldog outfit. In the preliminary final last week Glenelg was playing for its lives and it showed, bouncing back to form with an emphatic 66 point demolition of the Double Blues.



X-factor

Glenelg: Matthew Bode. In his last game for his beloved Tigers he could be the game-breaker. After an ordinary final two weeks ago he showed signs that he is getting back to his best last week.

Central: Matthew Westhoff. The young Bulldog key forward has been threatening to make a big impact on the finals stage. In his two finals Westhoff has taken 14 marks but has been inaccurate, kicking 2.6.

HEAD-TO-HEAD



Sam Rudolph (Glenelg) v Daniel Schell (Central)

Rudolph, after being under a cloud all week with concussion, was outstanding in the preliminary final, keeping Brant Chambers to just one goal from his only mark. He will pick up Schell, the Bulldogs reluctant forward, fresh from his five-goal haul in the second semi-final.



Brett Backwell (Glenelg) v Elijah Ware (Central)

Backwell had a welcome return to form last week, gathering 30 possessions in a dominant performance on a wing. His match-up on Ware will be one of the game's highlights as the speedy Bulldog wingman has had an excellent finals series so far.

THE VERDICT

The Bulldogs may have inadvertently done the Tigers a favour two weeks ago showing them the pre-requisites needed to win a final.

Glenelg 11-20

TAB Sportsbet fixed-odds markets HEAD-TO-HEAD

Central District \$1.75, Glenelg \$2



Time to draw a line in sand

Glenelg's day to stand up to rugged Doggies



BAD BLOOD: Glenelg's Luke Panozzo and Central's James Gowans face off this year



SAM SLAM: Central's Daniel Schell crunches Glenelg's Sam Rudolph in their semi-final clash

SCOTT WALSH JOHN WHISTLER

DEFENDER Luke Panozzo says Glenelg does not fear SANFL superpower Central District and will use controlled aggression to triumph in today's Grand Final.

Panozzo declared the Tigers' 30-point semi-final lapse was a one-off slip rather than a sign the Tigers were intimidated by the defending premiers.

And three Glenelg legends – feared for their uncompromising and sometimes brutal style of play – believe the only way to counter the Bulldogs' trademark intimidatory tactics is not to take a backward step.

FINDING THE SPARK

Panozzo conceded the Bays' intensity was down in their five-goal loss to the Dogs a fortnight ago.

But he said the Bulldogs' Grand Final aura – and the notorious verbal and physical barbs of master enforcers Chris and James Gowans – would not undermine the Tigers' first Grand Final appearance in 16 years.

"You've just got to stand up for yourself," Panozzo said.

"You're not going to go out bloody throwing punches and all that, you've got to stay calm and focused. But at the same time, you're not going to let blokes walk over you, that's for sure."

"You don't want to go out there trying to rough everyone up and then not worrying about your game. But you've got to stick up for yourself and fly the flag."

Panozzo is no stranger to football's physical side.

Raised on country football in Tantanoola in the state's south-east, and a veteran of an under-18s premiership with Millicent, the 25-year-old is no spectator when the heat rises.

In Round 12 at Elizabeth, Panozzo clashed with James Gowans, remonstrating behind the play in response to a late bump. "There wasn't much in that. Like I said, you just stick up for yourself," he said.

When full back Sam Rudolph was concussed in a Daniel Schell tackle on three quarter-time two weeks ago, Panozzo was the first on

the scene to drag the Central tall from Rudolph's stricken body.

The incident looked innocent enough – the unlucky result of Rudolph having his arms pinned and unable to cushion his side-on crash-landing into the Adelaide Oval turf.

But in a scene symbolic of the Dogs' domination of the third term, there was "flag-flying" support from Rudolph's teammates as Schell walked to his huddle.

"I'm all for flying the flag, and I was one of the closest blokes there," Panozzo said.

"I didn't think Schell did much wrong. If a bloke's there to be tackled, you tackle him. It's just what you do."

"I didn't even know Sammy was knocked out until Schell was off with the Centrals blokes – and you're not going to go charging into the bloody Centrals pack and starting that sort of stuff at three-quarter time."

THE DOGS' VIEW

Schell, aiming for his fifth premiership with the Dogs, expected the clash would ignite no extra fireworks today.

"I doubt it. I've got no idea what they're thinking but I'm not thinking 'gee, I wonder if they'll do something'," he said.

"All I'm worried about is playing our footy."

"That's up to them but I would doubt it because it was a fair tackle. They're a good side and they'll be more worried about how they set up and what they want to do in those first few contests."

But having witnessed Glenelg's turnaround against Sturt a week ago, Schell, who booted five goals in the Bulldogs' semi-final victory, forecast harder resistance today.

"They finished top this year so we're expecting a bloody good footy side," he said.

"They deserve to be there, they were really impressive against Sturt so we know we'll have to play at our best to give ourselves a real good shot at it."

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VIDEO: The moments that fuelled the rivalry.

"If they win those stoppages and get the ball going their way they'll be really hard to stop. You've got to be hitting in hard at the stoppages and winning the contested footy."

Central District has won the two previous contests with Glenelg after the Tigers claimed the first two this year, in rounds six and 12.

"Our season was pretty patchy this year and by no means were we a dominant team in the minor round," Schell said.

"The key thing is the way we play footy – we play contested and we back ourselves in playing a hard style of footy. That tends to win you finals games."

"We might not be as flashy and great to watch at times during the year but the game plan we have is the same one we've had for a long time – so you know it stands up."

CALL THE BLUFF

The three Tigers greats said there was a simple way to deal with the Gowans twins – or anyone else in the Bulldogs camp who wanted to niggle and sledge.

"The Gowans are bluffers, they get inside your head so the best way to deal with that is not to play their game," said Wayne Phillis, who played 218 games from 1967-1977 and was a member of the 1973 premiership team.

"I don't like them, their tactics – but if they were on my team I'd love it."

"The Glenelg boys have got nothing to be afraid of. They've just got to go for it – attack every contest hard and leave no stone unturned."

Phillis, a rugged defender with a dislike for turning left or right when he had the ball, said he always played in fear of losing a Grand Final – an attitude the Tigers' class of 2008 needed to adopt. "If Glenelg are to win, they have to relax, believe in themselves," he said.

"Don't leave it to someone else on your team to get the ball – make it your job. Don't sit back in the change rooms after it's all over and blame each other."

READY FOR ANYTHING

His comments were echoed by Alan Stringer, whose strong-arm tactics made him loathed by opposition fans in an era of hard men that included the likes of Port's Martin Leslie and Stephen Clifford, and Norwood's Jim Thiel and Garry McIntosh.

"The Bulldogs have got a reputation for being tough and they know how to play the mind games when it matters, especially the Grand Finals," said Stringer, who played 145 games for the Bays from 1983-89.

"They love the niggly stuff – the Gowans do it the best and always do it together."

"But, look, the Centrals players have got two arms and two legs and bleed like everyone else."

"They're not superhuman so the trick is to take them on, they've got to be resolute, they've got to cop any of that stuff and show toughness at the footy."

"In my day, we never broke the rules but we might have bent them now and again."

"Our attitude was to hit the ball hard and if there was a body in the way then you'd hit them hard, too."

"That's what the Glenelg boys have to do on Sunday."

"There's no tomorrow, no second chance."

KEEP COMPOSED

Neil Kerley, who coached Glenelg in the '73 Grand Final, said the Tigers had to remain focused if they were to be any chance.

"Centrals love to get into the opposition's heads, take their minds off the footy," he said.

"So it's absolutely vital that Glenelg, come what may, have to play hard footy, be at the ball."

Kerley, who played 260 games in total for West Adelaide, South Adelaide and Glenelg from 1957-1969, said Glenelg was fortunate coach Mark Mickan had plenty of experience in "hard, tough footy".

"There's no doubt the Glenelg boys have plenty of talent but the real challenge will be if they can handle the hard stuff when it comes," he said.

"If things get untidy, outside the rules, let's hope the umpires show some common sense and award frees to sort things out."

"They can't let it fester."

ESSENTIALS

● 8.30am: Car parks open.

● 8.45am: Stadium gates open.

● 9.05am: Under-19 Grand Final - Sturt v Glenelg.

● Noon: Reserves Grand Final - Sturt v Eagles.

● 3.10pm: SANFL League Grand Final - Glenelg v Central District.

● Coin toss by 1962 Magarey Medal winner Ken Eustice.

● The Jack Oatey Medal for best on ground presented by Norwood great Keith Thomas.

● TICKETS: Adults \$22, concession \$14, children \$6, family \$44.

● TV: ABC 3.30pm (delay).

● RADIO: ABC 891 and regionals; FIVEaa; 5RPH; LifeFM.

Reserves

Sturt v Woodville-West Torrens, from noon at AAMI Stadium.

Sturt: Scott-Toms, Papageorgiou, Trengove, Hurley, Jaensch, Fitzgerald, Bratton, Herring, Anderson, Johncock, Martin, Avery, Rischbieth, B. Eckermann, Plant, Sharples, Smith, Kay, Thring, Miles, Bartlett, Copping, Kurtze, Davey, Borholm.

Eagles: Klun, R.Fiacchi, Hank, Lee, Elliot, McEntee, Allmond, Staple, Couch, Jolly, C.Fitzgerald, Gogoll, Papps, C.Groche, Daveron, Malinowski, Rayner, Giuffreda, Arbon, Williamson, Goldsworthy, J.Redden, J.Polec, Osborn, Lane, Edwards.

GRAND FINAL

CENTRAL DISTRICT V GLENELG AAMI Stadium, 3.10pm today					
F	8. McCabe	27. Schell	5. Callinan	F	10. Bode
HF	7. O'Sullivan	24. M Westhoff	21. C Gowans	HF	26. Kirkby
C	47. O'Hara	28. J Gowans	50. Ware	C	3. B Kane
HB	22. Hayes	41. Aufderheide	35. Williams	HB	34. Mules
B	11. Goodrem	37. Sibenaier	9. Cochrane	B	19. Hinge
R	18. MacKenzie	16. Thomas	59. Slade	R	9. Cranston
INT: (From) 13. Dutschke, 17. Giles, 2. Hadden, 3. Lawry, 30. Moss.			INT: (From) 13. Willoughby, 17. Ruwoldt, 30. C Kane.		
IN: Lawry, Hadden.			IN: C Kane.		
OUT: -			OUT: Lally (knee).		

Under-19

Sturt v Glenelg, from 9.05am at AAMI Stadium.

Sturt: Baccanello (c), Beven, Brimacombe, Cahill, Chaplin, Clarke, Eckermann, Evans, Flanagan (vc), Giles, Gordon, Gregory, Healy, Heritage, Hughes, Jones, Kepa, Kinal, King, Laube, O'Malley, Read, Thompson, Twopeny, Weir, Wilson, Woods (c), Woolford.

Glenelg: Snook, Bosley, Redden, Genikas, Noonan, Hitchcock, Hartigan, Pekin, Perry, Trembath, Scott-Collings, Denson, de Visser, Ramsey, Sverdlhoff, Hill, Urwin, Clayfield, Drew, Collins, Venning, Ruwoldt, Talbot.

Report 7.30am, black shorts.