

# GAA Season Schedule Proposal



**Conor Donnelly - GAA Scores**

**Table of contents**

- Disclaimer ..... 3**
  - Major dates.....3
- Competitions ..... 4**
  - New A and B Provincial Championship Participants as of 2016.....6
- GAA Season Schedule ..... 7**
- Impact on Clubs ..... 9**
  - Football .....9
  - Hurling .....9
- Matchday gaps, minimum and maximum number of championship matches..... 10**
  - Football .....10
  - Hurling .....10

## Disclaimer

- Any teams used in examples throughout are based on entries for the 2016 season.
- Matches can be played on Saturday evenings and Sunday afternoons.
- New Provincial A and B Championships help in preparation for Christy Ring Cup, Nicky Rackard Cup and Lory Meagher Cup.

## Major dates

- Provincial U20HC Final – Week #3 March
- Provincial U20FC Final – Week #3 March
- Provincial SFC Finals – Week #2 and Week #3 April
- Provincial A and B SHC Finals – Week #4 April
- Provincial SHC Finals – Week #4 May
- Christy Ring Cup/Nicky Rackard Cup/Lory Meagher Cup Final – Week #3 July
- All-Ireland SHC Final – Week #3 July
- All-Ireland SFC Final – Week #4 July

# Competitions

## Pre-season Competition (Non-Higher Education Players)

- Any county players who are not part of a Higher Education panel can take part in these competitions.
- Matches are played on Saturday evenings and Sunday afternoons.

## Higher Education Championships

- Matches are played midweek except for the Sigerson/Fitzgibbon weekend.
- Played over three weeks in February with Sigerson/Fitzgibbon weekend taking place on the third weekend of the month.

## Provincial U20 Football Championship

- Only players who are too old for minor and qualify for U20 may play at this grade.
- Any players who qualify for U20 cannot represent their senior football team during the senior provincial championships until the **semi final** stage. (Ineligible for only one match, two if there is a Preliminary Rd required and only affects 19 and 20 year olds).
- Provincial U20FC/U20HC can be played as double headers. Not compulsory.
- Matches played on Saturday evenings.

## Provincial U20 Hurling Championship

- Only players who are too old for minor and qualify for U20 may play at this grade.
- Any players who qualify for U20 cannot represent their senior hurling team during the senior provincial championships until the **quarter final** stage. (Ineligible for only one match and only affects 19 and 20 year olds).
- Provincial U20FC/U20HC can be played as double headers. Not compulsory.
- Matches played on Saturday evenings.

## All-Ireland U20 Football Championship

- All-Ireland U20FC/U20HC Final is played as a double header with each code alternating as curtain raiser each year.
- Matches played on Saturday evenings.

## All-Ireland U20 Hurling Championship

- All-Ireland U20FC/U20HC Final is played as double header with each code alternating as curtain raiser each year.
- Matches played on Saturday evenings.
- All-Ireland U20HC Semi Finalists made up of Ulster U20HC winner, Leinster U20HC winner, Munster U20HC winner and one provincial runner up.
- The provincial runner up who advances to the semi final will be from the province of the previous year's All-Ireland champion. (i.e. based on 2015 All-Ireland U21HC the four 2016 semi finalists would be Ulster, Leinster, Munster winners and Munster runner up because Limerick won the All-Ireland).

## Provincial Senior Football Championship

- Minor Championship matches are played as a curtain raiser to the corresponding senior match at all stages.
- Provincial SFC rounds alternate between week 1/3 and week 2/4 each year.
- Matches are played on Saturday evenings and Sunday afternoons.

## Provincial Senior Hurling Championship

- Minor Championship matches are played as a curtain raiser to the corresponding senior match at all stages.

- Galway will participate in the Leinster SHC, Leinster U20HC and Leinster MHC.
- Bottom team in Leinster SHC Qualifying Group is relegated to Christy Ring Cup and replaced by Christy Ring Cup winner for following year.
- Matches are played on Saturday evenings and Sunday afternoons.

#### Provincial B Senior Hurling Championship / Ulster Senior Hurling Championship

- Ulster A SHC, Ulster B SHC, Connacht B SHC and Leinster B SHC are not linked to All-Ireland SHC.
- Ulster A SHC, Ulster B SHC, Connacht B SHC and Leinster B SHC are played as a round robin with each team playing each other once with top two playing in the provincial final.
  - If Kerry were to be relegated to the Christy Ring Cup then they would take the place of the promoted county in this provincial championship the following season.
  - If a Leinster team is relegated to the Christy Ring Cup they will participate in the Leinster B SHC the following season.
  - If an Ulster team is ever relegated from the All-Ireland SHC they will always take part in the Ulster A SHC the following season.
- Matches are played on Saturday evenings and Sunday afternoons.

#### All-Ireland Senior Football Championship

- Minor Championship matches are played as a curtain raiser to the corresponding senior match at all stages.
- All-Ireland SFC will be eight groups of four with top two qualifying for last 16.
- Seeds for first year are based on final league standings. Seeds for future years will be based on final position in the previous year's round robin.
- Matches are played on Saturday evenings and Sunday afternoons.

#### All-Ireland Senior Hurling Championship

- Provincial quarter final and semi final losers enter All-Ireland SHC Qualifier Rd 1.
- All-Ireland Qualifier Rd 1 winners, provincial final losers and provincial final winners meet in All-Ireland Quarter Final against an opponent they haven't yet played.
- Matches are played on Saturday evenings and Sunday afternoons.

#### Lory Meagher Cup/Nicky Rackard Cup/Christy Ring Cup

- Christy Ring Cup, Nicky Rackard Cup and Lory Meagher Cup participants take part in the Ulster A SHC, Ulster B SHC, Connacht B SHC and Leinster B SHC.
- Christy Ring Cup, Nicky Rackard Cup and Lory Meagher Cup winners will be automatically promoted.
- Christy Ring Cup, Nicky Rackard Cup and Lory Meagher Cup take place on the same weekend as All-Ireland SHC Final.
- Matches are played on Saturdays and/or Sundays.
- Lory Meagher Cup and Nicky Rackard Cup Finals played on Saturday at Croke Park
- Christy Ring Cup, All-Ireland MHC and All-Ireland SHC Finals played on Sunday at Croke Park.

#### County Championship

- County championship season runs August to third week of September

#### Provincial Club Championship

- Provincial club championship seasons runs from third week of September to end of October.

#### All-Ireland Club Championship

- All-Ireland club championship matches run throughout the month of November.
- Matches are played on Sundays

## **New A and B Provincial Championship Participants as of 2016**

### **Ulster A Senior Hurling Championship**

Antrim, Armagh, Derry, Down

### **Ulster B Senior Hurling Championship**

Donegal, Fermanagh, Monaghan, Tyrone

### **Connacht B Senior Hurling Championship**

Lancashire, Leitrim, London, Mayo, Roscommon, Sligo, Warwickshire

### **Leinster B Senior Hurling Championship**

Fingal, Kildare, Longford, Louth, Meath, Wicklow

# GAA Season Schedule

## January

Week #1 - *Off Season*

Week #2 - *Off Season*

Week #3 - [Pre-season Competition \(Non-Higher Education Players\)](#)

Week #4 - [Pre-season Competition \(Non-Higher Education Players\)](#)

## February

Week #1 - [Higher Education Championships](#) | [Pre-season Competition \(Non-Higher Education Players\)](#)

Week #2 - [Higher Education Championships](#) | [Pre-season Competition \(Non-Higher Education Players\)](#)

Week #3 - [Higher Education Championships](#) | [Pre-season Competition \(Non-Higher Education Players\)](#)

Week #4 - [Ulster/Leinster U20FC Prelim Rd](#) | [Connacht B SHC Round 1](#)

## March

Week #1 - [Ulster/Connacht/Leinster SFC Prelim Rd](#) | [Leinster SHC Qual. Gp Rd 1](#) |

[Ulster/Leinster/Connacht/Munster U20FC Quarter Final](#) | [Ulster/Leinster/Munster U20HC Quarter Final](#) | [Connacht B SHC Round 2/Leinster B SHC Round 1](#)

Week #2 - [Leinster/Munster SFC Quarter Final](#) | [Ulster/Leinster/Connacht/Munster U20FC Semi Final](#) | [Ulster/Leinster/Munster U20HC Semi Final](#) | [Ulster A SHC Round 1/Ulster B SHC Round 1/Connacht B SHC Round 3/Leinster B SHC Round 2](#)

Week #3 - [Ulster/Connacht SFC Quarter Final](#) | [Leinster SHC Qual. Gp Rd 2](#) |

[Ulster/Leinster/Connacht/Munster U20FC Final](#) | [Ulster/Leinster/Munster U20HC Final](#) | [Connacht B SHC Round 4/Leinster B SHC Round 3](#)

Week #4 - [Leinster/Munster SFC Semi Final](#) | [Ulster A SHC Round 2/Ulster B SHC Round 2/Connacht B SHC Round 5/Leinster B SHC Round 4](#)

## April

Week #1 - [Ulster/Connacht SFC Semi Final](#) | [Leinster SHC Qual. Gp Rd 3](#) | [All-Ireland U20FC Semi Final](#) | [All-Ireland U20HC Semi Final](#)

Week #2 - [Leinster/Munster SFC Final](#) | [Ulster A SHC Round 3/Ulster B SHC Round 3/Connacht B SHC Round 6/Leinster B SHC Round 5](#)

Week #3 - [Ulster/Connacht SFC Final](#) | [Munster/Leinster SHC Quarter Final](#) | [All-Ireland U20FC Final](#) | [All-Ireland U20HC Final](#)

Week #4 - [Ulster A SHC/Ulster B SHC/Connacht B SHC/Leinster B SHC Final](#)

## May

Week #1 - [All-Ireland SFC Round Robin Rd 1](#) | [Munster/Leinster SHC Semi Final](#) | [Meagher Cup Rd 1](#)

Week #2 - [All-Ireland SFC Round Robin Rd 2](#) | [All-Ireland SHC Qualifier 1](#)

Week #3 - [All-Ireland SFC Round Robin Rd 3](#) | [Meagher Cup Rd 2/Rackard Cup Rd 1/Ring Cup Rd 1](#)

Week #4 - [Munster/Leinster SHC Final](#)

## June

Week #1 - [All-Ireland SFC Last 16](#) | [Meagher Cup Rd 3/Rackard Cup Rd 2A&2B/Ring Cup Rd 2A&2B](#)

Week #2 - [All-Ireland SHC Quarter Final](#)

Week #3 - [All-Ireland SFC Quarter Final](#) | [All-Ireland SHC Quarter Final](#) | [Meagher Cup Rd 4/Rackard Cup Quarter Final/Ring Cup Quarter Final](#)

Week #4 - Meagher Cup/Rackard Cup/Ring Cup Relegation Playoff

## July

Week #1 - All-Ireland SHC Semi Final | Meagher Cup Rd 5/Rackard Cup Semi Final/Ring Cup Semi Final

Week #2 - All-Ireland SFC Semi Final

Week #3 - All-Ireland SHC Final | Meagher Cup Final/Rackard Cup Final/Ring Cup Final

Week #4 - All-Ireland SFC Final

## August

Week #1 - County Club Championship [All-Ireland SHC Final Replay]

Week #2 - County Club Championship [All-Ireland SFC Final Replay]

Week #3 - County Club Championship

Week #4 - County Club Championship

## September

Week #1 - County Club Championship

Week #2 - County Club Championship

Week #3 - County Club Championship | Provincial Club Prelim Rd

Week #4 - Provincial Club Quarter Final

## October

Week #1 - Provincial Club Semi Final

Week #2 - Free

Week #3 - Provincial Club Final

Week #4 - Free [Provincial Club Final Replay]

## November

Week #1 - All-Ireland Club SHC Semi Final

Week #2 - All-Ireland Club SFC Semi Final

Week #3 - International Rules Series (Non-club championship players)

Week #4 - All-Ireland Club SHC Final/All-Ireland Club SFC Final

## December

Week #1 - Off Season

Week #2 - Off Season

Week #3 - Off Season

Week #4 - Off Season



## **Impact on Clubs**

### **Football**

- Club leagues are played between March and July. All leagues must be completed before start of club championship.
- County players are available for club throughout league providing there isn't a championship game within 10 days.
- Club championship season runs August to November.
- Sixteen county teams are eliminated by start of June - therefore players are available for club league fixtures.
- Eight county teams (24 total) are eliminated in mid-June - therefore players are available for club league fixtures.
- Four county teams (28 total) are eliminated by start of July - therefore players are available for club league fixtures/championship preparation.
- Two county teams (30 total) are eliminated in mid-July - therefore players are available for club league fixtures/championship preparation.

### **Hurling**

- Club leagues are played between March and July. All leagues must be completed before start of club championship.
- County players are available for club throughout league providing there isn't a championship game within 10 days.
- Club championship season runs August to November.
- Two county teams are eliminated by mid-April therefore players are available for club league fixtures.
- Four county teams (6 total) are eliminated in mid-May - therefore players are available for club league fixtures.
- Four county teams (10 total) are eliminated at start of July - therefore players are available for club league fixtures/championship preparation.
- Two county teams (12 total) are eliminated in mid-July - therefore players are available for club league fixtures/championship preparation.

# Matchday gaps, minimum and maximum number of championship matches

## Football

- Maximum gap between All-Ireland SFC fixtures - 2 weeks
- Maximum number of championship fixtures – 7 matches in 12 weeks.
- Minimum number of championship fixtures - 3 matches in 3 weeks.
- Duration of uninterrupted club championship season - 4 months.

## Hurling

- Gap between provincial SHC Final and All-Ireland SHC Quarter Final - 2 weeks
- Gap between All-Ireland SHC Qualifier 1 and All-Ireland SHC Quarter Final - 3 weeks
- Gap between All-Ireland SHC fixtures - 2 weeks maximum
- Maximum number of championship fixtures
  - 6 matches in 13 weeks (non-Leinster SHC Qual. Gp team reaches All-Ireland Final)
  - 9 matches in 19 weeks (Leinster SHC Qual. Gp team top two reaches All-Ireland Final)
- Minimum number of championship fixtures
  - 2 matches in 4 weeks (non-Leinster SHC Qual. Gp team)
  - 6 matches in 10 weeks (Leinster SHC Qual. Gp team top two)
  - 3 matches in 5 weeks (Leinster SHC Qual. Gp team bottom two)
- Duration of uninterrupted club championship season - 4 months