**Cork County Senior and Intermediate Championships 2021**

Following a comprehensive review process throughout 2018 and 2019, the Championship formats outlined below were approved at County Committee for a period of two years, 2020 and 2021. In 2021 this format will be implemented as outlined below, with a number of additional amendments which proved successful in 2020 and will be retained.

* Two teams (instead of three) will progress from the groups of four to the play-off stages, thus removing the need for preliminary quarter-finals. This will result in six teams qualifying for the play-off stages in most competitions, with the two top group winners qualifying for the semi-finals and the remaining group winner and the three second -placed teams qualifying for the quarter-finals. In the Premier Senior championships with only top-ranked group winner will qualify for the semi-finals and the remaining two group winners, the three second-placed teams and the divisions / colleges winner qualifying for the quarter-finals. In IAFC, two teams will qualify from each of the four groups, as before.
* In all grades, the relegation final will be a straight play-off between the two lowest ranked teams (in terms of points won and scoring difference) amongst the bottom-placed teams from each group, with the exception of IAHC where two teams will be relegated after a three-team round robin.
* All knock-out games will be finish on the day, where necessary, and as decided by the CCC.
* Clarification was provided in 2020 with regard to avoiding repeat pairings in quarter-finals. and this is also incorporated below, with no repeat pairings in semi-finals.
* Seeding for 2021 will be based on final positions after the group stages in 2020, with promotion and relegation taking precedence.

Despite a number of requests, it is still planned to abolish the LIHC grade at the end of 2021. Also, the county-wide review of Junior championships at Divisional level, that was agreed in line with this measure, will take place in early 2021.

As uncertainty currently prevails with regard to the 2021 GAA calendar, no decision has been made by the CCC at this point with regard to schedule of dates for the coming year. The format included here would require a Club season with a minimum of twelve weeks, however a period of fourteen weeks or more would be more appropriate. Championship draws will take place when there is more certainty regarding the national calendar and a championship programme will follow immediately after.

The format / scheduling of Divisional / College rounds will be confirmed at a later date following further consultation with the Divisions / Colleges. There has been no decision on the number of teams that will qualify for the U21 A football or Junior A Football and Hurling County competitions. This will depend on the window available.

It is planned to organise the County Senior and Intermediate Leagues (Divisions 1-5) in 2021 along the same lines as last year. Teams that are relegated in championships shall retain their league status as both competitions are now decoupled. Teams relegated to Junior A will retain their position in the County leagues should they wish to do so. Plans to organise Junior regional leagues in partnership with the divisions, as discussed last year, may be postponed until 2022, due to the prevailing uncertainty around 2021. Further consultation with the divisions to follow.

**Summary**

* **96 Club teams** in total in the County Senior & Intermediate Championships by 2022
* **Four Grades with 12 Teams** in both Football and Hurling
  + Premier Senior
  + Senior A
  + Premier Intermediate
  + Intermediate A
* **Transition period across 2020 / 2021** will see 16 teams remain in IAFC and an extra hurling grade of 12 hurling teams in Lower Intermediate (LIHC)
* **Grades**
  + Premier Senior Football Championship PSFC
  + Senior A Football Championship SAFC
  + Premier Intermediate Football Championship PIFC
  + Intermediate A Football Championship IAFC
  + Premier Senior Hurling Championship PSHC
  + Senior A Hurling Championship SAHC
  + Premier Intermediate Hurling Championship PIHC
  + Intermediate A Hurling Championship IAHC
  + Lower Intermediate Hurling Championship LIHC
* **Seedings** These are based on final positions after the group stages in 2020, with promotion and relegation taking precedence.
* **Sequence of Group Games** R1 (A v B, C v D); R2 (A v D, B v C); R3 (A v C, B v D).
* **Placings as per Rule 6.21** Placing within groups for qualification / relegation will be determined in line with general rule, as follows:
  + if two teams are tied, it will be based on the head-to-head result.
  + if three or more teams are tied, it will be based on scoring difference.
  + also, placing across groups will be determined by points won and scoring difference.
* **Qualification** two teams from each groups qualify for the semi-finals / quarter-finals as outlined in each grade below.
* **Relegation** ‘one up one down’ typically, apart from IAHC and apart from end-2021 when five teams will be relegated from IAFC to Junior and all teams remaining in LIHC will be relegated to Junior.
* **Divisions / Colleges** one team to enter at quarter-final stage of the Premier Senior Championships. Format / scheduling of Divisional / College rounds to be confirmed later following further consultation with the Divisions / Colleges.
* **Draw Format & Procedure** In all competitions with 12 teams (3 groups of 4), draws will take place as follows: There will be 3 Groups to be filled (labelled 1 to 3). There will be 3 top seeds, 3 second seeds, 3 third seeds and 3 fourth seeds. Firstly, the three top seeds will be placed in the bowl. Each will be drawn and placed in Groups A to C in order. Then, the three second seeds will be placed in the bowl. Each will be drawn and placed in Groups 1 to 3 in order. Then, the three C seeds will be placed in the bowl Each will be drawn and placed in Groups 1 to 3 in order. To conclude, the three D seeds will be placed in the bowl. Each will be drawn and placed in Groups 1 to 3 in order. \*Exception For IAFC where there are 16 teams there will instead be four top seeds placed in the bowl. They will be drawn and placed in Groups 1 to 4 in order and so on.

**Premier Senior Hurling & Football**

* 12 Teams
* 3 Groups of 4 Teams, each with a top seed, second seed, third seed and fourth seed included
* 3 Games each
* Divisional and College teams will play in their own competition as before, with one team gaining entry to the Championship proper at the quarter-final stage. Players from the 24 Senior Clubs (Premier Senior and Senior A ) will not be eligible to play with such teams as per bye-law. Cork will represented in provincial Club competitions by the Premier Senior, Premier Intermediate and Junior A champions, as before.

*Premier Senior Hurling Championship Seedings 2021*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Top seeds** | **Second seeds** | **Third Seeds** | **Fourth seeds** |
| Glen Rovers | Douglas | Newtownshandrum | Carrigtwohill |
| Blackrock | Erins Own | Midleton | Bishopstown |
| Sarsfields | Na Piarsaigh | St. Finbarr’s | Charleville |

*Premier Senior Football Championship Seedings 2021*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Top seeds** | **Second seeds** | **Third Seeds** | **Fourth seeds** |
| Castlehaven | Newcestown | Carbery Rangers | Carrigaline |
| Nemo Rangers | Ballincollig | Douglas | Ilen Rovers |
| St. Finbarr’s | Valley Rovers | Clonakilty | Mallow / Eire Óg |

**Qualification**

In the Premier Senior Hurling and Football Championships, only the top group winner will qualify for the semi-finals, with the remaining two group winners, the three second-placed teams and the divisions / colleges winner qualifying for the three quarter-finals.

Teams (1-6) will be ranked as follows, on completion of the group stages:

1. Top Group winner
2. Second Group winner
3. Third Group winner
4. Top Group runner-up
5. Second Group runner-up
6. Third Group runner up

Quarter-finals: (a) 2v5, (b) 3v4, (c) 6 v Divisions / Colleges winner

Semi-finals: 1 v (b), (a) v (c)

A repeat pairing is possible in the quarter finals in (a) 2v5 and (b) 3v4 above. If either scenario arises, then team 2 will instead play team 4, and team 3 will play team 5. Repeat pairings in semi-finals will be avoided, with pairings being adjusted where necessary.

**Relegation**

The relegation final will be a straight play-off between the two lowest ranked teams (in terms of points won and scoring difference) amongst the three bottom placed teams from the groups.

**Senior A Hurling & Football**

* 12 Teams
* 3 Groups of 4 Teams, each with a top seed, second seed, third seed and fourth seed included
* 3 Games each

*Senior A Hurling Championship Seedings 2021*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Top seeds** | **Second seeds** | **Third Seeds** | **Fourth seeds** |
| Ballyhea | Newcestown | Fermoy | Mallow |
| Fr. O’Neill’s | Bride Rovers | Cloyne | Killeagh |
| Kanturk | Bandon | Ballymartle | Blarney |

*Senior A Football Championship Seedings 2021*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Top seeds** | **Second seeds** | **Third Seeds** | **Fourth seeds** |
| Bishopstown | Mallow / Eire Òg | Kiskeam | Dohenys |
| O’D Rossa | St. Michael’s | Clyda Rovers | Bantry Blues |
| Fermoy | Bandon | Béal Áth an Ghaorthaidh | Knocknagree / Kanturk |

**Qualification**

Two teams will progress from each group of four to the play-off stages. This will result in six teams qualifying for the play-off stages, with the two top group winners qualifying for the semi-finals and the remaining group winner and the three second -placed teams qualifying for the quarter-finals.

Teams (1-6) will be ranked as follows, on completion of the group stages:

1. Top Group winner
2. Second Group winner
3. Third Group winner
4. Top Group runner-up
5. Second Group runner-up
6. Third Group runner up

Quarter-finals: (a) 3v6, (b) 4v5

Semi-finals: 1 v (b), 2 v (a)

A repeat pairing is possible in the quarter finals in (a) 3v6 above. If this arises 3 will instead play 5 and 4 will play 6. Repeat pairings in semi-finals will be avoided, with pairings being adjusted where necessary.

**Relegation**

The relegation final will be a straight play-off between the two lowest ranked teams (in terms of points won and scoring difference) amongst the three bottom placed teams from the groups.

**Premier Intermediate Hurling & Football**

* 12 Teams
* 3 Groups of 4 Teams, each with a top seed, second seed, third seed and fourth seed included
* 3 Games each

*Premier Intermediate Hurling Championship Seedings 2021*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Top seeds** | **Second seeds** | **Third Seeds** | **Fourth seeds** |
| Kilworth | Watergrasshill | Ballinhassig | Aghada |
| Carrigaline | Ballincollig | Youghal | Valley Rovers |
| Castlelyons | Courcey Rovers | Inniscarra | Aghabullogue / Eire Óg |

*Premier Intermediate Football Championship Seedings 2021*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Top seeds** | **Second seeds** | **Third Seeds** | **Fourth seeds** |
| St. Nick’s | Nemo Rangers | Macroom | Naomh Abán |
| Cill na Martra | Kanturk / Knocknagree | Castletownbere | Na Piarsaigh |
| Newmarket | Aghada | St. Vincent’s | Mitchelstown / Rockchapel |

**Qualification**

Two teams will progress from each group of four to the play-off stages. This will result in six teams qualifying for the play-off stages, with the two top group winners qualifying for the semi-finals and the remaining group winner and the three second -placed teams qualifying for the quarter-finals.

Teams (1-6) will be ranked as follows, on completion of the group stages:

1. Top Group winner
2. Second Group winner
3. Third Group winner
4. Top Group runner-up
5. Second Group runner-up
6. Third Group runner up

Quarter-finals: (a) 3v6, (b) 4v5

Semi-finals: 1 v (b), 2 v (a)

A repeat pairing is possible in the quarter finals in (a) 3v6 above. If this arises 3 will instead play 5 and 4 will play 6. Repeat pairings in semi-finals will be avoided, with pairings being adjusted where necessary.

**Relegation**

The relegation final will be a straight play-off between the two lowest ranked teams (in terms of points won and scoring difference) amongst the three bottom placed teams from the groups.

**Intermediate** **A Hurling**

* 12 Teams
* 3 Groups of 4 Teams, each with a top seed, second seed, third seed and fourth seed included
* 3 Games each

*Intermediate A Hurling Championship Seedings 2021*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Top seeds** | **Second seeds** | **Third Seeds** | **Fourth seeds** |
| Blackrock | Sarsfields | Midleton | Argideen Rangers / Meelin / Glen Rovers |
| Aghabullogue / Eire Óg | Mayfield | Dungourney | Russell Rovers / Castlemartyr |
| Kildorrery | Cloughduv | Douglas | Junior A winners |

**Qualification**

Two teams will progress from each group of four to the play-off stages. This will result in six teams qualifying for the play-off, with the two top group winners qualifying for the semi-finals and the remaining group winner and the three second -placed teams qualifying for the quarter-finals.

Teams (1-6) will be ranked as follows, on completion of the group stages:

1. Top Group winner
2. Second Group winner
3. Third Group winner
4. Top Group runner-up
5. Second Group runner-up
6. Third Group runner up

Quarter-finals: (a) 3v6, (b) 4v5

Semi-finals: 1 v (b), 2 v (a)

A repeat pairing is possible in the quarter finals in (a) 3v6 above. If this arises 3 will instead play 5 and 4 will play 6. Repeat pairings in semi-finals will be avoided, with pairings being adjusted where necessary.

**Relegation**

In the Intermediate A Hurling Championship, two teams will be relegated in order to facilitate the promotion of the 2021 County Junior A winners straight to Intermediate A. Therefore, a round robin between the bottom teams in each group will be required in this case.

**Intermediate A Football**

* 16 Teams
* 4 Groups of 4 Teams, each with a top seed, second seed, third seed and fourth seed included
* 3 Games each

*Intermediate A Football Championship Seedings 2021*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Top seeds** | **Second seeds** | **Third Seeds** | **Fourth seeds** |
| Gabriel Rangers | Aghabullogue | Dromtarriffe | Glenville |
| Mitchelstown / Rockchapel | Ballinora | Kildorrery | Ballydesmond |
| Kilshannig | Glanworth | St. Finbarr’s | Glanmire |
| Millstreet | Kinsale | Adrigole | Junior A winners |

**Qualification**

In Intermediate A Football Championship there are four groups of four, so the top two from each group will qualify for the quarter-finals, where group winners will play a group runner up from another group.

Teams (1-8) will be ranked as follows, on completion of the group stages:

1. Top Group winner
2. Second Group winner
3. Third Group winner
4. Fourth Group winner
5. Top Group runner-up
6. Second Group runner-up
7. Third Group runner up
8. Fourth Group runner-up

Quarter-finals: (a) 1v8, (b) 2v7, (c) 3v6, (d) 4v5

Semi-finals: (a) v (d), (b) v (c)

A repeat pairing is possible in all quarter finals here. If a repeat pairing occurs, the second team in the fixture will move down to the next fixture on the list with group winners playing group runners up in all cases. If a repeat pairing occurs in the last quarter-final (d) (i.e. 4v5), then team 3 plays team 5 and team 4 plays team 6. Repeat pairings in semi-finals will be avoided, with pairings being adjusted where necessary.

**Relegation**

The Intermediate A grade is to be reduced from 16 to 12 teams at the end of 2021 with five teams to be relegated to Junior A instead of the usual one. At the end of 2021, the County Junior A champions will be promoted and 5 teams will be relegated from Intermediate A. These 5 teams will be selected as follows: the bottom team in each of the four groups along with a straight play-off involving the four 3rd placed teams to identify the fifth team to be relegated.

This will facilitate 48 football teams participating across four football grades from the start of 2022.

**Lower Intermediate Hurling**

* 12 Teams
* 3 Groups of 4 Teams, each with a top seed, second seed, third seed and fourth seed included
* 3 Games each

*Lower Intermediate Hurling Championship Seedings 2021*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Top seeds** | **Second seeds** | **Third Seeds** | **Fourth seeds** |
| Argideen Rangers / Meelin / Glen Rovers | St. Catherine’s / Russell Rovers | Milford | Dripsey |
| Argideen Rangers / Meelin / Glen Rovers | Tracton | St. Finbarr’s | Grenagh |
| Castlemartyr / St. Catherine’s | Kilbrittain | Ballygarvan | Barryroe |

**Qualification**

Two teams will progress from each group of four to the play-off stages. This will result in six teams qualifying for the play-off stages with the two top group winners qualifying for the semi-finals and the remaining group winner and the three second -placed teams qualifying for the quarter-finals.

Teams (1-6) will be ranked as follows, on completion of the group stages:

1. Top Group winner
2. Second Group winner
3. Third Group winner
4. Top Group runner-up
5. Second Group runner-up
6. Third Group runner up

Quarter-finals: (a) 3v6, (b) 4v5

Semi-finals: 1 v (b), 2 v (a)

A repeat pairing is possible in the quarter finals in (a) 3v6 above. If this arises 3 will instead play 5 and 4 will play 6. Repeat pairings in semi-finals will be avoided, with pairings being adjusted where necessary.

**Relegation**

The Lower Intermediate Hurling championship grade is to be abolished at the end of 2021 with all teams regraded to Junior.

At the end of 2021, two teams will be relegated from the Intermediate A grade (4th grade) to Junior A, along with the remaining eleven teams in Lower Intermediate (5th grade). They will be replaced by the 2021 Lower Intermediate (5th grade) winners and by the 2021 Junior A winners.

This will facilitate 48 hurling teams across four grades from the start of 2022.