

GALWAY SOCCER WRAP UP

# Moran grabs the winner as Mervue tops in local derby

■ Revitalised Renmore push neighbours all the way in Connacht Junior Cup

MERVUE UNITED	2
RENMORE	1

MIKE RAFFERTY

THOUGH they were great rivals in times past, recent meetings have been rare as Renmore found themselves meandering about the lower divisions, but Sunday's TP Brennan Connacht Junior Cup meeting proved that all is alive and well and certainly competitive in the neighbouring parishes.

Mervue United position of strength challenging for Premier Division honours is almost an annual feature, but it is just this season that Renmore can claim to have returned to a competitive level as they have streaked well clear at the top of the First Division and look odds on to return to the top flight after a prolonged absence.

On Sunday in Fahy's Field, Renmore looked to be the better outfit for much of the exchanges and offered a greater threat in the last third of the park. However, scoring goals is an art in itself and in Barry Moran, Mervue United have one of the best goal scorers that ever played in the local leagues.

He got one chance in the game and with a subtle header, delivered the match winner. In contrast, the visitors just didn't have a finisher of the same quality to give them a reward for a good performance.

It was Renmore who broke the deadlock in the opening half when Harry Connolly headed in a Colie Ridge free kick and only for a terrific save by Lorcan Doyle, they would have added a second, when the goalkeeper denied Eoin O'Boyle.

The home side levelled matters just before the break with a rather fortuitous equaliser as a Keith McHigh free kick from half way took a deflection off Paddy Gannon for an own goal to tie up matters at 1-1.

While Renmore did the majority of the pressing in the second half, they seldom directly threatened Doyle's goal. Florian Jouffre, Cathal O'Regan and Colie Ridge all went close as the visitors probing provided no reward.

In contrast, the home side notched the winner on 72 minutes, with their only shot on target in the half. Ciaran Foley,

new signing Kevin Fitzpatrick and Simon Walsh provided all the style down the right and following the latter's cross, Moran's header crept beyond Cillian Murphy to make it 2-1.

Within a minute, the visitors had legitimate penalty claims waved away by referee Brian Lynch when John Finnegan was upended in the box by Foley and all they got was an unfair booking for skipper Gannon as he took issue with the match official. A double whammy for Renmore, who can certainly feel hard done by with the decision.

They continued to force all the late pace, but the home side hung on as efforts by O'Regan, Kevin Connolly and a Colie Ridge free kick went east and west of the posts.

## Junior Cup

Two Western Hygiene Supplies Premier Division sides made surprise departures from the Connacht Junior Cup as Hibernians and Salthill Devon hit for the exit door.

The Bohermore side made the short journey out the road to face Maree/Oranmore and left deflated with a 2-1 defeat. It was the visitors who led by 1-0 at the break as Conor O'Loughlin headed in a Keith Ward free kick for the opener, but a second half brace by Conor Murphy won it for the home side. Damien Carter went close to an equaliser for Hibernians in the latter stages, but was denied by the crossbar.

Salthill Devon paid the side for fielding a depleted side in Sligo against Ballisodare United and had just a late Damien O'Reilly goal to show for their efforts in a 2-1 defeat.

Aided by new signing Alan Murphy, West United had no such problems in the finishing stakes as goals by Sean Keogh (four), Eoin Dooley (two) and Jimmy Jennings (two) helped them to a one-sided 8-0 win over Achill Rovers.

Corrib Rangers put their recent poor league form behind them when defeating Kilkerrin United by 5-0 at Westside as goals by Daniel Burke (two), Brian Connolly, Conor Cleary and Mark Wynne eased them to a comfortable success.

When goals by Thomas Hoban and Darren Creaven put Loughrea two up against NUI Galway in Dangan, they looked to be well on the way to victory.



The Galway U18 team which are through to the last eight of the FAI Youth Cup. Back row, left to right: Niall Rooney, Nathan Ward, Troy Slattery, Dean Cullinane, Mathew Barrett, Oran Monaghan. Front row: Paul Boyle, Conor Devlin, James Cahalan, Cian O'Toole (C), Jack Kissane.

However, goals by Gary Mullin and Ger Bane saw the students level matters, before Pat Nagle made it 3-2 for the visitors with a cracking set piece winner.

Though the holders Athenry advanced courtesy of a walkover from Sligo side Yeats United, last season's beaten finalists Ballinasloe Town advanced with a 5-0 victory over West Coast United. One up at the break, they added a few late goals for a merited success.

Aided by three penalty saves by Denis Farragher in the shoot-out, St Bernard's eventually got the better of Strand Celtic by 3-2, after the sides had finished level at 2-2 following extra time in Abbeyknockmoy.

Aided by the elements the Sligo team were two up at the brea before goals by Eoghan Roche (pen) and an own goal levelled matters on the resumption. In the shoot-out, Roche, Shane King and Jamie Finn all hit the target as the home side eventually prevailed.

Elsewhere in the province, there were wins for all the top sides as the likes of Westport United, Castlebar Celtic, Boyle Celtic and Carbury advanced.

## Connacht Shield

Bohemians have two teams in the TP Brennan Connacht Shield and both advanced with the greatest of ease with victories in Mayo.

Bohemians A proceeded to see off Conn Rangers B by 10-0 with Namanja Spasojevic, Oskar Nowak and Dave Cubbard all hitting hat tricks. James Nolan completed the visitors tally in a one-sided contest.

Bohemians B had it equally comfortable with a 4-1 away success over Ballina Town B. On this occasion, Kevin Flynn (two), Jason Merrigan and Steven Mulherrins were all on the mark for the Galway outfit.

Ronan Molloy and Dave Tierney were on target for NUI Galway B as they defeated CP Ajax by 2-1, while Aaron McDonagh got a late winner for Moyne Villa as they came from behind to see off Partry Athletic by 3-2.

Aided by a smart penalty save by goalkeeper Liam Cahill, Corrib Celtic B emerged 3-1 winners over Medtronic/Merlin Woods as Kevin Fox, Darragh Geary and Liam Joyce found the net for the home side.

East United were comfortable 3-0 away winners over Chaffpool United. Darragh Kelly (two) and Christy Madden found the net for the visitors, and despite two goals from Jason McDonagh, Hibernians B, exited courtesy of a 4-2 home defeat by Oughterard.

Inter-Leagues  
It was a successful weekend for the Galway sides in FAI Inter League action in Eamonn Deacy Park over the weekend.

Aided by second half goals by Nathan Ward and captain Cian O'Toole, the Galway Youth side came from behind to see off the Clare League by 2-1 and, in the process, set up an away quarter-final against the DDSL. Elsewhere, there were 3-0 wins for the U12 side against Mayo, while the U13 team emerged 5-1 winners against Longford.

## NUI Galway

With NUI Galway in Collingwood Cup action next week in Maynooth, the College side received the perfect boost in midweek as a 2-0 win over Sligo IT saw them qualify for the Division One Final of the Colleges and Universities League.

Goals by Ali Sanusi and Rory Brennan gave them a merited success and in the decider at the FAI Complex in Abbotstown, they will face IT Tallaght on Tuesday, February 28th.

On Monday next at 2pm, Jumbo Brennan's charges will face Mary Immaculate College, Limerick in the opening round of the Collingwood Cup where a win would set up a second round tie against DCU.

Last week it was the turn of the First Years for Intervarsity action in the Harding Cup and after outplaying UCC for long spells in the game, they exited at the semi final stage with a penalty shootout defeat.

The contest finished level at 1-1 following extra time, with Maurice Nugent getting the students' lone goal, with Jack Walsh and former Galway United U19 player Nugent also denied by the woodwork.

In the penalty contest, just Nathan Ward and Kaelan Evers could hit the target in a 4-2 defeat. In the opening round, Derek Rogers charges defeated UL by 2-1, courtesy of goals by Jack Walsh and Danny O'Shaughnessy.