

Baby 'Hodgey' inspires Bays

ANDREW CAPEL

STURT'S elimination final misery continued as a Glenelg young gun lit up Adelaide Oval on Sunday.

The Tigers' hard-fought 16-point win – built on the back of a supreme defensive performance – was highlighted by the coming of age of a 20-year-old dubbed 'Baby Hodgey'.

Cooper Horsnell, playing only his 16th league game, proved a difference maker on the big stage, kicking two crucial goals from a wing in a low-scoring slugfest and standing out with his class.

"He's classy, he makes smart footy decisions and he got rewarded today," Glenelg coach Brett Hand said of Horsnell after the Bays won an arm wrestle in which only 14 goals were kicked in dry but blustery conditions. "He's quality but while his goals were very important if you look at some of his one percenters, you go, 'gee, that's smart'."



Local product Horsnell, who resembles Glenelg's 1978 Magarey Medallist Kym Hodge-man and wears the same guernsey number (24), had a modest 16 disposals but turned the game on its head with exquisite finishes in the first and third quarters.

Sturt won clearances by nine and inside 50s by two but could not penetrate a Tigers backline where Toby Pink (nine marks), hard-as-nails captain Max Proud, Alex Martini and Darcy Bailey stood firm.

The Blues' loss continued their shocking elimination final record. They have now lost nine of the 10 elimination finals they have contested.

And they have lost their past seven games against Glenelg.

Kicking with a two-goal wind to the southern end, Sturt struck the early blows in the knockout final. Key forward Lachlan Burrows nailed the first major after 10 minutes following a dubious free kick paid against Proud and 90 seconds later the Double Blues doubled their tally when Josh Hone

	GLENELG	61
	2.2 4.6 6.10 8.13	
	STURT	45
	2.2 3.4 4.8 6.9	

CAPEL'S BEST

Glenelg: Allen, Pink, Horsnell, McBean, Proud, Martini, Snook, Bailey.

Sturt: Lewis, Battersby, Grivell, Voss, Fahey-Sparks, Wundke.

GOALS

Glenelg: Horsnell 2, McBean, Stagg, Hosie, Martini, Allen, Reynolds.

Sturt: Grivell 2, Burrows, Hone, Lewis, Emmett.

REPORT

Glenelg: Reynolds, for allegedly striking Slimming (Sturt) in the first quarter.

UMPIRES

Morgan, Scott, Hundertmark.

snapped brilliantly to give them a handy 13-point lead.

The Tigers had to wait until 17 minutes to kick their first goal but it was worth the wait, with Horsnell wheeling onto his left foot from deep in the north-western forward pocket and splitting the uprights.

Glenelg's triple Ken Farmer Medallist Liam McBean, who spent most of the game in ruck, then unloaded from 51 metres to level the scores at 2.2 at quarter-time.

Both sides were tackling ferociously and Glenelg, with the aid of the breeze, edged in front by eight points at the long break. With goals at a premium, hard-nosed defender Martini proved an unlikely goalkicking hero for the Tigers early in the third quarter, bobbing up with a snap shot which bounced through after only 94 seconds.

Wingman Matt Allen was best-afield with 24 disposals, seven marks and a long goal in the final term as Glenelg ensured one of its favourite sons, Andrew Bradley, celebrated his 200th game in style.

Midfield hard nut Tom Lewis was Sturt's best with 23 disposals, 13 clearances, 14 tackles and a superb checkside goal.

DEFENCE PRAISED BY HAND

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GLENELG coach Brett Hand hailed his team's strong defensive effort as the Bays staved off finals elimination against Sturt.

"We played a good finals brand of footy," he said after the tough 16-point win at Adelaide Oval.

"We've been building towards it but haven't been able to execute for four quarters but we stuck to the game plan for most of the game and got the reward. Our leaders stood up and our young kids were fantastic."

The Tigers restricted the Double Blues to only six goals in dry conditions, with Hand describing their defence as "top notch".

"We defended as well as we have all year and to see it hold up on a big ground – and our workrate to do some things defensively – was really pleasing," he said.

"The wind was really tricky but Sturt are a good defensive team – they've had the second-least scores kicked against them – so we were happy to kick more goals than them in the end."

Glenelg is hopeful 2019 Magarey Medallist Luke Partington will play in next week's first semi-final after he missed the elimination final with a foot injury.

Double Blues coach Martin Mattner lamented some missed opportunities.

"We won some really good KPIs (clearances and inside 50s) and gave ourselves opportunities but didn't reward ourselves on the scoreboard and with that last kick inside 50," he said. "We lacked that little bit of polish going forward."



Sturt's Josh Hone is tackled by Glenelg's Max Proud during the SANFL elimination final at Adelaide Oval on Sunday and (below) Matthew Snook of the Tigers kicks as the Double Blues' Henry Carey tries to smother. Pictures: David Mariuz/SANFL



Mattner described Sturt's season as "frustrating" after bowing out in the first week of the finals.

"But in terms of the long-term goal, I think we're on the right track," he said.

Tigers book semi final spot with win over Sturt

– Brett Hand, Senior Coach

glenelgfc.com.au

Adelaide Oval, Sunday 28th August, 12:15pm

Finals had arrived, spring was in the air and it was great to be at Adelaide Oval, with the ground looking fantastic. It was a tricky day with the wind, but we were ready for the contest against Sturt.

The first quarter started like we thought it would. It was a fairly contested game with both sides hard at it, but I was impressed with the way we were able to wrestle the momentum after Sturt kicked a couple of early goals. We capitalised on some opportunities going into the breeze and restricted Sturt to only three shots from their 14 entries. Cooper Horsnell kicked the first goal for the game for us with a clever snap on the left foot from the pocket, which was really pleasing to see. We went into quarter time with the scores level, and I was happy with the way we were moving the footy

and with the way we were going about it defensively, not allowing Sturt to play their game.

During the second quarter though we probably went away from the game a little bit. We spent too much time kicking the ball long to outnumber in our forward line and allow Sturt some uncontested marks inside our D50 which hurt us a little bit. But we still managed to go into the half time break eight points up after capitalising on a couple of opportunities in the forward line. It was good to see Matt Allen having a real impact and Matty Snook at the contest winning some clearances. Even though we were getting beaten there, I thought his ability to get his hands on the ball first was helping us. Toby Pink down back was also starting to take control of the back line with Max Proud.

At half time we talked about repeating our first quarter effort in the third, and Alex Martini managed to kick a goal 90 seconds into the quarter (his first for the year!) which put us 14-points up. From there, it was a matter of maintaining that position. I was pleased with the way we went about it – our ball use was good, and we continued to defend really well and not allow Sturt to get around us and go coast to coast, which was the focus for us pregame. Although, we did waste some opportunities and we probably could have been a bit further up. We had a couple more inside 50s in the third quarter and lacked composure there, but our tackle pressure was good and our pressure around the contest was great, with Cole Gerloff's physicality and toughness in this area particularly standing out. So while Sturt did get one back,

Cooper Horsnell kicked another clutch goal for us late in the third quarter, which was really important, and this put us up 14-points at three quarter time.

Going into last quarter we knew the breeze was going to play a factor for us. Sturt came out strong and kicked the first goal, and from then on it was a bit of goal for goal. We were losing clearances and so we had to adjust things around that, which helped. We kicked the ball to grass a few times and got out the back, which was good reward for our forwards that had worked really hard all day. Reyno got the end of one and Hosie got the end of another earlier on, so it was pleasing to see that happen. And it was great to take out the game like we did and bring home the win for Andrew Bradley in his 200th SANFL game.