Coiste na nÓg Dhun na nGall

**RULES & REGULATIONS 2024**

1, Coiste na nÓg shall be the governing & controlling body of all underage Hurling and Football games within County Donegal.

**1.1 Roles and Responsibilities of Coiste na nÓg / Coiste na nÓg CCC**

a) To agree competition formats with all Regional Boards and the Hurling Board at start of the year.

b) Will have final decision in the grading for all competitions.

c) Will draw up match regulations for all competitions.

d) Will work in conjunction with the Coaching & Games Development Committee to co-ordinate new coaching initiatives.

e) Will deal with all disciplinary matters arising from all stages of all Competitions in both Football and Hurling.

**2. Regional Boards**

The Three Regional Boards shall be called the Northern Regional Board, the Southern Regional Board and the Inishowen Regional Board.

**3. Role and Responsibilities of All Regional Boards:**

a) To organize Leagues, Championships and Blitz competitions up to and including Minor(U17) age group.

b) To produce a detailed fixture list in conjunction with the Coiste na nÓg CCC at the start of the year for all the above competitions.

c) To send all disciplinary matters within their Board’s area to be dealt with by Coiste na nÓg CCC Disciplinary secretary. Appeals arising out of decisions made by the Coiste na n Óg CCC will be dealt with by the County Hearings Committee.

d) To have one (1) vote on County Committee.

**4. Regional Boards AGMs**

The Annual General Meeting of all the Regional Boards shall be held not later than November 30th each year. It shall consist of the officers of the outgoing Boards and two delegates from each club, which competed, in an underage Championship of the preceding year.

**5. Finance**

 Funding will be determined by the Donegal County Committee. The Treasurers shall lodge all monies in a bank as nominated by the Donegal County Committee and shall produce all books including those of the Regional Boards, when requested to do so for audit purposes.

5.1 The Treasurer and one of either the Chairman or Secretary must sign all cheques. The Treasurer shall submit a financial report to every monthly meeting of the Regional Board.

5.2 The Regional Board Treasurer shall send a copy of their annual report to the County Treasurer immediately after the AGM.

**6.0 Fixtures**

The Donegal Coiste na nÓg CCC in conjunction with the three Regional Boards and the Hurling Board, shall produce a complete set of all underage fixtures, these to ratified by Donegal Coiste na nÓg and be set up on the Servasport system and published on Donegal GAA Webpage.

6.1 The Regional Boards’ Coiste na nÓg CCC delegate and/or appointee shall be responsible for coordinating Regional Board fixtures and the selection of venues that arise between meetings and the appointment of referees for all regional games.

6.2 Coiste na nÓg will meet at least six (6) times during the year to ensure smooth running of the fixture programme.

6.3 Players who reside in a Club area where no underage teams exist may apply in writing to the County Committee as per Rule 6.4 T. O 2022.

6.4 Fixtures in all regions will take place as per master fixture plan with the following exception on a postponement. The Coiste na nÓg CCC, in exceptional circumstances, may grant the postponement of a club fixture in the event of a sudden or tragic death or the

death of a club member who during their lifetime had rendered exceptional service to CLG. The Coiste na nÓg CCC may grant a postponement on the death of an immediate family member of a player, Team Manager, 3 Main Club Officers and the CCC will have responsibility for the rescheduling. (Immediate Family Members shall include husband, wife, child, parent, sibling and in the case of player grandparent or parent’s sibling.)

6.6 As the last round of League Games will be played simultaneously, no postponement of any game to a date beyond that round, or of the final round of fixtures, will be granted.

6.7 In the case of unplayable pitches, games cannot be called off without a pitch inspection by an official referee appointed by the County Referees Administrator at least 4 hours before appointed time. If the pitch is deemed unplayable the game automatically reverts to the opponent’s grounds (provided it is playable).

6.8 Challenge Game

The Club Secretary of all Clubs wishing to seek permission to play an Underage Challenge Match, must do so on the Official Challenge match App in advance of the Fixture as per Rule, 6.41 T.O. 2022.

Challenge Games outside the County and within Ulster require permission from Ulster Council, Challenge Games outside the Province must be sought from Croke Park, Clubs participating in unauthorized challenge games will be fined €100.

**7.0** Referees unable to fulfill a fixture must contact the Referees Administrator for the services of a neutral referee, and he shall inform the Assistant Secretary of the relevant Board before 6pm on day prior to fixture.

7.1 Referees shall forward their reports to the relevant Regional Secretary / Treasurer who will reimburse their expenses. The referee’s expenses shall be recovered from the relevant club.

Referees Reports in Regional games with Disciplinary issues or injuries must be with relevant regional secretary and Coiste na nÓg CCC Disciplinary secretary at Disciplinarysecretary.coistenanog.donegal@gaa.ie no later than 48 hours after the game.

7.2 The expenses of referees in semi-finals and finals of all county competitions shall be paid for by the Treasurer of the Donegal Coiste na nOg Committee.

**8. Games and control of games:**

(a) Both teams qualifying for County Finals should be properly attired and presented on County Final Day.

(b) Five (5) Subs only are permitted in all underage levels from u15 upwards.

(c) All knockout League games including County Finals must be finished. Therefore, in the event of a draw at full time, extra time (10 minutes each way) must be played. Penalty kicks to be taken if still level after extra time.

(d) In the event of teams finishing level on points after completion of group games in Regional leagues the positions in league table will be determined by Scoring Difference (subtracting the total Scores Against from total Scores For) per Rule 6.21(4) c (ii) T.O 2021.

(e) An underage player is not allowed to play 2 grades above his/her age (4 years above the competition date) i.e., an U10 is not allowed to play U14, U12 is not allowed to play U16 (see below). Girls may participate only up to and including the U12 grade.

**Age Grades on 1/1/2024**

Under 18: Be over 14 and under 18 years

 Under 16: Be over 12 and under 16 years

Under 14: Be over 10 and under 14 years

Under 12: Be over 8 and under 12 years

Under 11: Be over 7 and under 11 years

(f) Each team to have only Four Mentors including medical person on the sidelines during underage matches from U12 to U18. Distinctive bibs to be worn to identify same **(Home Team shall wear Blue Bibs and Away Team shall wear Orange Bibs,)** The penalty for breach of this rule is €50.00 payable to relevant Regional Boards if Regional Games or to Coiste na nÓg CCC if County Quarter Final /Semi-Final or Final matches.

**9.0 Returning of Trophies**, all cups and trophies to be returned to the relevant Regional Board Secretary by 1st April of each year. All County Trophies won in 2022 to be returned to Assistant Treasurer Frankie Doherty at assistanttreasurer.donegal@gaa.ie by 1st May 2024 clubs who fail to do so will incur a €150 fine and may be made financially liable for any damage caused.

**10. Role of the Coiste na nÓg CCC.**

a). shall organise and decide format of all competitions under its jurisdiction.

b). shall deal with all objections and counter objections arising from the fixture programme within its jurisdiction.

c). shall deal with referees reports and matters arising other than those functions that are reserved for the County Hearings Committee.

d). shall investigate and process matters relating to the enforcement of the rules and match regulations except where these matters are reserved for the County Hearings Committee.

e). shall control all grading or re-grading in respect of county/club and Regional competitions.

f). the powers of the Coiste na nÓg CCC assistant secretary for Disciplinary are plenary.

g). The Coiste na nóg CCC will ensure that the provisions of the official guide are upheld in relation to games and competitions.

**12.0 Methods for Grading/Re-grading:**  Results from the 2023 season will be the measurement for all grading/re-grading requests.

12.1 Any team winning a County League or Championship in a year will be promoted to the next higher grade if applicable in the next years competition.

12.2 Categorizing Division 1 teams for Regional U12 and U14 competitions

* Each region identify those clubs, based on historical evidence, that would be considered Div 1 clubs.
* A club categorized as a Regional Division 1 team must enter Div 1 at Under 12 level for their regional competition regardless of whether they feel they have a strong or weak group.
* If a traditionally non-division 1 club wishes too, they can also enter Div 1
* At Under 14 level the winners of Division 2 two years prior will also be required to play Division 1 but no Division 1 teams will drop down.
* If a non-division 1 club had entered Division 1 at Under 12 level but finished in the bottom two, they will have the option of dropping down to Div 2 at Under 14 level.
* ***Criteria for adjusting***:
	+ If a club wins their regional Under 12 Div 2 league two years in a row, the following years Under 12 team will be categorized as a Div 1 team for that age group and going forward.
	+ If a non Division 1 team enters Div 1 at Under 12 level two years in a row and do not finish in the bottom two in both years then the following years team are considered a Division 1 team for that age group and going forward.
	+ If a club finishes bottom of the Under 12 Div 1 league two years in a row, and they wish too, the following years Under 12 team can be categorized as a non Div 1 team.
	+ If a Division 1 team loses all their Under 12 games by an average of 10 points or more, and they request to be downgraded, then they can play in Division 2 at Under 14 level assuming the CCC approve.
* The Regional Boards have the final say on whether clubs are categorized as Div 1 clubs

**13.0 Criteria for separating teams on same points**

In the event of teams finishing on equal points where a league/group format is used, the following rule shall apply for qualification for the next stage:

i) Where only two teams are involved, the outcome of the meeting of those two teams in the previous game in the competition [i.e. Head-to-Head];

ii) Where more than two teams are involved, a mini-league table using the results of the games between the particular teams shall be used;

iii) A play-off.

14.0 Competitions Format

14.1 Under 12 League format

Regional Boards will be responsible for organizing and assigning teams to their respective Under 12 Divisions. After the full round of regional games have been played teams will go into an all county cup competitions as follows:

The guideline that we will follow is that the top three teams from Division 1 from the NRB and SRB and the top two teams from IRB will go into the all county Division 1 to make a total of eight teams. The next three and two teams respectively from each region based on their finishing positions from the NRB, SRB and IRB will go into the all county Division 2.

We will repeat this process until all teams have been assigned to an all county divisions.

An Coiste na nÓg along with the Regional Boards may make adjustments on the placings based on the results of the leagues in order to try to make the divisions as competitive as possible.

At Under 12 level we expect to have at least 6 all county divisions but this will be dependent on the number of teams that complete their regional competitions.

14.2 Under 12 Cup Competition

After the teams have been assigned to the respective all county divisions of eight we will run as follows:

* Divided into Two Sections of Four (Round Robin)
* All teams will play 3 games after which we have finalized placings in each group. **(If teams are tied then a toss of coin shall decide outcome)**
* There will be no all county semi finals. Instead we will have a county finals day (or days) at Convoy CoE where first place in Group A plays first place in Group B in a Division final. Second place in Group A plays second place in Group B in a Divisional final. Third place plays third and fourth place plays fourth.
* This model will apply to all Divisions
* In the event that a Division does not have an even 8 teams then An Coiste na nÓg CCC will organize a structure to give all teams at least one final.
* For Under 12 finals five minute halves would be played extra time and if both teams remain level then a draw will be declared

14.3 Under 14 Division One League

Regional Boards will be responsible for organizing and assigning teams to their respective Under 14 Divisions. After the full round of regional games have been played teams will go into an all county cup competitions as follows:

The guideline that we will follow is that the top three teams from Division 1 from the NRB and SRB and the top two teams from IRB will go into the all county Division 1 to make a total of eight teams. The next three and two teams respectively from each region based on their finishing positions from the NRB, SRB and IRB will go into the all county Division 2.

We will repeat this process until all teams have been assigned to an all county division.

An Coiste na nÓg CCC along with the Regional Boards may make adjustments on the placings based on the results of the leagues in order to try to make the divisions as competitive as possible.

**14.4 Under 14 Cup Competition**

After the teams have been assigned to the respective all county divisions of eight we will run as follows:

* Divided into Two Sections of Four (Round Robin)
* Top two in each section shall qualify for County Semi Finals.
* Top team in Section A shall play Second team in Section B (Section A Winner to receive Home Advantage. Top team from Section B will play second place from Section A with Section B team getting home advantage. (If teams are tied for top place toss of coin shall decide outcome)
* If teams are tied between 2nd and 3rd, we will use the “**Criteria for separating teams on same points”** as defined in Section 13.0
* Semi Final winners meet in U14 Division 1 County Cup Final (Neutral Venue where possible)
* Third placed team in Section A shall play Fourth placed team in Section B in County Shield Semi Final.
* Fourth placed team in Section B shall play Third place team in Section A in County Shield Semi Final.
* Third placed teams in Sections A& B shall have (Home Advantage in County Shield Semi Finals.)
* (If teams are tied for third place toss of coin shall decide outcome)
* Shield Semi Final winners meet in U14 Division 1 County Shield Final (Neutral Venue where possible)
* This model will apply to all Under 14 Divisions
* In the event that a division does not have an even 8 teams then An Coiste na nÓg CCC will organize a structure to give all teams at least one game leading to a cup/shield final.

 **14.5 All County U16 Cup**

**The Under 16 competition will be played initially on an all county basis where teams have been assigned to Divisions of eight teams with the primary driver being the results from the 2023 Under 15 competitions. There will be a Regional Under 16 competition based on the structure to be defined by the respective regional boards.** An Coiste na nÓg CCC along with the Regional Boards will have the final say on the placing of teams in each division.

**14.6 Under 16 All County Cup Competition**

After the teams have been assigned to the respective all county divisions of eight we will run as follows:

* Each team will play each other team in a series of seven games with some teams having four home games and others having three home games depending on a random draw.
* After the full round of games the following rules will apply to all divisions of eight teams:
* The top four teams will qualify for the cup semi finals (1st v 4th, 2nd v 3rd) with home advantage given to the higher placed team.
* The bottom four teams will qualify for the shield semi finals (5th v 8th, 6th v 7th) with home advantage given to the higher placed team.
* If teams are tied on points we will use the “**Criteria for separating teams on same points”** as defined in Section 13.0
* Semi Final winners of the top four meet in U16 Division County Cup Final (Neutral Venue where possible)
* Semi Final winners of the top bottom four meet in U16 Division County Shield Final (Neutral Venue where possible)
* This approach will apply to all divisions except Division 5.
* For Div 5 the exact number of team entries for second teams, etc.. is not clear so we may have to adjust the approach for those divisions – to be confirmed later. There will be Cup and Shield semi finals and finals for this division also.
* For Division One, all teams will play 7 league fixtures after which a round of quarter finals will be played with 1st v 8, 2nd v 7th, etc.. The team in the higher position would have home advantage. After this round of fixtures the four winners would advance to the cup semi finals and the losers to the Shield semi finals. The semi final pairings will be determined by an open draw and if a neutral venue cannot be secured for the semi final a toss of the coin between the two teams will determine the venue.

***Note: We will look to schedule fixtures where long distance is a challenge to summer months where possible***

**14.7 All County U18 League**

Regional Boards will be responsible for organizing and assigning teams to their respective Under 18 Regional Divisions. After the full round of regional games have been played teams will go into an all county league competitions as follows:

**14.8 Division 1 & 2 U18 County League**

* The top team from Division One and Division Two will qualify for their respective all county league finals similar to U17 in 2023.
* One team will get a bye into the final after a random draw.
* If/when county Under 17s are available they can play for their team and this may include squad members that management allow to play

**14.11 All County U18 Cup**

**Teams will be assigned to Divisions of eight teams with the primary driver being the results from the 2023 Under 17 competitions and the results from the Under 18 league will be taken into consideration.** An Coiste na nÓg CCC along with the Regional Boards will have the final say on the placing of teams in each division.

**14.12 Under 18 All County Cup Competition**

After the teams have been assigned to the respective all county divisions of eight we will run as follows:

* Each team will play each other team in a series of seven games with some teams having four home games and others having three home games depending on a random draw.
* After the full round of games the following rules will apply to all divisions of eight teams:
* The top four teams will qualify for the cup semi finals (1st v 4th, 2nd v 3rd) with home advantage given to the higher placed team.
* The bottom four teams will qualify for the shield semi finals (5th v 8th, 6th v 7th)
* If teams are tied on points we will use the “**Criteria for separating teams on same points”** as defined in Section 13.0
* Semi Final winners of the top four meet in U18 Division County Cup Final (Neutral Venue where possible)
* Semi Final winners of the top bottom four meet in U18 Division County Shield Final (Neutral Venue where possible)
* This approach will apply to all divisions except Division 5.
* For Div 5 the exact number of team entries for second teams, etc.. is not clear so we may have to adjust the approach for those divisions – to be confirmed later. There will be Cup and Shield semi finals and finals for this age group.

15.0 Expectation from clubs to host neutral games for finals

Any club may be requested to host two neutral games for finals through the year. If a club is not in a position to accommodate two requests from the first three times of asking, they concede neutral venues for games that their club is involved in across all age groups for the remainder of the year – if the Coiste na nÓg CCC deems that this is appropriate.