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TIGERS MARCH TO FINAL



Glenelg's Sam Durdin breaks away with the football during last night's SANFL preliminary final against South Adelaide and, above, Glenelg's Marlon Motlop celebrates a goal. Pictures: Cory Sutton/SANFL

ANDREW CAPEL

GLENELG will play in its second SANFL grand final in three years after ending the South Adelaide fairy-tale at Adelaide Oval on Friday night. The Tigers, whose only minor round loss came in the final round, earned a rematch with second semi-final conqueror Woodville-West Torrens after beating the Panthers by 28 points in the preliminary final. South's heartbreaking defeat stretched its premiership drought to 57 years and left it without a grand final appearance since 1979. In contrast, Glenelg will next week be chasing its second flag in three seasons after beating Port Adelaide in the 2019 decider.

The minor premier Tigers, who were upset by the Eagles by four points in a thrilling second semi-final, won a war of attrition in what was a scrappy contest highlighted by a spectacular performance from top AFL draft prospect Jason Horne-Francis. While South teammate Bryce Gibbs had a night to forget against his former club, electrifying teenager Horne-Francis kicked three of the Panthers' six goals and had 24 disposals and 11 clearances. He twice had shots at goal which slammed into the goalpost early in the final term, ending South's hopes of a comeback after it trailed by 22 points at the last change. The game signalled the end of re-

tiring dual Panthers Magarey Medalist Joel Cross's illustrious career. He was chaired from the field after the game. Glenelg's grand final appearance, in its centenary year, was secured on the back of a standout defensive display, where Dylan Landt, Sam Durdin, Chris Curran and Max Proud stood tall after it was smashed in clearances 50-35. In the first preliminary final between the teams, it was the Tigers who settled faster. They quickly struck the first blow when wingman Billy Stretch snapped brilliantly over his left shoulder after 97 seconds. With Gibbs getting booed by Tiger fans every time he touched the ball, 2019 Magarey Medallist Luke Partington stamped his mark on the match in the fifth minute when he marked and goaled from 40m in his first game in six weeks following a hamstring injury. The Bays dominated territory in the opening stanza but could not put their superiority on the scoreboard. They won disposals by 29, marks by 15 and inside 50s by six while laying 12 more tackles but led by only nine points at the first break after kicking 2.4 to 1.1, with the Panthers' sole major coming from a clever mark from top draft prospect Matthew Roberts. With Cross and Hayden Sampson starting to have an impact, South got the game back on its terms in the sec-

GLENELG	77
2.4 5.8 8.10 11.11	
SOUTH	49
1.1 4.4 5.6 6.13	

CAPEL'S BEST

Glenelg: Landt, Allen, Bradley, Durdin, Curran, Reynolds, Partington, Stretch.
South: Horne-Francis, Schwarz, Sampson, Haines, O'Neill, Roberts.
GOALS
Glenelg: Reynolds, Stretch, Motlop, McBean 2, Partington, Hosie, Allen.
South: Horne-Francis 3, Roberts 2, Schwarz.
UMPIRES
 Bryce, Harris, Scott.
CROWD
 7051 at Adelaide Oval.

ond quarter, having the first eight inside 50s of the term. Glenelg started to fumble and be indecisive with the ball and the Panthers were rewarded for effort when Roberts bobbed up with his second goal and then Horne-Francis was involved in two majors in two minutes as the underdog grabbed a 10-point lead. With the Tigers under serious pressure, forward Luke Reynolds stood up to wrestle back momentum. Entering time-on in the second quarter, he kicked Glenelg's first goal since the five-minute mark of the first term after a mark before quickly adding a second following a strong tackle. When Stretch, who had not kicked a goal in his previous three league games this season in an injury-riddled year, booted his second from long range just before the siren, the Bays were back out to a 10-point lead.

Horne-Francis show class - but Panthers' wait goes on

WARREN PARTLAND ANALYSIS

TEN minutes into the third quarter South Adelaide young gun Jason Horne-Francis raced past four players to toe the ball through for a goal. It was no goal of the year contender, but it was glaring evidence of the class and poise from the youngster expected to have his name revealed first in the national draft. And that was the issue for the Panthers. While most of the side failed to handle the occasion and had games to forget, it was an 18-year old with the composure trying to provide the spark. Horne-Francis is a gun. His work rate is outstanding, as is his passion for the contest and he has the ability to back up his confidence. He was the one bloke who gave the Panthers hope, amassing 11 clearances and bagging three goals. Some of the efforts of his teammates were just not acceptable at this level and unfortunately for the Panthers faithful, they are on the doorstep of another summer in which to contemplate the ifs, whys and maybes. Knocked out of the title race by Glenelg at the penultimate hurdle, the long-suffering Panthers' fans will be mulling over another preliminary final defeat. The modern day Panthers have given those supporters a tremendous ride and there would be plenty of pride in their side after establishing itself as a consistent threat. But near misses are becoming too frequent. One of the main reasons for what the Panthers have been able to build is Joel Cross, a dual Magarey Medalist and four-times Knuckey Medalist as the club's best. The midfielder took his final curtain call for the Panthers after calling an end to his prolific career. He deserved a flag, such has been his impact on the league. But while the Panthers can ponder a lost opportunity, the Tigers are still alive in the race for the flag. Did they do enough to scare Woodville-West Torrens? Doubtful. After winning their first 17 games, the Tigers have struggled to recapture their best form. There was the one impressive quarter against the Eagles the previous week, and maybe two this week.

by Zac Milbank

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Glenelg ended South Adelaide's dream finals run with a hard-fought 28-point Preliminary Final win at the Adelaide Oval on Friday night.

Despite leading at every change, the Tigers didn't put the Panthers away until triple Ken Farmer Medallist Liam McBean kicked his first goal of the night 19 minutes into the final term. Fifth-placed South — fighting to make its first Grand Final since 1979 and win its first flag since 1964 — fought hard to work back into the match with significant surges at the start of the second and fourth terms.

After the Bays failed to put any scoreboard pressure on South in the first term, leading by just nine points at the first change, South had the first eight inside 50 entries of the second stanza. It resulted in a 10-point lead on the back of Nic Schwarz's goal in the 15th minute, two minutes after star in the making Jason Horne-Francis gave his side the lead with a snap goal. Critical third term goals to Tigers Lachie Hosie (3rd minute) and Marlon Motlop (23rd minute) swung the game back in Glenelg's favour. South then kicked the first

four behinds of the fourth term before Motlop ensured his career would extend an extra week with a goal from close range 10 minutes into the last term. Horne-Francis, who finished with 24 disposals and 3.3, loomed as the only significant danger to Glenelg, his two posters in the final term proving influential in the result. Glenelg coach Brett Hand will be pleased his side found a way to win without any significant performances from his midfielders, with Dylan Landt (33 disposals) and Andrew Bradley (25) leading the way on the stats

sheet. Luke Reynolds kicked two vital goals in the second stanza while Sam Durdin was exceptional in defence with co-captain Max Proud. Hard-running Hayden Sampson (28 disposals) and Nic Schwarz (27 disposals, eight clearances and a goal) supported Horne-Francis strongly, in what was the last game for Panthers champion Joel Cross. Cross was fittingly chaired off after his 208th and final SANFL League game, after 18 disposals and three marks.

Adelaide Oval, Friday 24th September, 7:15pm

Glenelg	2.4	5.8	8.10	11.11	77
South Adelaide	1.1	4.4	5.6	6.13	49
Glenelg					
Goal Kickers: L.McBean 2.2, L.Reynolds 2.2, M.Motlop 2.1, B.Stretch 2.0, L.Hosie 1.2, M.Allen 1.1, L.Partington 1.1, J.Kluske 0.1					
Disposals: D.Landt 33, A.Bradley 25, M.Allen 22, C.Curran 19, L.Partington 19, M.Snook 19, S.Durdin 16, B.Turner 14, L.Hosie 12, M.Motlop 12, L.Reynolds 12, B.Stretch 12, M.Virgin 12					
South Adelaide					
Goal Kickers: J.Horne-Francis 3.3, M.Roberts 2.1, N.Schwarz 1.1, M.O'Neill 0.2, F.Turner 0.2, B.Gibbs 0.1, D.Nobes 0.1, S.Skinner 0.1					
Disposals: H.Sampson 27, N.Schwarz 27, J.Haines 25, M.O'Neill 25, J.Horne-Francis 24, B.Gibbs 20, J.Cross 18, F.Turner 18, M.Rose 15					