

SENTINEL SPORT



Michael's recover to reach inter. decider

St. Michael.....2-5
Headford1-6

By Declan Tierney

At one stage it looked like a challenge doomed to failure, but St. Michael's reserved all the sparkle for the second half with a compelling performance to earn them victory over Headford at Tuam Stadium on Sunday in the intermediate football championship semi-final and another stab at senior status.

The city side, who trailed by four points in a low scoring first half, seemed well out of contention but then they defied all the odds with a two goal blitz in the third quarter — a bombardment which Headford could never recover from.

It was quite an amazing victory for St. Michael's. They only scored once in the first half and it wasn't for the lack of chances at their disposal as their tally of nine wides during that period indicates.

Headford, in the meantime, looked a far more potent entity as they utilised what chances they had with wing forward, Jason O'Sullivan, pointing a free and he followed this with an excellent point scored

under pressure from a number of Michael's defenders.

Des Dowling, who was the only Michael's forward that looked any way threatening at the time, scored a 14th minute point from play and the city side were fortunate not to have conceded a goal after 22 minutes when Headford full forward, Tom Corbett, took a pass from John Ger Gibsey but his shot was well saved by goalkeeper Sean Callaghan.

But two minutes later, the deserved break-through came for Headford. A high ball into the Michael's square was knocked away by Callaghan but only to the feet of Corbett again. He had two chances which were blocked by Callaghan but Gibsey was third time lucky as shot to the net.

Leading by 1-2 to 0-1 at half time, it seemed routine enough as far as Headford were concerned as Ger Lee, who was having a very good performance at midfield, responded to a first minute second half point from Adrian Brennan.

However, disaster struck for Headford. Long time St. Michael's campaigner, Jimmy Maughan, who was gradually making his presence felt, found possession close to the Headford square. He spotted Adrian Brennan available, passed it out and the former county minor and under 21 star made made no mistake in taking his goal.

This left the city side just one point adrift and in another lightning assault on the Headford goal, substitute Colin Murphy, flicked on a Tom Power long ball into the net but the goal was disallowed as Murphy was adjudged to have been in the square at the time the ball was played.

The same player was not finished yet. Within 30 seconds Murphy was well positioned to take a cross from Johnny Walsh and he got the necessary touch to scramble the ball across the line. It proved to be a substitutes day as Eamonn O'Shea added a point from play to change matters around dramatically with Michael's now a clear goal ahead.

Headford's Jason O'Sullivan pointed two frees before St. Michael's midfielder and former county senior player, Damian Tummon, replied with a point from play before Ger Lee reduced the arrears again for Headford to just a single point.

Michael's could have had the game wrapped up but for three good chances missed by Brennan and Maughan while Headford were having their own woes in front of the posts as well.

Johnny Walsh for Michael's left two points between the sides but the final opportunity to clinch the match rested with Headford when Monty Heneghan had a shot and



ATTACK . . . Hibernians' Dermot McSweeney in control as Renmore's Pat Lohan moves in to tackle during their Heineken Brod Trill Premier Division clash.

Damian Tummon saved on the line to deny a goal.

St. Michael's, who now meet Leitir Móir in the county final, had stars in John Ruane, who did a lot of work at corner back, Tom Power and Kevin Joyce in defence. Tummon and Sean O'Dowd had their moments at midfield while Declan Dowling, until replaced, Johnny Walsh and Jimmy Maughan were the main forces up front.

Headford were fancied to

take this match and for long periods looked as if they could achieve victory. They had good displays from Shane O'Reilly, David Stankard, Roy O'Toole, Ger Lee, Jason O'Sullivan, Declan Newell and Monty Heneghan.

St. Michael's: S. Callaghan; T. Melia, A. Garvey, J. Ruane; K. Joyce, T. Power, B. Joyce; D. Tummon (0-1), S. O'Dowd; A. Brennan (1-1, 0-1 '45), D. Dowling (0-1), J. Walsh (0-1); D. Walsh, J. Maughan, B.

O'Donnell. Subs.: E. O'Shea (0-1) for Melia; C. Murphy (1-0) for Dowling; T. Landers for Brennan.

Headford: D. Corbett; R. O'Toole, R. Biggins, S. O'Reilly; D. Stankard, K. Lee, P. Darcy; G. Lee (0-2), T. Craddock; J. O'Sullivan (0-4, 0-3 frees), D. Newell, M. Heneghan; T. Bane, T. Corbett, J. G. Gibsey (1-0). Subs.: V. O'Malley for Darcy.

Referee: Sean McHugh (Caltra).

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