

# Tigers claw back for win



	<b>GLENELG</b> 2.0 5.3 8.8 11.10	<b>76</b>
	<b>NORWOOD</b> 5.4 7.7 7.8 10.13	<b>73</b>

#### BEST

**Glenelg:** Snook, Agnew, Motlop, Nicholson, McBean, Bradley.

**Norwood:** Nunn, Panos, Z. Richards, Shenton, Johnston, Pinyon.

#### GOALS

**Glenelg:** McBean 4, Bailey 3, Reynolds, Partington, Stretch, Nicolson.

**Norwood:** Panos, Surman, Pinyon 2, Bampton, Nunn, Douglas, Gerloff.

#### UMPIRES

Schramm, Bowen, Bryce.

#### CROWD

3907 at Adelaide Oval.

Luke Partington celebrates after putting Glenelg back in front in the last quarter against Norwood. Picture: Sarah Reed

#### WARREN PARTLAND

SO much has changed in the world since Glenelg snapped a 33-year premiership drought with a stunning grand final triumph.

That was an incredible 281 days ago, and pre-COVID-19.

But there is one constant after the SANFL's opening round – the Tigers being victorious at Adelaide Oval.

The fighting three-point win over Norwood wasn't pretty, and there were plenty of mistakes foreign to their victory over Port Adelaide in the title decider.

But the endeavour, disciplined structures and qualities necessary to win the big games remain intact.

"Momentum swings" is an often-adopted phrase and this game had them in abundance.

The Redlegs came into the season full of optimism and they showed why by building a 27-point buffer early in the second quarter.

Against most teams that lead would be sufficient. But against the Tigers the Legs could not feel comfortable ... and with good reason.

Come three-quarter time, the Tigers, remarkably, were in front. They then gained a nine-point lead midway through the final term, only for the Redlegs to respond.

Norwood bombarded its forward 50 in the final minutes, but could not find the winning goal and Glenelg hung on in a desperate battle to the siren.

"It was a tough game, they are a pretty good team," Tigers coach Mark Stone said.

"Our contested work was really good, but our ball handling in the contest can improve.

"There is plenty to work on, but it is good to get off to a

start like that."

Playing with plenty of confidence and authority for much of the first half, the Redlegs punished their opponents' mistakes and moved the ball with conviction.

Matt Nunn was having an impact on the ball for the Redlegs, Cameron Shenton was prominent down back and Nick Pedro was keeping Magarey Medallist Luke Partington quiet.

Not that the Tigers didn't have plenty of opportunities.

However, they wasted so many threatening forays with sloppy work entering the attacking 50.

Both teams were guilty of poor skills after half-time and turnovers became a constant.

Hard-working midfielder Matthew Snook, best-on-ground in the grand final, was at it again with his possession count and Brad Agnew just thrives on the grunt work.

On Saturday, it was the debutants showing off their talents in the double-header.

Yesterday, it was the proven campaigners in clutch moments – such as the goals from new Redlegs captain Matthew Panos and Partington in the final term.

"Our intent and effort was good for four quarters," Redlegs coach Jarrod Cotton said.

"We had opportunities to win the game and probably lacked a bit of composure at the end.

"I thought we played the game in our half for the last 10 minutes but could not crack a goal. We don't want to be a second team, we want to be the best team. We will learn from that and get better.

"They had their chances and we had ours. Those games can go either way."

By ZAC MILBANK

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**Glenelg began its premiership defence with a heart-stopping three-point victory against a determined Norwood at Adelaide Oval.**

Desperate to honour former skipper Andrew Bradley in his 150th game, the Bays showed tremendous resolve to slowly claw their way back into the contest after trailing by as much as 27 points early in the second term.

Norwood went without a goal for more than a quarter before its Mount Compass recruit Tom Pinyon made the most of a rare defensive error from Glenelg to tie up the scores four minutes into the last term.

Bays forward Liam McBean, one of his side's most influential players, then swooped on a loose ball to turn and snap a goal along the ground in one action.

It only served to spark the Redlegs into conjuring a significant surge in the fourth quarter as it then scored the next four behinds in succession, forcing new Bays skipper Max Proud into several spoils on the last line of defence.

Unheralded Tiger Carl Nicholson then pulled in a courageous mark running back with the flight before converting it into a nine-point lead. In such a tight contest, it seemed like the 2019 premiers were all but home 15 minutes in.

But Norwood's spirit was emphasised by Cole Gerloff nailing a difficult set shot from 35m before new captain Matt Panos made his presence felt by snapping truly from 30m to restore the lead on the stroke of time-on.

Within two minutes, Glenelg snatched back the lead when Magarey Medallist Luke Partington continued his strong finish to the match by marking an errant kick from Norwood's defence just inside the 50m arc.

Partington calmly slotted through his 45m set shot to put the Bays back in front by three points, which proved to be the final margin after a nail-biting final 11 minutes registered just a behind to each team as the clock ticked beyond 30 minutes.

It was an outstanding display of Statewide Super League football between two of the competition's powerhouse clubs at the home of SA footy.

Returning Tiger juniors Matt Allen and Billy Stretch combined for the opening goal of the game but the energetic Redlegs then shifted the momentum dramatically on the back of a stunning opening term from Panos.

Panos kicked his side's first major of the game before chalking up 11 disposals and four clearances before quarter-time as big Norwood key forward Luke Surman loomed large after booting two goals after displaying great aerial strength.

Even former Crow Richard Douglas was in on the act with his first goal, a close range snap shot, for his new club as the Legs earned a 22-point break at the first change.

The lead ballooned close to five goals when Pinyon snapped his first goal of the game after a turnover.

But Mark Stone's men had seen enough. Slowly but surely, the Tigers systematically worked their way back into the fierce

contest by lifting their own pressure and moving the ball through the corridor.

Ken Farmer Medallist McBean was a significant beneficiary as he booted two goals and hit the post during the second stanza, one of his majors a booming set shot from 55m.

Jack Oatey Medallist Matt Snook was his typical self in and under from the first bounce while earning 29 disposals, seven tackles and 11 clearances.

His teammates began to join in through the third term as Partington (21 disposals) and Marlon Motlop (23 disposals) worked their way into the game after slow starts.

Hard nut Brad Agnew had 20 disposals, nine tackles and eight clearances while Glenelg debutant Luke Parks was impressive with his reading of the play to snare 10 defensive marks to go with his 16 disposals across half-back.

Livewire Bays forward Darcy Bailey also had an impact on the outcome, kicking three vital goals. Norwood's old firm of Panos (24 disposals, five tackles and nine clearances) and Mitch Grigg (23 disposals and seven tackles) led the way along with Matthew Nunn (27 disposals and six tackles), who kicked a nice goal on the run in the first-quarter flurry.

Douglas finished with 20 disposals to go with his goal while Norwood ruckman Sam Baulderstone got first touch in the centre square to amass 41 hit outs.

The Redlegs will look to inject former North Melbourne and Brisbane midfielder Ryan Bastinac into its side for Round 2 after he gained match condition in the Reserves this weekend.