

Mojopin Studios proposals for reform of Football Championships

There has been a lot of debate over how to get the best out of the All-Ireland senior football championship for the past couple of years and we at Mojopin Studios have come up with the following plan that we think would work for counties, clubs and supporters.

We have identified 4 areas that we think should be focussed on:

- Retention of the provincial senior championships
- Retention of ability of all counties to progress to All-Ireland Senior Football Final
- Provision of additional competitive games for counties and spectators
- Reduce the amount of time from start to finish of the championship providing club teams with their county players back quicker

Senior Football Championship Proposals

Extra time will be played in all drawn games. If the game is still a draw after extra time, then the teams will compete in a 45 shootout*.

Provincial championships

Provincial championships will continue as is for the most part, with all eligible counties entered into open draws in the single elimination style bracket. The exception is within Connacht.

Connacht senior football championship

The only pre-determined matches will be who plays New York and London, as this is on a cyclical basis. London and New York will also be able to face each other in the first round, which effectively guarantees one of the "Exile" counties entry into the semi-finals. With the cyclical nature of this match, it will come around every 6 years, but it will also be cyclical in the designation of the home team. The winner of the "all Exile" clash will however face an away fixture in their next match.

All-Ireland Championship

The All-Ireland Championship is to be split into Senior and B levels. All teams that will be in Divisions 1 & 2 of the league the following year (i.e. Taking into account promotion/relegation from the most recent campaign) will automatically be entered into the Senior championship. They will also be joined by teams that reached the final of their provincial championship, but will be competing in Divisions 3 or 4 in the following campaign. The remaining teams, including New York (if agreed), will be entered into the B Championship.

This means that the Senior Championship can consist of between 16-24 teams and the B Championship will be contested between 9-17 teams. The B Championship will have a completely open draw. Whereas the Senior Championship will have the provincial winners (regardless of Division status) entering directly into the quarter finals of the Senior Championship. Any beaten finalists, that come from Divisions 3 & 4, will be required to play in the preliminary rounds of the Championship. The rest of the Senior Championship will be an open draw.

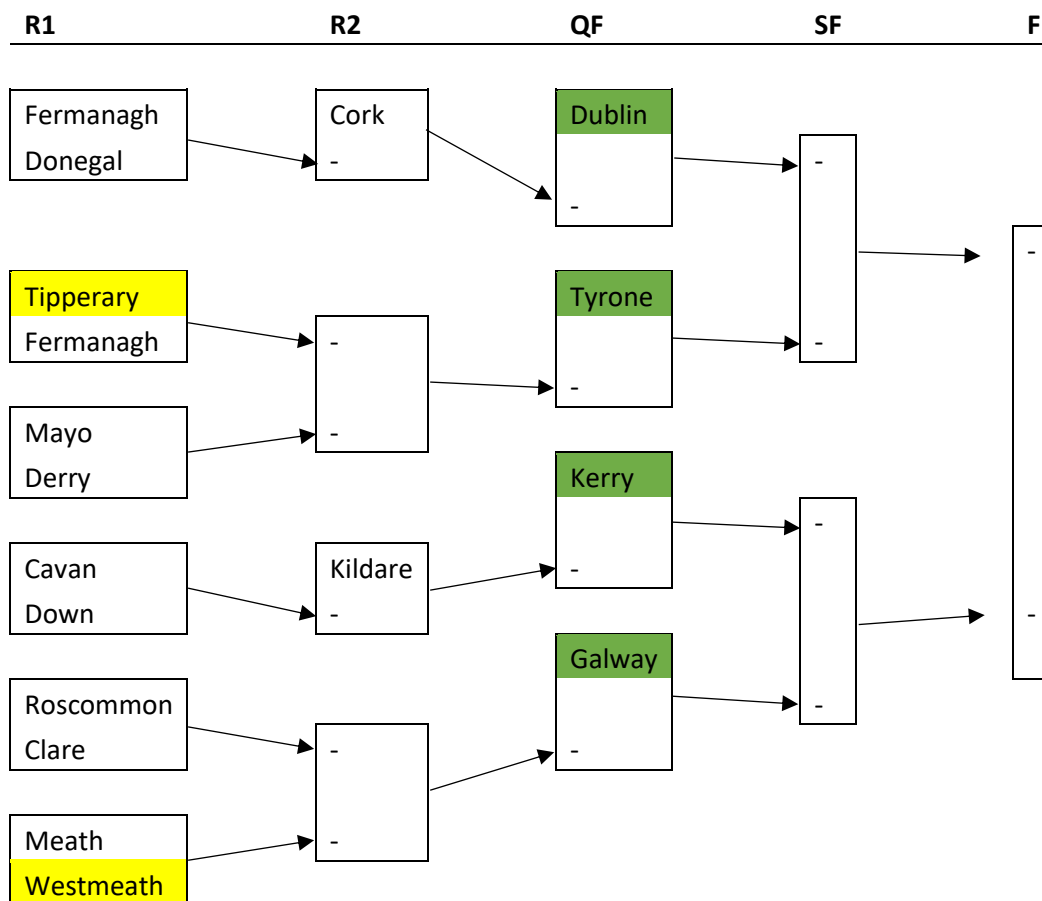
* 45 shootout consists of each team taking turns attempting 5 x 45m frees, trying to put the ball over the bar; a goal does not count in this scenario. The team that scores the most points being declared the winner of the match. If the teams are level after 5 attempts each, we enter a sudden-death scenario.

Senior and B Championships (based on 2016)

Senior		B	
Dublin	Kildare	Louth	Limerick
Kerry	Meath	Armagh	Leitrim
Donegal	Cork	Sligo	Waterford
Monaghan	Clare	Offaly	Wicklow
Mayo	Down	Longford	London
Tyrone	Derry	Antrim	New York
Cavan	Fermanagh	Laois	
Roscommon	Tipperary	Wexford	
Galway	Westmeath	Carlow	

Senior Structure

As noted above, using the example teams, Tipperary and Westmeath will be required to play in the first-round stages (as Division 3/4 provincial finalists) and Tyrone, Dublin, Galway and Kerry will enter directly into the quarter finals. So, the resulting draw could look like the below. As there are between 16-24 teams, there will always be 5 rounds of matches:



Colour code - Division 3/4 teams Provincial champions

B Structure

As stated above, the B Championship will be a completely open draw with no pre-determined places in the bracket. As there are between 9-17 teams in the championship, there will be at least 4 rounds of matches, with a preliminary match only required if the full 17 teams participate.

Championship Schedule

With the defined schedule, we want to ensure that there are similar breaks between rounds of matches to ensure that teams come into games properly rested. So, we are dictating at least 2 weeks between each round of games. The quarter-finals and semi-finals of the All-Ireland Championships will be split over successive weeks, with the Finals on the last week of August. Below is the number of rounds of matches required to complete each championship:

- Ulster Senior Championship – 4 rounds
- Connacht Senior Championship – 3 rounds
- Leinster Senior Championship – 4 rounds
- Munster Senior Championship – 3 rounds
- All Ireland B Championship – 4/5 rounds
- All Ireland Senior Championship – 5 rounds

With this in mind below would be our proposed schedule if based on 2017 calendar:

wk	April	wk	May	wk	June
13		18	Provincial Prelim (4 games)	22	Provincial SF2 (4 games)
14	NFL Finals	19	Provincial QF1 (6/7 games)	23	
15		20	Provincial QF2 (6/7 games)	24	Provincial Finals 1 (2 games)
16		21	Provincial SF1 (4 games)	25	Provincial Finals 2 (2 games)
17				26	AIBFC Prelim (1 at most)

wk	July	wk	August
26	AISFC R1 a (0-8 games)	31	AISFC SF1 (1 game) AIBFC SF1 (1 game)
27	AIBFC R1 (1-8 games) AISFC R1 b (0-8 games)	32	AISFC SF2 (1 game) AIBFC SF2 (1 game)
28	AISFC R2 (8 games)	33	
29	AISFC QF1 (2 games) AIBFC QF1 (2 games)	34	AISFC Final (1 game) AIBFC Final (1 game)
30	AISFC QF2 (2 games) AIBFC QF2 (2 games)		

This schedule will accommodate between 60-75 matches, the current schedule accommodates 62 games.