

GAA GALWAY INTERMEDIATE FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL

# Intermediate title on the line

- Ml Breathnach and Oughterard already promoted to senior in 2020

By Billy Coss

OUGHTERARD and Micheál Breathnach will play senior football in 2020, that much is certain. The Cotter Cup, the mantle as Intermediate Championship winners and the right to represent Galway in Connacht will all be on the line when the Connemara clubs face off in what has the makings of cracking final at Pearse Stadium on Sunday afternoon (throw-in: 3.45pm).

It's the second instalment of a double-header in Salthill, following the Senior Football Championship semi-final clash of Moycullen and Tuam Stars (2pm), and is sure to attract the weekend's biggest attendance.

An Spidéal prevailed when they crossed paths with Micheál Breathnach in last year's final replay, but Frank Doherty's side showed all their mettle to bounce back and will ply their trade in Galway club



**ACTION** from the Intermediate Football Championship semi-final with Tommy Ó Conghaile of Micheál Breathnach up against Joe Donnellan and Adrian Varley of Cortoon.

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football's top flight on the back of superb knockout wins over Kilconly and Cortoon.

So too will Oughterard, a club currently reaping the rewards from their underage work, underlined by their

West Board Minor B (U-18) title won last weekend against Leitir Mór.

It's been another very competitive Intermediate Championship this season and if the finale produces anything

like the fireworks of last year's decider, we're in for a treat.

As fate would have it, the pair meet some eight weeks down the track from their Group A clash in Moycullen. With the pressure piled on



**OUGHTERARD'S** Ryan Monaghan.

them, Oughterard recovered from seven points down at the interval and went on to dominate the second half and run out 1-14 to 3-6 winners.

Micheál Breathnach exploded out of the blocks as Seán Denvir and Tommy Ó Conghaile provided the assists for Liam Mac Donnacha to blast home two cracking early goals, while Fiontán Ó Curraoin netted a third to open a double scores lead at the break, 3-5 to 0-7.

The second half was a completely different ball game. Oughterard dominated from the off and led by the Matthew Tierney and Niall Lee battled back to within three after 44 minutes.

They could even afford the luxury of a missed penalty as

Micheál Breathnach 'keeper Rónán Ó Beoláin saved from Enda Tierney. When a second spot-kick was awarded to Oughterard on 54 minutes, Matthew Tierney duly obliged and late pointed frees from the Tierney brothers gave them a two-point win.

This weekend promises to be similarly tight. Oughterard flirted with elimination in their final group game with Kilkerrin-Clonberne but have been ruthless in front of the posts in recent matches, clocking up 3-16 and 3-18 against Caltra and Dunmore, respectively. The Tierneys, the Lees (Niall and Eric), the Monaghans (Cian and Ryan), and team captain Eddie O'Sullivan have all been to the fore for Tommy Finnerty's side.

Micheál Breathnach have answered the far more searching questions in the knockout stages from Kilconly and Cortoon Shamrocks and have the experience of being here twice in 2018. Plus, they possess a serious midfield partnership in Tommy Ó Conghaile and Fiontán Ó Curraoin, while Liam Mac Donnacha, Rónán Mac Donnacha and Seán Denvir lead their scoring returns. **VERDICT: OUGHTERARD**