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Blues tune up for fierce final test by taming top Tigers

BEN CAMERON

STURT has booked an elimination final rendezvous with inner-city rival Norwood next Saturday after holding off a fast-finishing, Liam McBeanless Glenelg by 12 points.

Inspired by four goals to Josh Patullo, who was stitched up after being stretchered off for a head knock midway through the second quarter, the Double Blues resisted a late Tiger surge.

Glenelg drew within five points after a Luke Reynolds hanger and goal before the home team held their nerve and kicked clear, led by Sam Colquhoun with 36 possessions.

It was an opening quarter of goal-of-the-day contenders, with Jake Sutcliffe, Danyle Pearce and Patullo all landing majors from around 50m.

Then big man Tom Read ripped one out of the ruck like Gary Ablett circa 1989 to snap Sturt's third.

The second quarter saw the lively Josh Hone rival Read's effort for the day's best, getting his boot to a marking spillage.

The first 15 minutes of the second half were a stalemate but Sturt should have buried the visitors, kicking an errant 2.7 for the quarter.

The minor premiers fought back with a trio of majors through Marlon Motlop, Bailey's second and that screamer from Reynolds.

But a cool conversion from backline maestro Fraser Evans and then a beauty from Sutcliffe in the goalsquare snuffed out any chance of the Tigers stealing the points.

Sturt coach Nathan Grima admitted to some stressful moments in the box.

"There's a fair bit riding on it, first time senior coach, taking on a proud club with some recent history (of success) and expectation you play finals," Grima said.

"We feel we're as good a chance as anyone. I see finals as a whole new season."

Tigers coach Mark Stone was happy his team had fought on, despite backman Max Proud being forced off by lower leg "awareness".

"We had to shift the team around a fair bit," Stone said.

"I liked the spirit within the group. We pushed right to the end.

"We knew we were facing a team that was desperate to keep their finals alive."

SANFL PREMIERSHIP ROUND 18

	Ply	Won	Lost	Drw	For	Agnst	Pts	%
Glenelg	18	13	3	2	1658	1179	28	58.44
Port Adel	18	13	5	-	1684	1310	26	56.25
Adelaide	18	11	6	1	1460	1247	23	53.93
Sturt	18	11	7	-	1321	1201	22	52.38
Norwood	18	11	7	-	1556	1477	22	51.30
South Adel	18	9	7	2	1426	1307	20	52.18
WW Eagles	18	8	10	-	1439	1500	16	48.96
Centrals	18	5	13	-	1223	1664	10	42.36
North Adel	18	4	13	1	1191	1506	5	44.16
West Adel	18	2	16	-	986	1553	4	38.83

STURT	5.0 6.3 8.10 11.11	77
GLENELG	1.3 3.5 4.8 9.11	65

BEST

Sturt: Colquhoun, F. Evans, Crocker, Pearce, Patullo.
Glenelg: Agnew, Partington, Gould, Curran, Motlop, Bailey.

GOALS

Sturt: Patullo 4, Sutcliffe 2, M. Evans, F. Evans, Pearce, Hone, Read.
Glenelg: Bailey 3, Reynolds 2, Slade, Scharenberg, Motlop, Agnew.

UMPIRES

Schramm, Philp, Crosby.

CROWD

3422 at Peter Motley Oval, Unley.

By PETER CORNWALL

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Sturt stormed into the finals with a stunning 12-point win against minor premier Glenelg at Peter Motley Oval.

The Blues went into the clash knowing they had to beat the high-flying Tigers to be certain of competing in the major round for the fourth successive season but they also knew they would have to earn it – Mark Stone's talented Glenelg line-up had lost just two of its previous 23 games.

Sturt, beaten at home in the previous two weeks by Norwood and Port Adelaide, set up the triumph with five goals to one with the strong breeze in the opening quarter but had to dig deep to claim the crucial win when the Tigers stormed home to the northern scoring end in the last term.

When Luke Reynolds soared over the pack for a spectacular mark, then slotted his second goal at the 14-minute-mark of the last quarter Glenelg was within just five points and looked primed to charge to its 14th win of the minor round.

But, despite kicking into the teeth of the strong wind, the Blues refused to concede their season was over. With human wrecking-ball Aidan Riley crashing through packs with a single-minded determination to get his hands on the footy first – he won a staggering 18 clearances in a remarkable performance – Sturt owned the decisive next 10 minutes of the game.

Steven Slimming earned a free kick 50m from goal – out of his range – but he handballed to defender Fraser Evans, who charged past and bombed a massive left-foot goal from 50m.

Tall forwards Jake Sutcliffe and Josh Patullo followed with

majors and the Blues were out by 24 points at the 26-minute-mark, their elimination final spot sealed against long-time rival Norwood.

Glenelg kept coming for consolation goals from Jonty Scharenberg and Darcy Bailey but there was no late goal for Reynolds, who was left one goal short of sidelined team-mate Liam McBean in the race for the Ken Farmer Medal.

Hard-running Sam Colquhoun, the highest possession-winner in the SANFL this season, set the Blues on their way all day with 36 disposals, ever-improving 21-year-old ruckman Daniel Fahey-Sparks won a whopping 46 hit-outs, Matthew Crocker and skipper Zane Kirkwood earned plenty of the footy and Patullo stood tall on a day that seemed over for him when he was carried from the ground on a stretcher after a heavy knock early in the second quarter. He returned for the second half his head swathed in bandages and finished with four crucial goals.

Tigers midfielder Luke Partington again showed the touches of class that have him standing out as Magarey Medal favourite, earning 28 possessions, while powerpacked dual All-Australian under-18 defender Will Gould had 10 rebound-50s in his 22 clearing kicks as he continued to display what a bright future he has in the game.

Carl Nicholson provided plenty of dash with 21 touches in his first league game since Round 6 after being struck down by an Achilles injury.

Mark Stone's Tigers, having earned their first minor premiership in a decade, have a week off before coming up against the winner of the Port v Adelaide qualifying final in the second semi-final on Sunday, September 8.

STURT	**5.0**	**6.3**	**8.10**	**11.11 (77)**
GLENELG	**1.3**	**3.5**	**4.8**	**9.11 (65)**

Leading Disposals

Sturt: Colquhoun 36, Crocker 26, F. Evans 25, Riley 23, Kirkwood 21.
Glenelg: Partington 28, Gould 27, Agnew 23, Nicholson 21, Motlop 20.

Goals

Sturt: Patullo 4, Sutcliffe 2, M. Evans, F. Evans, J. Hone, Pearce, Read.
Glenelg: Bailey 3, Reynolds 2, Motlop, Agnew, Slade, Scharenberg.

Magarey Medal:
3 – S.Colquhoun (Sturt)
2 – D.Fahey-Sparks (Sturt)
1 – L.Partington (Glenelg)

Round 18 Match Results

23-Aug-2019							
Richmond Oval	**Norwood**	10- 8	68	**d.**	**West Adel**	6-14	50
24-Aug-2019							
Elizabeth Oval	**Port Adel**	22-17	149	**d.**	**Cent.Dist**	8-11	59
Prospect Oval	**North Adel**	10-10	70	**d.**	**WW Eagles**	8- 9	57
Noarlunga Oval	**South Adel**	12-11	83	**d.**	**Adelaide**	12- 4	76
Unley Oval	**Sturt**	11-11	77	**d.**	**Glenelg**	9-11	65
31-Aug-2019							
Elimination Final	Adelaide Oval	**Norwood**	16-14	110	**d.**	**Sturt**	15- 6	96
Qualifying Final	Adelaide Oval	**Port Adel**	12-13	85	**d.**	**Adelaide**	8- 7	55

Ken Farmer Medal

Liam McBean wins 2019 Ken Farmer Medal

By ZAC MILBANK

Glenelg's Liam McBean is the first to admit he doesn't like to watch football.

And there were multiple reasons why this was reaffirmed for the Bays' spearhead as he sat in the grandstand at Peter Motley Oval on Saturday.

Rested for the Tigers' final minor round clash due to general soreness, the 24-year-old had a three-goal buffer on team-mate Luke Reynolds at the first bounce.

By the final siren, McBean had not only been denied his wish of a Glenelg victory against Sturt, Reynolds came up one goal short in tying up the race for the Ken Farmer Medal on 46 majors.

Speaking on SANFL Radio, the former Richmond big man said he would have liked to share the award with Reynolds, who has had an equally efficient season in front of the big sticks.

Together, McBean and Reynolds have booted 91.35 between them, with McBean's haul finishing on 46.19 and Reynolds having 45.16.

Glenelg's first Ken Farmer Medallist since Clint Alleway in 2015 and Todd Grima in 2010, McBean says he's on track to return for the Second Semi-Final on Sunday September 8.

SANFL Leading Goalkickers to Round 18

Player	Team	Games	Gls - Bh
Liam McBean	Glenelg	17	**46 - 19**
Luke Reynolds	Glenelg	18	**45 - 16**
James Rowe	W-WT	17	**35 - 19**
Troy Menzel	Centrals	18	**33 - 29**
Joshua Hone	Sturt	18	**32 - 20**
Billy Frampton	Port	11	**32 - 14**
Tyson Stengle	Adelaide	16	**30 - 23**
Mark Evans	Sturt	17	**30 - 14**

Magarey Medal

Partington Wins 2019 Magarey Medal

By ZAC MILBANK

Glenelg's Luke Partington has become the first Tiger in 13 years to win the prestigious Magarey Medal at a gala ceremony held at Adelaide Oval on Monday night.

The first Bays player to win SANFL's illustrious best-and-fairest trophy since Brett Backwell in 2006, Partington is also the 10th in club history to earn the League's coveted individual honour.

Joining Glenelg greats such as Tony McGuinness, Fred Phillis and Kym Hodgeman, the 22-year-old polled 26 votes to finish ahead of Adelaide's Patrick Wilson on 21 and Norwood's Lewis Johnston on 17.

After polling a vote in Round 1, the 22-year-old was slow out of the blocks having missed Rounds 2 and 3 with a minor hamstring strain.

But the hard-running midfielder sprang to life from Round 7, as he attracted maximum votes from seven of eight matches, with Round 11 the only game he didn't poll in during the two-month period.

In this time, the former West Coast Eagle landed a staggering 21 of his total votes which proved to be enough to hold off early pacesetters in Wilson and Port Adelaide's Jack Trengove.

Measuring in at 181cm and 79kg, Partington averaged 29.5 disposals, five tackles, five clearances and a goal as he quickly cemented himself as one of SANFL's premier midfielders this season.

Glenelg's No.10 also claimed SANFL's inaugural Digital Pass Player of the Year Award as well as the R.O Shearman Medal as voted by the competition's coaches.

Originally from the Tumby Bay Football Club on the Eyre Peninsula, Partington was forced to deal with immense grief when his father Brian was killed in a mining accident at Olympic Dam in February 2015.

The tenacious onballer was then spurred on to get drafted by AFL club West Coast later that year, where he played six games at the highest level in 2017, including the dramatic Elimination Final victory against Port Adelaide at Adelaide Oval.

With the high-flying Eagles boasting a supremely strong midfield division, Partington returned to Adelaide to resume his SANFL career with Glenelg, having previously represented Port Adelaide at junior level and Norwood in 2015.

Leader Board

Luke Partington	Glenelg	26
Patrick Wilson	Adelaide	21
Lewis Johnston	Norwood	17
Sam Colquhoun	Sturt	16
Zane Kirkwood	Sturt	15
Jack Trengove	Port	15
Abe Davis	South	14