

## CONNACHT SENIOR FOOTBALL FINAL

Galway's Dylan McHugh getting the better of Sligo's Paul McNamara during Sunday's Connacht Senior Football Final at MacHale Park.  
PHOTOS: JOE O'SHAUGHNESSY.



# FINAL CAKEWALK

Galway make short work of limited Sligo in one-sided provincial final

GALWAY	2-20
SLIGO	0-12

**PÁDRAIC Ó CIARDHA**  
AT MACHALE PARK

IF you wanted to sum up Galway's performance in Sunday's Connacht Final in a word, it would be 'clinical'. Two words? 'Really clinical'. Whether you need any more than that is debatable but there's space to fill and let's enjoy this while it lasts.

The 14-point win over Sligo in Castlebar won't go down as a classic but that's no reason why it shouldn't leave Galway supporters with a spring in their step this week. It's been 20 years since the Tribesmen managed to retain a Connacht title and the fact that Pádraic Joyce's side managed the feat at their leisure at the weekend is a very good sign of where Galway are at at the minute, even if it was against a Division 4 team.

A quick start from Sligo, as they raced into a two point lead, might have given Joyce and the rest cause for concern but Galway were back on track

soon enough and, really from the moment Matthew Tierney blasted to the roof of the net in the tenth minute for the game's first goal, both he and Galway never looked back. The lead was 2-7 to 0-5 by half-time after Damien Comer and Tierney combined again for Galway's second goal and they extended their lead steadily in the second half.

It was a brilliant day for Tierney, in particular, who finished up with a tally of 2-7, with all but two points of that coming from play. While his two goals came from a combined distance of about six yards, the Oughterard man had plenty of work to do with both chances but finished expertly. Sunday's all-action display has only strengthened his case for being Galway's player of the year to date and if Tierney carries this form into the round-robin series, it'll be a huge bonus.

You could find very little to fault any of those in a Galway jersey on Sunday, really. Shane Walsh's subdued display which saw him taken off after 40 minutes certainly raised eyebrows but with Joyce explaining afterwards that Walsh had been



Galway defender Jack Glynn comes under pressure from Sligo's Cian Lally at MacHale Park on Sunday.

bedridden with flu during the week, it makes his underperformance wholly understand-

able.

The other man who is so often the focus in attack for

Galway, Damien Comer, didn't manage a score in Castlebar but there's no questioning the

impact he had on the game, creating both of Tierney's goals while also having a hand in some more scores. Ian Burke also continued where he left off against Roscommon, settling back into the team with a couple of nicely taken points while Johnny Heaney continued his role as Mr. Reliable.

It was a mark of Galway's attacking prowess that they registered just two wides in the game and a shot conversion rate of over 80% but the work of those further back the field was just as important.

Peter Cooke enjoyed probably his best performance for Galway since his return to the fold and while the task is now to match that level as the opposition improves, Sunday should give him the confidence to kick on.

While Sligo's Seán Carrabine, Niall Murphy and Pat Spillane caused Galway problems at times, Cillian McDaid, on his return to the starting line-up, matched Spillane's pace well, Seán Kelly and Jack Glynn got to grips with Sligo's marksmen and John Daly, Dylan McHugh and, in particular, Johnny McGrath, were very