



Eagles' Zachary Buck runs with the ball (main), while (inset), Glenelg's Hugh Stagg celebrates. Pictures: Tricia Watkinson

Eagles' Kuller blow

ANDREW CAPEL

	EAGLES	2.1	5.2	8.3	12.7	79
	GLENELG	2.2	6.3	11.4	13.6	84

REID Kuller was the unlikely hero as Glenelg won a SANFL Anzac Day classic at Woodville Oval on Monday.

The 20-year-old midfielder-turned-defender snapped a superb, left-foot goal from 40m with 30 seconds left on the clock, as the Tigers stole victory from the jaws of defeat to exact some revenge for last year's grand final loss to Woodville-West Torrens.

Kuller, not a noted goal-kicker, spared the Bays' blushes after they gave up a game-high 20-point lead early in the final term and trailed by a point until his last-gasp match-winner handed them a thrilling five-point win.

Clay Cameron had only minutes earlier missed a set shot from 45m that would have pushed the Eagles six points clear, after teammate Daniel Menzel's fifth goal tied the scores.

"It feels a bit surreal," Kuller said of his crucial kick,

BEST

Eagles: Knight, D. Menzel, Ballenden, Williams, Sinor, Clarke, Toumpas, Lehmann.

Glenelg: Durdin, Snook, Partington, Bradley, Lyons, Stagg, Stretch, Bailey.

GOALS

Eagles: D. Menzel, Williams 5, Hardie, Firns. **Glenelg:** Hosie 4, Stagg 3, Kuller 2, McBean, Murdoch, Leck, Partington.

INJURIES

Eagles: Lonergan (shoulder).

UMPIRES

Bryce, Medlin, Morgan.

CROWD

2623 at Woodville Oval.

which was just the eighth goal of his 26-game career and left his team unbeaten, after he made the most of a sharp handball under pressure from young teammate Hugh Stagg.

"It's just a great moment, especially getting over these

boys (the Eagles) considering what happened last year.

"It shows we're on the right track and to kick that goal on such a special occasion was a good reward for all the hard work I've put in over the years.

"I don't always trust my skills, but today I backed myself and fortunately got it done."

The win meant a lot to Glenelg following its humiliating 67-point grand final loss to the Eagles last year, after it lost only one minor round game for the season.

It led for most of the game on Sunday and by 20 points when 2019 Magarey Medalist Luke Partington missed an easy shot on the run from 30m early in the last quarter.

The miss appeared to be costly when the Eagles, who have won the past two premierships, stormed home to take the lead in time-on.

But Kuller made the most critical play of all, delighting Tigers coach Brett Hand.

"Reid's adapting to a new role, he is a beautiful kick and hopefully he gets a lot of self-belief out of this," Hand said.

"Footy's a strange game and we had some opportunities to put some more scoreboard pressure on them and didn't take them. They then got some ascendancy and we were able to wrestle it back.

"Fortunately we were able to apply some good forward pressure at the end and Reid finished the job."

While Kuller was the match-winner, key defender Sam Durdin won the Bob Quinn Medal as best afield with a standout display that included 22 disposals and 11 marks.

Midfielders Matthew Snook (31 disposals, 11 clearances) and Partington (26 and seven) were excellent, while veteran Andrew Bradley was rock-solid down back and Stagg kicked three goals and handed out a couple as a pressure forward.

The Eagles, who lost mid-

fielder Kobe Mutch before the game due to Covid-19 health and safety protocols, were gallant and showed their premiership qualities.

Coach Jade Sheedy said his team, which is still without several premiership players, including Mutch, Troy Menzel, Jarrad Redden and Luke Beecken, had regained its "identity" after a stuttering start to the season.

"I thought we found our identity again as a footy club, we had 91 tackles, which is the brand of footy we want to play, so we took a huge step forward," Sheedy said.

"We just paid a price for some of our decision-making going forward, but the beauty for us is that we still have huge growth in us, as much as 50 per cent."

Riley Knight was superb for the home side, gathering 33 disposals, while ruckman Connor Ballenden was influential and Menzel and Zane Williams each bagged five goals.

ANZAC Day blockbuster goes down to the wire

— Brett Hand, Senior Coach

glenelgfc.com.au

Maughan Thiem Kia Oval, Monday 25th April, 2:10pm

What a thriller Monday turned out to be. A great game between two sides that demonstrated the Anzac spirit on such a special day for our country. Sam Durdin deservedly won the Bob Quinn Medal for the player that demonstrated the Anzac spirit across all four quarters.

Anzac Day is a special occasion on the SANFL Calendar and to be involved in the game means so much to our club. We spent some time during the week talking about the significance of what the Anzacs were tasked to do on the 25th April in 1915. We also recognised the contribution of all our service men and women in our history. We are grateful for the country we live in and the sacrifices that many young men and women made whilst serving in war.

The opening quarter started with a true arm wrestle as both sides tested out what they were planning to do. There were numerous stoppages in the first 10 minutes of the game with Liam McBean breaking the scoring

drought with a goal. We had a lot more of the ball at this stage, and after Jordan Murdoch converted a nice passage of play from our back half with a goal on the run, we started to put some scoreboard pressure on the Eagles. Unfortunately we were unable to capitalise on other opportunities in the quarter, and through a couple of poor errors we allowed the Eagles to kick two goals in the back end of the quarter.

The Eagles adjusted their style in the second quarter and after Stagg kicked an early goal they gained ascendancy in the middle of the ground, winning centre bounce clearances and kicking a few goals to take a 12 point lead halfway through the quarter. Unlike the last couple of games, we were able to stop their momentum and we kicked the last three goals of the quarter, taking a seven point lead into the main break.

The third quarter was a classic contest with both sides playing some tough bruising football. In

the latter part of the quarter we managed to kick away, with Lachie Hosie kicking three goals. This saw us go into the last change 19 points clear. Matt Snook won plenty of the ball in the third quarter and Andrew Bradley and Darcy Bailey were providing plenty of drive from our defensive end.

We couldn't have asked for a better start to the last quarter, with Turner winning a centre bound clearance and Stagg getting the crumb, which he passed off to Luke Partington, who had a shot on goal which would have put us 25 points up. But, footy is a strange game and unfortunately Luke missed his shot and the Eagles took the ball to the other end of the ground and kicked truly, reducing the margin to 14 points. The arm wrestle then continued and the Eagles kept driving the ball inside 50 but our backline, lead by Sam Durdin and Toby Pink, stood strong and repelled them on numerous occasions. Eventually we levelled the scores before Stagg kicked his third of the day to put us back

up by a goal with about 10 minutes to play. When they hit the front by a point late in the quarter, it was going to come down to some belief and how well we could implement the plan we had been trying to do for the day. Full credit to the players on the field because there isn't a lot you can do as a coach when it is this close and with only a few minutes left. With three stoppages in a row, we managed to move the ball out of our D50. Toby Pink read the ball well and kicked the ball inside our fwd 50 twice in a minute to give us a sniff of hitting the front.

What happened next was very pleasing as a coach, with three new players to the squad this year having significant impact on the goal Reid Kuller kicked to hit the front. Cole Gerloff, Riley Holder and Hugh Stagg had a never-say-die attitude and fought and scrapped to keep the ball alive inside 50, tackling the opposition and feeding the ball out to Reid who finished with a classy goal on his left foot.