



TOUCH TIGHT: Michael Metzger of Magheraclone is challenged by Oughterard defender Claran Hanley.

around midfield, caused more chaos and Jordan Waller did brilliantly to block Michael Metzger's flicked effort which deflected over the bar.

Still, Oughterard were well ahead at that stage and deservedly led 1-10 to 0-7 at half-time with an unanswered 1-4 between the 20th and 30th minutes setting the bookmakers' underdogs on their way to victory.

Gavin Doogan, just retired from the Monaghan county team, kicked two first half points and the powerful, shaven-headed midfielder patrolled the middle third like a panzer tank in search of engagement. He was booked in the 28th minute and another Doogan, wing-back Jack, also saw yellow for a huge hit on Ryan Monaghan just minutes earlier.

Four Magheraclone players were booked in the first half and Michael Jones' sanction caught up with him when he picked up another in the 47th minute, resulting in his dismissal. Six minutes later, Farrelly walked to the line for a cynical trip and black card that followed an earlier yellow.

James Kieran's 13-men did reduce their arrears to just three points shortly after when Freeman converted back to back frees to make it 1-11 to 0-11 but, in truth, they were hanging on.

Clancy followed his goal for Oughterard with a point late on and despite only coming on in the 55th minute - he did feature as a blood sub earlier - he finished as the top scorer from play.

With Cian Harte and Daniel Kenny already on too, the Oughterard management introduced three different Gibbons' in the closing minutes: Donal, Phillip and Ian.

The latter, Ian, pinched a point from a free won by Donal, the fourth different Oughterard player to score from a placed ball as all of Finnerty's planning and drilling paid off on the biggest stage.

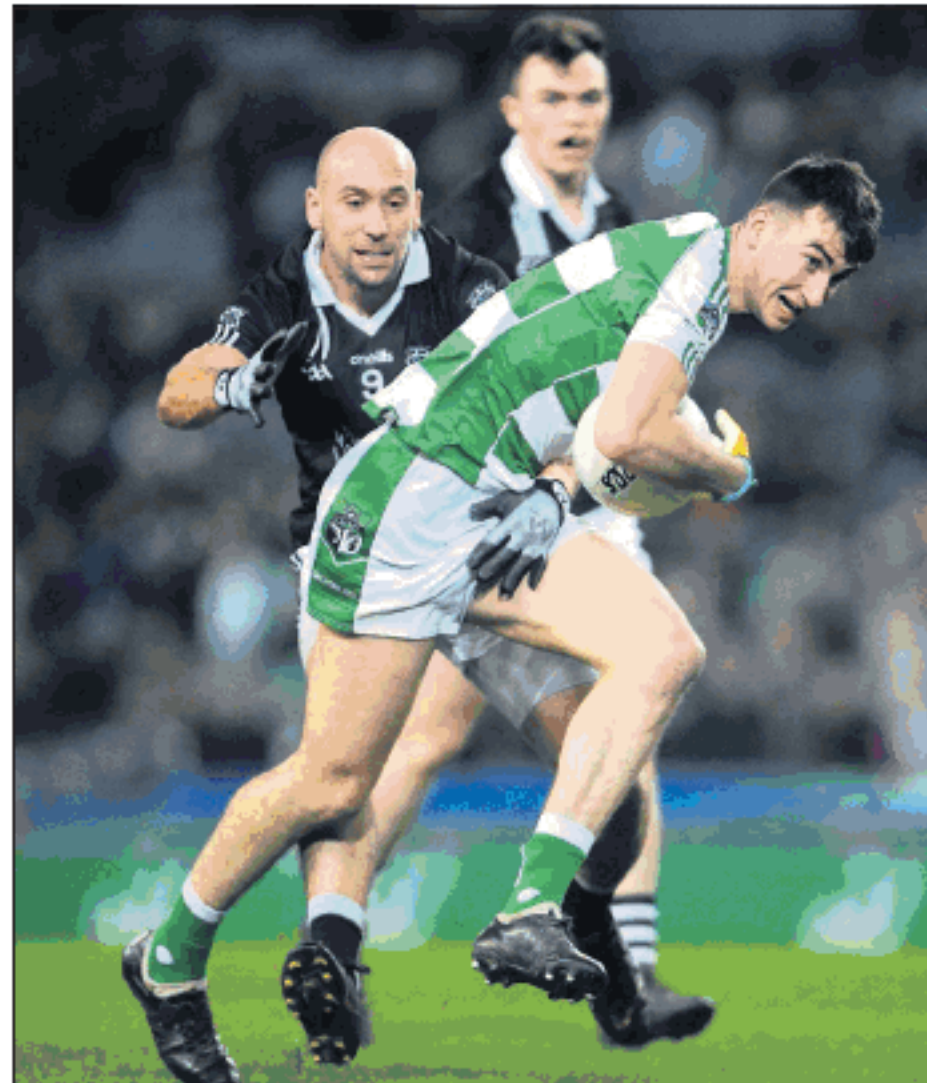
It was a victory for athleticism and natural talent as much as determination and preparation and it would be surprising if Matthew Tierney, a Connacht U-20 medallist last summer, hasn't caught the attention of Padraic Joyce.

The dynamism of Oughterard's half-back line was another factor in the big win and the Monaghan's, Ryan in number seven and Cian in number five, combined exquisitely for the team's second point.

By full-time the Monaghans had scored a brace of points from play each and allied to the agility and hard running of the Tierneys and Eric Lee, they overran Magheraclone.

Lee's 20th minute goal summed up what Oughterard brought to the occasion; a terrific solo goal into the Hill 16 end. The wing-forward won a ball almost 45 metres out on the Hogan Stand side and hared away from defenders Killian Rudden first, then Jones, before planting a low finish to the Magheraclone net.

A little piece of wizardry on a day when Oughterard conjured something special that will live long in the memory.



DRIVING FORWARD: Enda Tierney sets Oughterard on the attack against Gavin Doogan of Magheraclone.

**OUGHTERARD:** J. Waller; C. Hanley, E. O'Sullivan (captain), L. Moran; R. Monaghan (0-2), C. Monaghan (0-2), R. Molloy; E. Tierney (0-3, 0-2 frees), P.J. McGauley; B. Lambert, M. Tierney (0-1, free), E. Lee (1-0); N. Lee (0-4, 0-2 frees), Patrick Walsh (0-2), Paul Walsh. Subs: C. Harte for Molloy, 15 mins; D. Kenny, for Lambert, half-time; C. Clancy (1-1), for McGauley, 55 mins; D. Gibbons, for R. Monaghan (black card), 60 mins; P. Gibbons, for Patrick Walsh, 60 mins; I. Gibbons (0-1, free), for N. Lee, 62 mins.

**MAGHERACLOONE MITCHELLS:** D. Kirk; M. Jones, P. Ward, P. McArdle; K. Rudden, J. Ward (0-1), J. Doogan (0-1); J. Kieran, G. Doogan (0-2); B. Kieran, A. Kieran, P. McMahon (0-1); R. Farrelly (0-1), T. Freeman (0-5, 0-3 frees), M. Metzger (0-1). Subs: C. McKeown, for Rudden, half-time; L. Murray, for Metzger, 40 mins; A. McCahey, for J. Doogan, 45 mins; P. Tuite, for B. Kieran, 50 mins; N. Marron, for A. Kieran, 61 mins.

**REFEREE:** Sean Laverty (Antrim).

**HERALD SPORT MAN OF THE MATCH:** Shared by Enda Tierney & Eric Lee (Oughterard).

## First half dominance, Finnerty's plan and Galway's 2020 double

Herald Sport reflects on some of the main topics to emerge from Oughterard's magnificent All-Ireland final victory over Magheraclone Mitchells of Monaghan on Saturday.

### FIRST HALF HEAVY LIFTING

SOME teams upon taking to the Croke Park turf can be overcome by nerves and the occasion they are about to face. Not Oughterard, however. Despite trailing 0-3 to 0-1 after five minutes, the Galway and Connacht champions remained composed and for the remainder of the half outscored Magheraclone, 1-9 to 0-4, to push them into a commanding and unassailable position as they held a six-point advantage at the change of ends. Seven different scorers in Patrick Walsh, Ryan Monaghan, Enda Tierney, Cian Monaghan, Niall Lee, Eric Lee and Enda Tierney were all on target illustrating that this All-Ireland final victory truly was a team effort.

### FINNERTY THE MASTERMIND

TOMMY Finnerty was a man with the plan. Alongside his management team of Aidan Fahy, John Fleming, Liam Tierney, Willie Moran and Greg Muller they've taken Oughterard to the Holy Grail of becoming All-Ireland champions. Finnerty and co are clearly a tactically astute bunch and are certainly not lacking in the motivational department either as their team showcased the perfect blend of desire and composure that saw them through. Time and time again, this Oughterard outfit have been written off as underdogs, and over and over, they keep leaving the odds compilers with egg on their faces with yet another upset.

### ANOTHER STRONG OUGHTERARD FINISH

RENOWNED as a second half team throughout the year, after producing displays against Tulsk, The Neale, Templenoe, and three times in their clashes with Micheál Breathnach before eventually claiming the John Cotter Cup. Their fitness levels told once again, and tremendous credit must be given to S&C coach Greg Muller as continually Oughterard showed they have plenty left in the tank down the home stretch. Last Saturday, with five minutes of normal time remaining, only a goal separated the teams. Oughterard produced another stirring finish, hitting 1-5, to ensure there would be no way back for their Monaghan opponents with Conrad Clancy netting the all-important 56th minute goal. Defensively, they were superb also only conceding a mere three points in the final 20 minutes of the contest.

### DISCIPLINE KEY IN FINALS

MAGHERACLOONE's overall discipline in GAA HQ left a lot to be desired. Seven yellow cards, one black eventually culminated with the Ulster champions finishing the game without the services of both Michael Jones and Ryan Farrelly - both for needless and reckless challenges while already on yellow cards. In the end, this ended any faint chance of a revival and although Oughterard probably had enough of an advantage built up anyway, it certainly made their task that bit easier. Finnerty's side had to overcome adversity themselves when losing defender Ronan Molloy, a pivotal player throughout their unforgettable campaign, to a first half injury. Still, he was on hand to lift the cup with captain Eddie O'Sullivan and that's all that matters. Ryan Monaghan was shown a black card late on but by that stage his contribution of two points and overall all-action performance from the half-back line had made up for any indiscretion.

### SENIOR PROSPECTS

LIKE 2018 Galway intermediate champions An Spidéal, Oughterard should be carrying serious momentum into this year's Senior Football Championship. Spiddal reached the quarter-finals last year before bowing out to eventual beaten finalists Tuam Stars in a one-score game. Oughterard will be hoping to make a similar splash and given the talent scattered through their squad it would be amiss to say they aren't capable of at the very least matching An Spidéal and perhaps going even further. Players like Jordan Waller, Eddie O'Sullivan, Ronan Molloy, the Monaghans, the Tierneys, the Walshs and the Lees et al will be eager to test themselves in Galway's top tier. If they can reproduce performances like last weekend's, they'll be a force to be reckoned with.

### 2020 GALWAY DOUBLE

WHAT a start it's been to the new year for Galway football. With the exploits of Corofin and now Oughterard, it meant a first ever senior and intermediate All-Ireland double for Galway clubs - the only other All-Ireland winner at intermediate level being Moycullen in 2008. With Padraic Joyce's senior side also making a positive start to their league campaign with a win over Monaghan, it's exciting times for football within the county and his squad should receive a boost by the expected reintroduction of both the Corofin and Oughterard players in the near future.