



FRC

Football Review Committee

Review Of New Rule Enhancements
Post Allianz Football League 2025

3 Aibreán 2025

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A dark teal background featuring a silhouette of a person running towards the right, carrying a ball. The person is wearing a tank top and shorts. The ground is represented by several parallel diagonal lines that create a sense of motion and perspective. The text "EXECUTIVE SUMMARY" is centered in the middle of the image.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The Football Review Committee (FRC) was established in February 2024 with the purpose of evaluating the current rules and regulations of Gaelic football to identify potential areas for modification or enhancement that could contribute to a more exciting and dynamic playing and viewing experience. The review emanates from the work of the 'Strategic Plan Aontas 2026' and its Key Focus Area identified for Games as "providing the best possible games experience for players and spectators" with its Vision Description as "Gaelic Games will be the most enjoyable games in the world to play and watch".

Following extensive research, proposed rule changes to Gaelic Football were presented and adopted by Comhdháil Speisialta (Special Congress) in November 2024 for implementation on a temporary basis for 2025 competitions.

The 2025 Allianz Football League (AFL) was the first inter-county competition to be played under the new rule enhancements. The season began with the first of seven rounds of the nine-week competition, taking place over the third weekend of January.

After Round 5, the FRC conducted an assessment based on its Benefits Realisation Framework and made several recommendations to the Standing Committee on Playing Rules for modifications to the new rules. These recommendations were subsequently adopted by Ard Chomhairle (Central Council) following a proposal by Coiste Bainistí (The Management Committee).

The 2025 AFL concluded with the four divisional finals played on the last weekend in March with a total of 115 games being played throughout the competition.

REVIEW FOLLOWING CONCLUSION OF AFL 2025

Throughout the 2025 AFL the FRC has monitored, tracked and collected data to allow a continual assessment of the new rule enhancements and their impact in terms of real and measurable improvements in line with the Association's aim that Gaelic Games, and in this instance Gaelic Football, will become the most enjoyable game in the world to play and watch.

Included in this review paper are:

- FRC assessment of new rule enhancements.
- Games Intelligence Unit (GIU) data:
 - Analyses of 2025 AFL Rd 1 to Rd 7 games.
 - Physical demands of match play (note a very small sample size was available).
- Report on Exploring Attitudes and Perceptions of FRC Rule Enhancements In Gaelic Football – AFL 2025
- National Referee's Panel feedback

RESULTS FROM RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

The FRC's Benefits Realisation Framework indicates that the rule enhancements are translating into real and measurable improvements. Overall, the new rules, including the modifications made after Round 5, are working as intended. The FRC is not proposing further adjustments at this time and will continue to monitor, track, and collect data over the Senior Football Championship, as well as club league and championship games. This approach will allow the FRC to gather further insights and ensure that the current rules continue to deliver the desired outcomes.

NEXT STEPS

Following conclusion of the 2025 Inter-county competitions, the FRC will present a Final Report for consideration by Ard Chomhairle (Central Council). Motions will then be presented to An Comhdháil Speisialta (Special Congress) planned for 4th October 2025 for decisions on those rule(s) that will come into effect as permanent rule changes in 2026.

In the interim, the Football Review Committee will continue to liaise with the Standing Committee on Playing Rules and report to Ard Chomhairle (Central Council).

CONCLUSION

The FRC expresses its sincere thanks to all those who continue to contribute to the online surveys and to the many stakeholders who continue to inspire our efforts. Your collective input is vital in helping us all realise the Association's vision of making Gaelic Games *"the most enjoyable amateur sport in the world to play and watch."*

Ní neart go cur le Chéile - There's no strength without unity.



Séamus Ó Gáibhín / Jim Gavin
Cathaoirleach / Chairperson
Choiste Athbhreithnithe na Peile / Football Review Committee

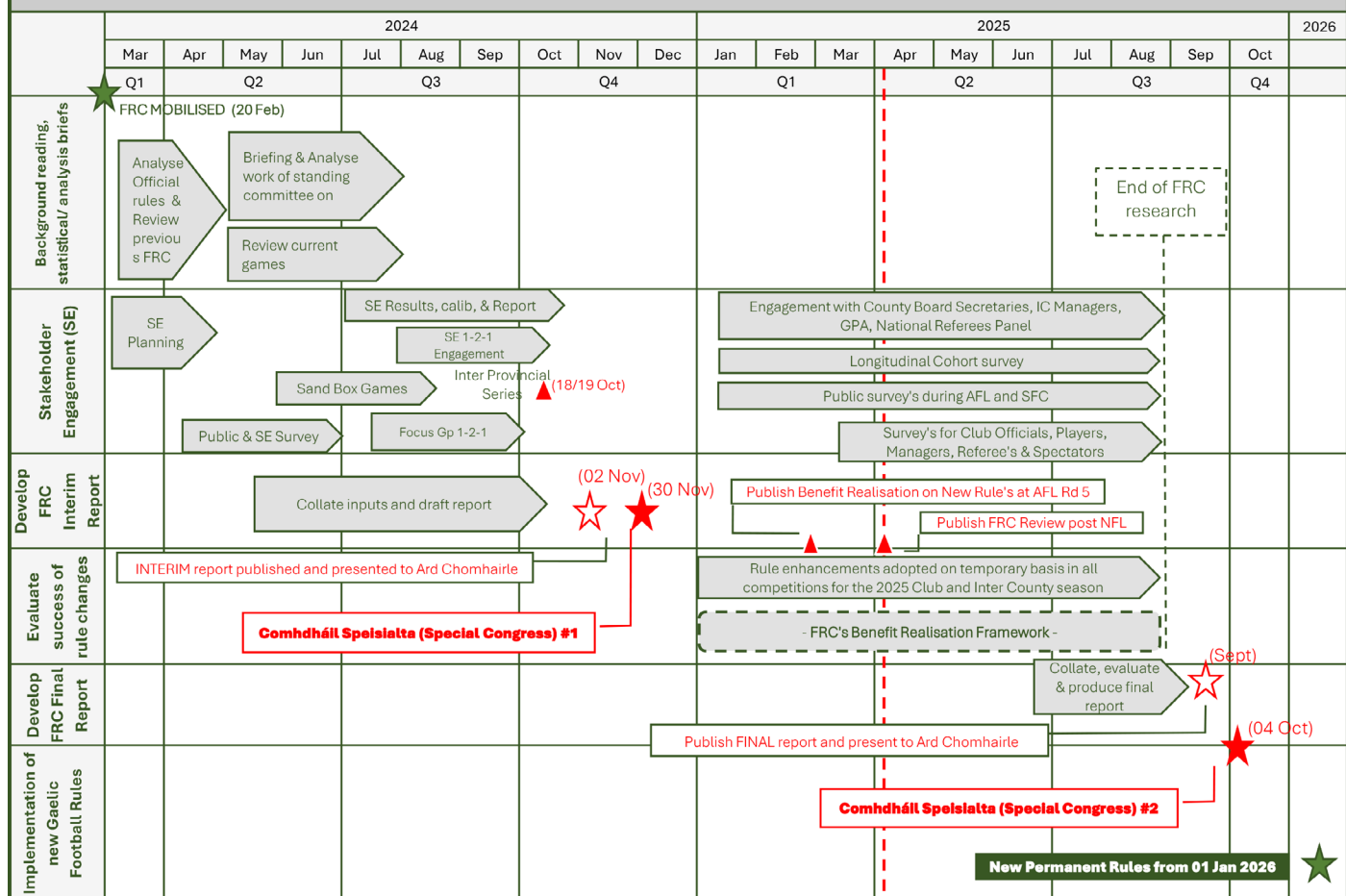
On behalf of the FRC Members:

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The background of the image features a dark teal color with a series of diagonal lines in a slightly lighter shade, creating a sense of motion and depth. A silhouette of a person is shown from behind, running towards the right. In the upper right area, there is a solid dark circle representing a ball.

PROJECT TIMETABLE

Football Review Committee 2024-2025: Strategic Plan of Action



3ú Albreán 2025

The background of the slide features a dark teal color with a pattern of diagonal stripes in a slightly lighter shade. Overlaid on this is a white silhouette of a soccer player in mid-kick, with a soccer ball positioned just in front of their foot. The player's arms are outstretched for balance, and their legs are in a dynamic kicking position.

FRC OBSERVATIONS ON RULE ENHANCEMENTS

1 v 1 THROW-INS	FRC Assessment
	<p>The introduction of 1v1 Throw-Ins at the start of each half has enhanced the spectacle of the game, allowing the player who gains possession—whether through a clean catch or by winning the breaking ball—to launch an immediate attack. This change has also significantly reduced fouling, which was previously common in 2v2 Throw-Ins. GIU data supports this improvement, with fewer than 22% of plays within 10 seconds of the Throw-In resulting in fouls. The rule is performing as intended.</p>
	FRC Recommendation
	FRC RECOMMENDS NO CHANGE TO THIS RULE AT THIS TIME ●

KICK-OUTS	FRC Assessment
	<p>Kick-outs are functioning as intended. With the requirement for the ball to travel beyond the 40m arc, kick-out distances have increased, with 47% travelling beyond the 65m line, leading to more aerial contests—65% of kick-outs have been contested in this year's National Football League. Shorter kick-outs remain a viable option, with 22% played inside the 45m line during Rounds 1-7. While players are permitted to remain inside the 20m line, occurrences have been limited so far. With an average kick-out duration of approximately 20 seconds, there have been no significant delays in restarting play. The FRC anticipates teams will develop innovative strategies during the Championship to maximise primary possession from their kick-outs.</p> <p>The recent amendment to the 'Kick-Out Mark – Play on Immediately' rule is working as intended. Under this amendment, if a player who makes a Kick-Out Mark is illegally challenged within four metres of the mark's position, a free kick is awarded 50 metres ahead, up to the opponents' 13m line. This change encourages high fielding and allows the catcher to play on immediately without illegal tackling hindering their forward progress. The rule has effectively enhanced the flow of the game and rewarded skilful high catches.</p>
	FRC Recommendation
	FRC RECOMMENDS NO CHANGE TO THIS RULE AT THIS TIME ●

GOALKEEPER	FRC Assessment
	<p>This rule is working as planned. As the goalkeeper can no longer receive a pass in their own half, except inside the large rectangle when both the goalkeeper and the teammate passing the ball are inside the large rectangle, a team's ability to constantly recycle the ball in their own half has reduced significantly. Teams have also been incentivised to press up and tackle in the opposition half rather than dropping into a deep defensive shape. The impact is evident, with an average of 35 turnovers per game from rounds 1 to 7 in the 2025 AFL, compared to 31 per game in 2024. Goalkeepers remain actively involved in play, contributing through primary shot stopping, fielding balls inside the square, intercepting passes/ opposition kickouts or receiving a pass from a teammate to assist an attack beyond the halfway line.</p>
	FRC Recommendation
	FRC RECOMMENDS NO CHANGE TO THIS RULE AT THIS TIME ●

4/3 STRUCTURE	FRC Assessment
	<p>The introduction of the 4/3 structure (i.e. during play, a team must have at least four players (which may include the goalkeeper) in their half of the field and at least three outfield players in the opposition half of the field) is achieving its intended effect creating a more balanced 11v11 attacking setup without the overload issues of the previous 3/3 structure.</p> <p>This change has led to an increase in shot attempts, averaging 61 in Rounds 6-7 compared to 56 in Rounds 1-5. Additionally, officiating has become more straightforward with the amendment allowing unintentional crossing of the halfway line in certain circumstances (i.e. A breach of this Rule does not occur where the player(s) who would otherwise cause the breach: (a) have done so unintentionally; (b) are within 4m of the half way line; (c) are not interfering with play; (d) are not interfering with an opponent; and (e) are not gaining an advantage) and has further enhanced overall game flow. This rule is functioning as intended.</p> <p>The other amendment, whereby a team must keep at least three outfield players in the opposition half of the field including if a player(s) is sent off or Red or Black Carded, is working as intended.</p>
	FRC Recommendation
	FRC RECOMMENDS NO CHANGE TO THIS RULE AT THIS TIME ●

SOLO & GO	FRC Assessment
	<p>The Solo & Go rule has been introduced to accelerate play following a foul, and it has been warmly received by players, officials, and spectators alike. This rule not only enhances game speed but also provides key advantages to the team in possession. GIU statistics show strong adoption, with an average of 9 instances per game, and players utilising Solo & Go in 25% of fouls. Of these, 53% led to a shot in the next phase, and 32% resulted in a score. The FRC expects teams to further capitalise on this rule during the Championship to enhance fast transitions from defence to attack. The rule is functioning as intended.</p>
	FRC Recommendation
	FRC RECOMMENDS NO CHANGE TO THIS RULE AT THIS TIME ●

SCORING SYSTEM	FRC Assessment
	<p>The scoring system is performing as intended, with the two-point arc encouraging long-range shooting and driving an overall increase in scoring. In the 2025 AFL, there has been an average of 58 shots per game in Rounds 1-7, compared to 52 shots per game in 2024. Scoring efficiency has also improved, with an average of 32 scores per game in Rounds 1-7 of the 2025 AFL, up from 25 per game in 2024. Additionally, goal-scoring has increased, with an average of 2.3 goals per game compared to 1.9 in 2024. As teams adjust their defensive strategies to counter two-point attempts during the Championship, the FRC anticipates a further rise in goal-scoring opportunities.</p> <p>The recent amendment to remove the word “directly” from the rule governing two-point scores is working as intended. Previously, the rule required that the ball be played “directly” over the crossbar and between the posts. With this clarification, a two-point score is now awarded even if the ball hits a post or bounces over the crossbar, provided it has been kicked by a player with at least one foot on or outside the 40m arc and has not been touched by another player. This amendment enhances clarity and ensures that all valid long-range efforts are appropriately rewarded.</p>
	FRC Recommendation
	FRC RECOMMENDS NO CHANGE TO THIS RULE AT THIS TIME ●

ADVANCED MARK	FRC Assessment
	<p>This rule is functioning as intended, promoting long-range kick passing, high fielding, and one-on-one contests. However, GIU statistics indicate an average of only three instances per round across all divisions in the 2025 AFL. The FRC expects teams to utilise this rule more frequently during the Championship as they become more familiar with it and as favourable weather conditions improve.</p> <p>Additionally, the recent amendment to the Advanced Mark – Play on Immediately rule is also working as intended. Under this amendment, the ‘advantage’ is now considered accrued if the player taking the advanced mark plays on immediately and successfully scores a goal or a point. This adjustment further encourages attacking play and enhances the flow of the game.</p>
	FRC Recommendation
	FRC RECOMMENDS NO CHANGE TO THIS RULE AT THIS TIME ●

BLACK CARD	FRC Assessment
	<p>This rule is working as intended. With referees now having additional authority to issue black cards, this has made it easier for them to make decisions, particularly in melee situations. As a result, the hold-up tackle, which was previously more common, statistically does not seem to be as prevalent. This change has streamlined officiating and improved the flow of Gaelic Football.</p>
	FRC Recommendation
	FRC RECOMMENDS NO CHANGE TO THIS RULE AT THIS TIME ●

DELAY FOULS	FRC Assessment
	<p>The rule for delay fouls (e.g. not deliberately moving back to delay a free kick/ solo & go or not handing over the ball) is working as the FRC intended and is effective. By penalising teams that try to slow play down, the rule is creating a strong disincentive for delay/time-wasting tactics. Since the team that was fouled can restart quickly, it keeps the game dynamic and minimises unnecessary stoppages – improving the flow in the game. The rule is ensuring that the fouled team retains its advantage instead of allowing the defending team to regroup unfairly (i.e. by using delaying tactics). The FRC expect to see further player adaptation throughout the Championship as players adjust their behaviour to avoid unnecessary fouls or delays, further reinforcing the rule’s effectiveness. A further outcome of the implementation of the new delay fouls rule has been a positive reduction in the number of red, yellow-yellow or black cards.</p>
	FRC Recommendation
	FRC RECOMMENDS NO CHANGE TO THIS RULE AT THIS TIME ●

ADVANTAGE

FRC Assessment

This rule is functioning as planned. The player who is fouled is no longer restricted by a time constraint, as the referee allows the advantage to continue until it is clear that no advantage has been accrued. The player fouled is also informed when the advantage ends, as the referee will indicate this by saying “advantage over,” lowering their arm, and allowing play to continue as normal. Additionally, the player fouled is no longer penalised if they commit a technical foul during their advantage. If a player from the offended team commits a technical foul before the advantage has been fully realised, the referee will stop play and apply the penalty for the first infringement. Moreover, if a player from the team that committed the foul commits another foul while the advantage is ongoing, the free is awarded from the more favourable position to the team that was offended.

FRC Recommendation

FRC RECOMMENDS NO CHANGE TO THIS RULE AT THIS TIME



DISSENT RULES

FRC Assessment

The dissent rule for showing “dissent with the referee’s decision to award a free to the opposing team” is working effectively where applied. GIU statistics from the 2025 AFL show an average of 6 dissent fouls per round across the 4 divisions, or 0.4 per game, indicating that players are discouraged from conceding the associated 50m free. However, continued reinforcement across all referees is still needed, particularly in ensuring consistency when moving the ball up 50m and addressing dissent situations on the field. Maintaining uniformity in these areas will help ensure the rule’s ongoing effectiveness. There is also no evidence yet of a team official conceding a free kick by challenging the authority or using abusive language to a match official. Both this rule and its implementation have received unanimous support and been positively received overall.

FRC Recommendation

FRC RECOMMENDS NO CHANGE TO THIS RULE AT THIS TIME



CAPTAIN

FRC Assessment

As only the team captain, or a nominated deputy if the captain is the goalkeeper or is no longer on the field, may speak to the referee to seek clarification of a decision made by a referee, and the fact that such clarification may only be sought during a break in play, the amount of dissent in the game has significantly reduced. However, continued reinforcement across all referees is still necessary, particularly in ensuring consistency in allowing only the team captain (or nominated deputy) to seek clarification. This will help maintain the rule’s effectiveness and further reduce dissent. This rule is working as planned.

FRC Recommendation

FRC RECOMMENDS NO CHANGE TO THIS RULE AT THIS TIME



CLOCK & HOOTER

FRC Assessment

The Public Clock and Hooter was only in operation during the 2025 AFL for Division 1 and 2 fixtures. It has had the intended positive impact, particularly in enhancing clarity and transparency in timekeeping. It has also helped address concerns regarding time-wasting tactics, especially when a player has been black-carded.

While some issues have been identified, the FRC anticipates improvements as the GAA community becomes more familiar with the Public Clock and Hooter timekeeping system. Continued refinement and adaptation will further enhance its effectiveness.

FRC Recommendation

FRC RECOMMENDS NO CHANGE TO THIS RULE AT THIS TIME



PITCH MARKINGS

FRC Assessment

Pitch markings have been of a very high standard, and credit must be given to the ground staff for their excellent work in lining pitches with the new markings. Their attention to detail has ensured clarity and consistency across all venues, enhancing the overall experience for players, match officials, and spectators while contributing to the smooth execution of games.

FRC Recommendation

FRC RECOMMENDS NO CHANGE TO THIS RULE AT THIS TIME



LINE UMPIRE

FRC Assessment

The empowerment of Line Umpires in their roles and responsibilities has strengthened teamwork among Match Officials and increased their overall awareness of in-game events. This rule is working as intended, enhancing officiating consistency and ensuring a more effectively managed game.

FRC Recommendation

FRC RECOMMENDS NO CHANGE TO THIS RULE AT THIS TIME



CROSSING A LINE

FRC Assessment

The rule which “requires a player to be inside or outside a particular line on the Field of Play, the player is required to have both feet inside or outside the line, as appropriate” has brought greater clarity and is working as intended. This clarification ensures consistency in decision-making, and evidence suggests that it has been effectively implemented across games.

FRC Recommendation

FRC RECOMMENDS NO CHANGE TO THIS RULE AT THIS TIME



The background of the image is a dark teal color. It features a silhouette of a soccer player in the center, captured in the middle of a kicking motion. The player is wearing a jersey and shorts. To the right of the player, a soccer ball is shown in mid-air. The ground is represented by several parallel diagonal lines in varying shades of teal and dark blue, creating a sense of perspective and movement. The overall composition is dynamic and focused on the action of the game.

GAME ANALYSIS

TABLE 1. TOTAL VALUES IN RELATION TO RULE ENHANCEMENTS FOR EACH ROUND

		Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5	Round 6	Round 7
Throw-Up	Clean catch	5	5	2	6	5	2	5
	Won breaking ball	27	27	28	22	25	28	27
	Fouled within 10 seconds	7 (22%)	7 (22%)	11 (37%)	6 (21%)	5 (17%)	2 (7%)	10 (31%)
Advanced Mark	Advanced mark scores	0	6	3	1	5	3	0
Technical Fouls	Technical fouls	50	52	67	57	71	67	74
	Technical fouls not returned in full	3	5	10	12	14	11	10
Delay Fouls	Delay fouls	21	18	27	33	27	31	41
	Delay fouls moved inside the 40m arc	8	8	11	20	13	14	23
	Remained Inside the 40m arc	5	4	8	12	8	7	16
	Moved Outside the 40m arc	3	4	3	8	5	7	7
	Resulted in 2-Point scores	3	4	4	6	4	7	5
Dissent Fouls	Dissent fouls	7	3	3	8	5	10	7
	Dissent fouls moved inside the 40m arc	3	0	3	2	3	1	6
	Remained inside the 40m arc	3	0	2	2	1	1	6
	Moved outside the 40m arc	0	0	1	0	2	0	0
	Resulted in 2-Point scores	0	0	1	1	0	2	0
Structure Fouls	Number of 3v3 / 4v3 infractions	14	17	18	13	24	10	16
	Remained inside the 40m arc	9	9	11	4	7	6	6
	Moved outside the 40m arc	5	8	7	7	11	3	7
	Resulted in 2-Point scores	3	6	4	4	9	3	7

TABLE 2. AVERAGE VALUES IN RELATION TO RULE ENHANCEMENTS FOR EACH ROUND

		Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5	Round 6	Round 7
Game Clock	Total game time	01:16:40	01:17:34	01:17:04	01:16:59	01:16:39	01:18:19	01:18:36
	% Ball in play time	57%	55%	58%	57%	56%	55%	54%
Kick-outs	Primary poss from KO > 45m line (clean)	36%	38%	35%	36%	35%	38%	44%
	Secondary poss from KO > 45m line (break)	64%	62%	65%	64%	65%	62%	56%
	Average kick-out duration	21.5	23	20.7	21.2	19.5	19.4	20.4
Goalkeepers	Passes to the goalkeeper	16.6	16.4	22.8	23.9	25.7	1.4	1.9
	Passes to GK in midfield (HW – 45m line)	81%	84%	86%	83%	76%	71%	77%
	Passes to GK in attack (> 45m line)	19%	16%	14%	17%	24%	29%	23%
	Goalkeeper Shots	1.1	0.9	0.8	1.1	1.9	0.1	0.2
Solo & Go	Average fouls per game	31.6	32.4	29.5	32.4	32.3	31	35.5
	Solo & Go	9.1	9.9	7.3	7.7	8.5	8.3	10.2
	Kick pass	12.3	12.4	14.2	15.8	14.3	10.5	14.7
	Shot	10.2	10.1	8	8.9	9.5	12.2	10.6
	Shots from solo & go (First phase)	4.7	6.1	4	3	4.6	4.5	5.3
	Scores from solo & go (First phase)	2.8	3.4	2.1	1.7	3	3	3.4
Scoring	Open play 1 point shots	37.1	37.4	36.8	36.3	38.8	43.5	40.4
	Open play 2 point shots	7.9	7.5	9.1	8.6	8.3	5.9	8.4
	Free Kick 1 point shots	7.5	6.3	5.9	6.2	6.5	7.9	7.2
	Free Kick 2 point shots	2.7	3.8	2.1	2.7	3.0	2.6	3.4

TABLE 3. AFL ROUND 7 - AVERAGE EVENT DATA PER GAME ACROSS ALL DIVISIONS

	All Divisions	Division 1	Division 2	Division 3	Division 4
No. of games	16.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Possessions	86.1	85.0	88.0	83.5	87.8
Goalkeeper involvements in team possessions	1.4	1.8	2.5	1.2	0.2
Goals	2.5	3.8	1.5	2.2	2.5
2 Point scores	4.9	5.2	6.2	3.2	4.8
Points	26.6	28.2	25.5	27.8	24.8
Passes	480.6	492.0	438.5	483.0	509.0
Passes to goalkeeper	1.9	2.0	3.5	2.0	0.2
Kick passes	96.6	88.2	95.0	91.8	111.2
Hand passes	384.1	403.8	343.5	391.2	397.8
Hand pass/Kick pass ratio	4.0	4.6	3.6	4.3	3.6
Kick-outs	46.7	48.8	47.0	47.0	44.0
Short kick-outs (inside 45m line)	9.3	8.8	5.2	7.8	15.5
Medium kick-outs (45m-65m line)	15.0	16.8	17.5	17.0	8.8
Long kick-outs (+65m line)	22.2	23.0	24.2	22.2	19.5
Kick-outs retained (%)	58.8	56.9	59.0	54.8	64.8
Contested kick-outs	29.6	32.5	31.0	33.5	21.5
Contested kick-outs (%)	63.5	66.7	66.0	71.3	48.9
Primary possession (clean) inside 45m line	8.0	7.2	4.5	6.0	14.2
Primary possession (clean) beyond 45m line	13.8	15.5	16.0	13.5	10.0
Secondary possession (break) beyond 45m line	17.7	18.8	18.8	20.2	13.0
Shots	60.6	62.5	62.8	61.8	55.5
Scores	33.9	37.2	33.2	33.2	32.0
Productivity	5.1	5.9	4.8	4.9	4.8
Shots from play	48.8	51.8	49.5	50.8	43.2
Scores from play	25.5	29.2	24.2	25.8	22.8
Shot/Score ratio from open play (%)	52.2	56.5	49.0	50.7	52.6
Shots from placed Balls	11.8	10.8	13.2	11.0	12.2
Scores from placed Balls	8.4	8.0	9.0	7.5	9.2
Shot/Score ratio from placed balls (%)	71.4	74.4	67.9	68.2	75.5
2 Point shots	11.8	12.0	13.8	10.2	11.2
Shot/Score ratio from 2 point shots (%)	41.3	43.8	45.5	31.7	42.2
Turnovers (Lost)	37.1	34.2	38.8	34.2	41.2
Turnover rate (%)	43.1	40.3	44.0	41.0	47.0
in defensive third (end line to 45m line)	2.8	1.8	3.0	3.2	3.2
in middle third (45m line to opp 45m)	8.4	8.5	8.0	6.5	10.8
in attacking third (opp 45m line to end line)	25.9	24.0	27.8	24.5	27.2
Fouls	35.5	32.5	39.5	33.5	36.5
in defensive third	10.1	8.2	12.0	8.5	11.5
in middle third	17.0	14.8	19.0	18.0	16.2
in attacking third	8.4	9.5	8.5	7.0	8.8

TABLE 4. GAME CHARACTERISTICS COMPARISON (AVERAGE PER GAME) WITH THE FIRST 5 ROUNDS OF THE 2025 AFL

Variable	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5	Round 1-5 (Average)	Round 6	Round 7
Total game time	1:16:40	1:17:34	1:17:04	1:16:59	01:16:39	01:16:59	01:18:19	01:18:36
% Ball in play time	57%	55%	58%	57%	56%	57%	55%	54%
Kick-outs								
Kick-outs per game	44	47	43	44	48	45	50	47
% of Kick-outs short (inside 45m line)	21%	21%	21%	20%	24%	21%	24%	20%
% of kick-outs long (+45m line)	79%	79%	79%	80%	76%	79%	76%	80%
Primary possession (clean) beyond 45m line	10	12	11	10	11	10.8	12.7	13.8
Secondary possession (break) beyond 45m line	18	20	20	18	20	19.2	20.3	17.7
Average kick-out duration	21.5	23.0	20.6	21.2	19.5	21.2	19.5	20.4
Contested kick-outs (%)	61%	64%	68%	67%	63%	65%	65%	64%
Passing								
Hand pass count	392	382	408	401	392	395	394	384
Total Kick pass count (includes free kicks and sidelines)	123	113	127	114	112	118	99	97
Open Play Kick Pass	94	83	100	85	84	89	72	67
Hand pass: Kick pass ratio	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.5	3.5	3.4	4.0	4.0
Shooting								
Total shots	56	57	55	55	59	56	61	61
Total scores	30	33	30	29	32	31	36	34
% of shots from open play	80%	79%	83%	82%	80%	81%	80%	80%
Shot/Score ratio from open play (%)	50%	54%	50%	49%	50%	51%	54%	52%
Shot/Score ratio from placed balls (%)	71%	73%	74%	70%	73%	72%	81%	71%
Defending								
Total turnovers (Lost)	37	33	38	34	32	35	33	37
Total fouls	32	32	30	32	32	32	31	36

FIGURE 1. THE % OF KICK-OUTS IN A GAME THAT ARE LONG VS SHORT

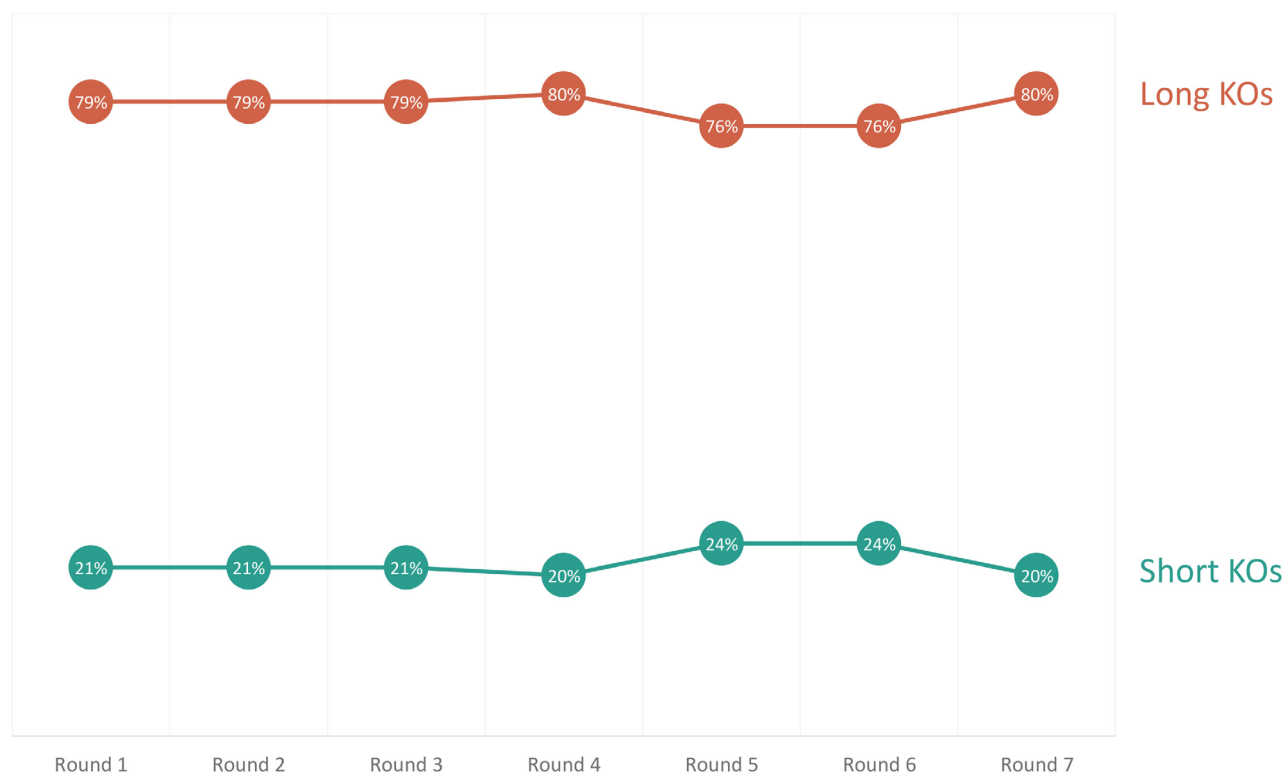


FIGURE 2. % OF CONTESTED KICK-OUTS DURING A GAME

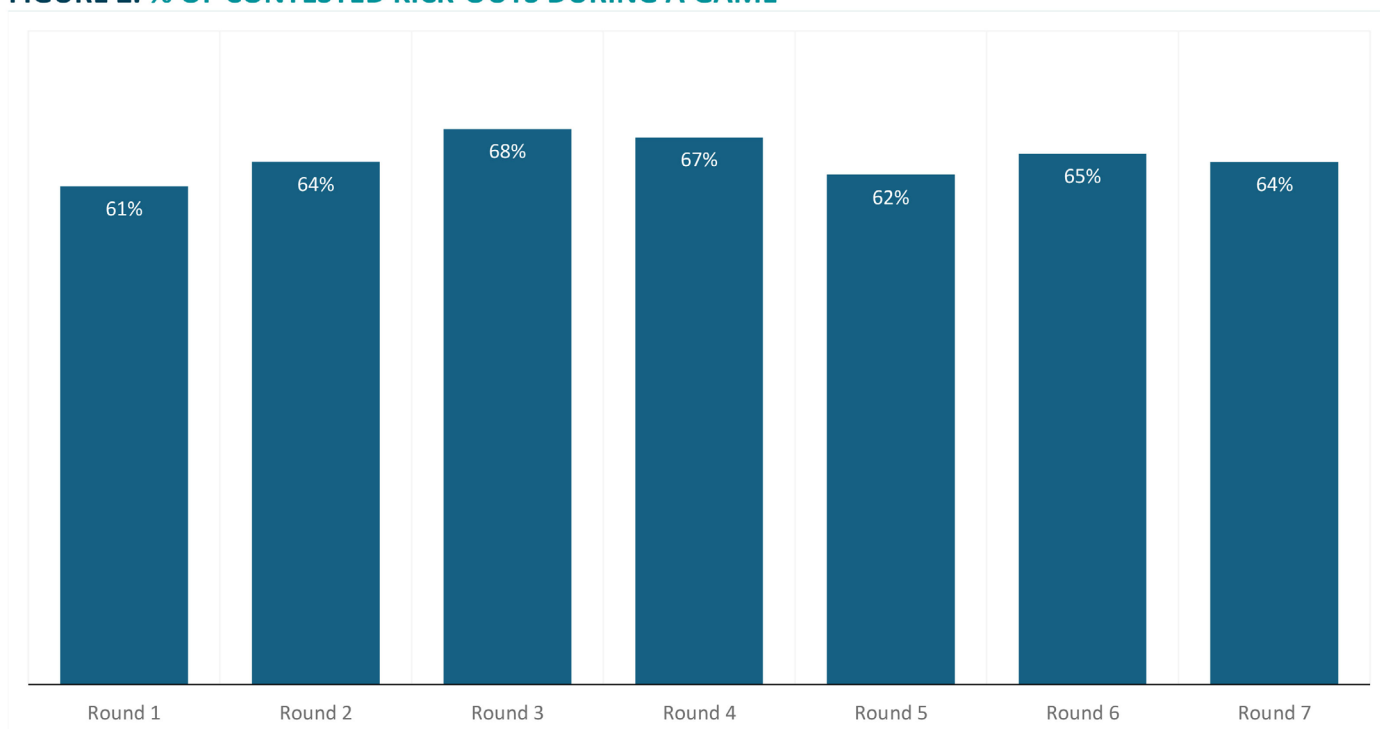


FIGURE 3. % OF CONTESTED KICK-OUTS IN A GAME ACROSS THE DIVISIONS

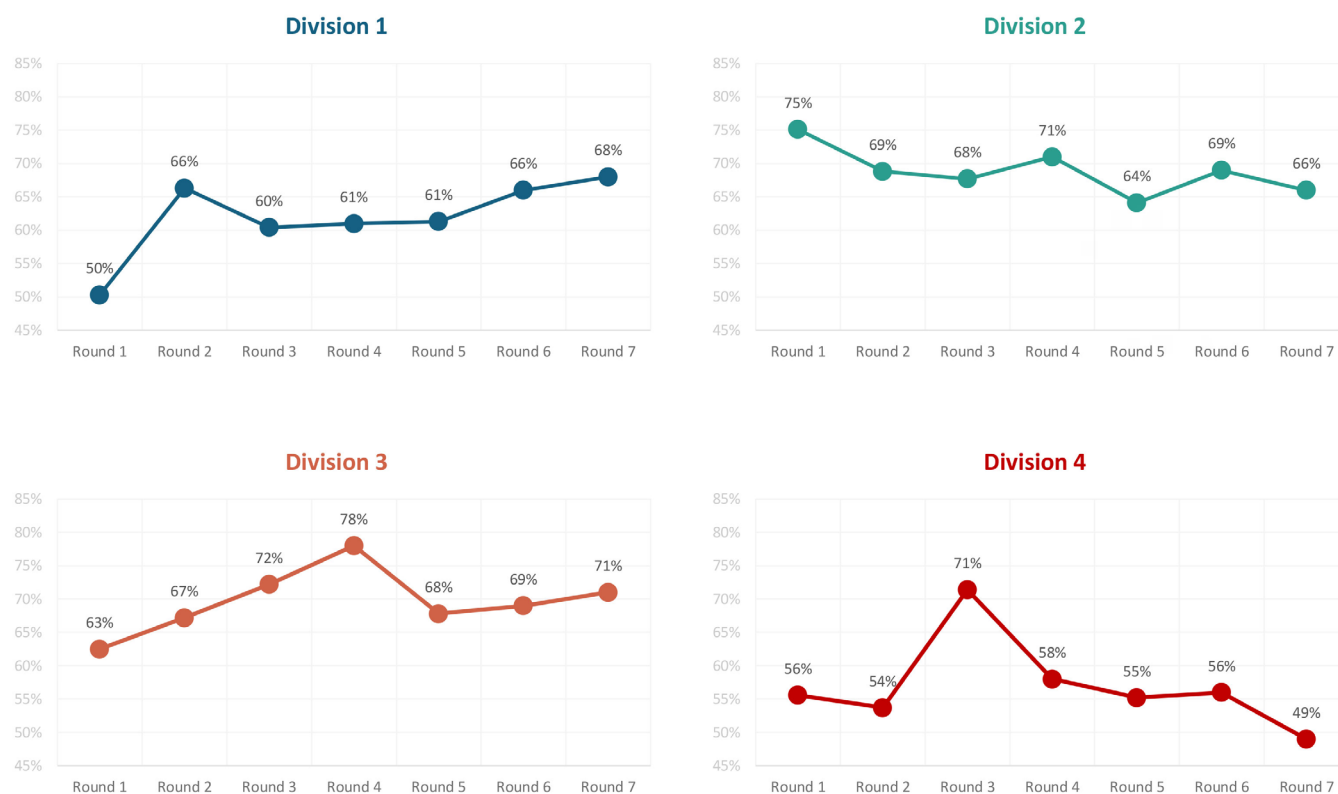


FIGURE 4. TOTAL PASSES BY TYPE (HAND PASS/KICK PASS) AND THE HAND PASS:KICK PASS RATIO

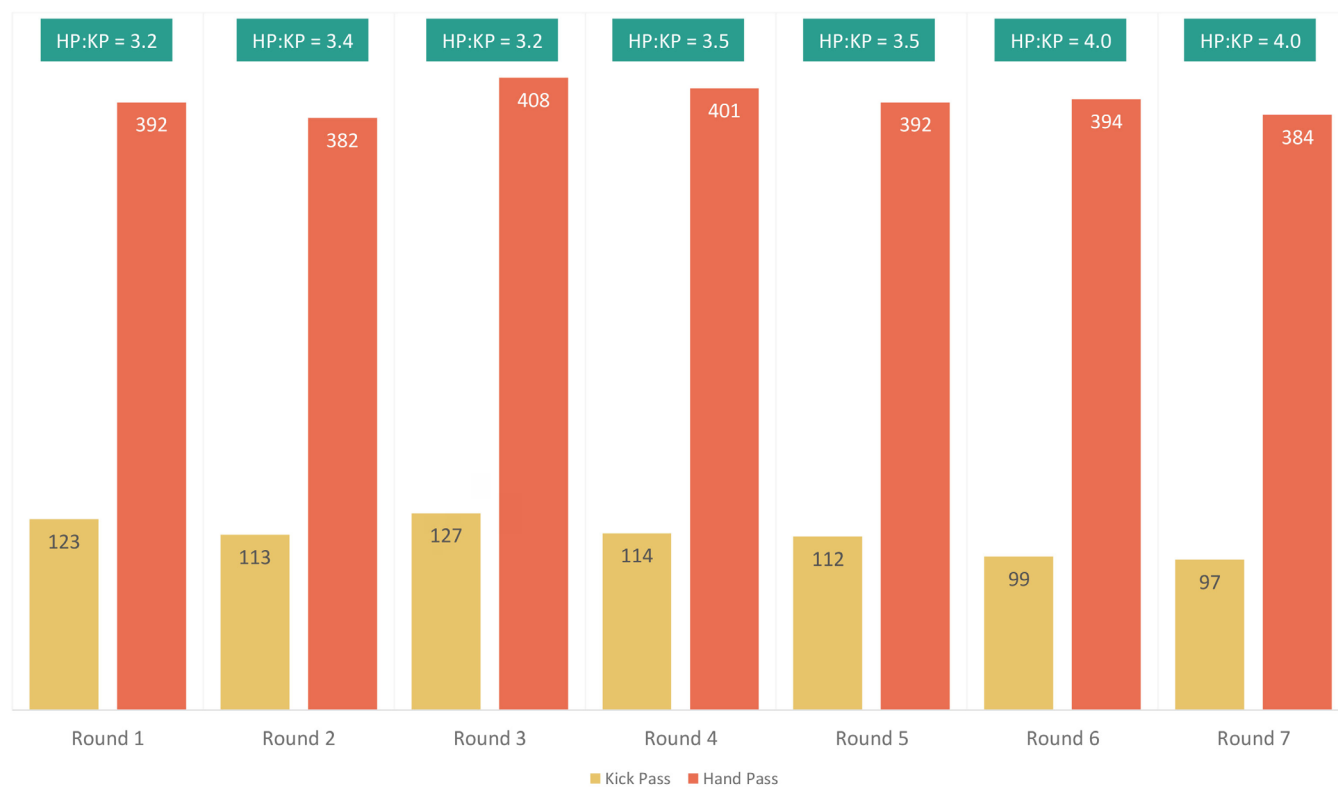


FIGURE 5. TOTAL SCORES AND SHOTS

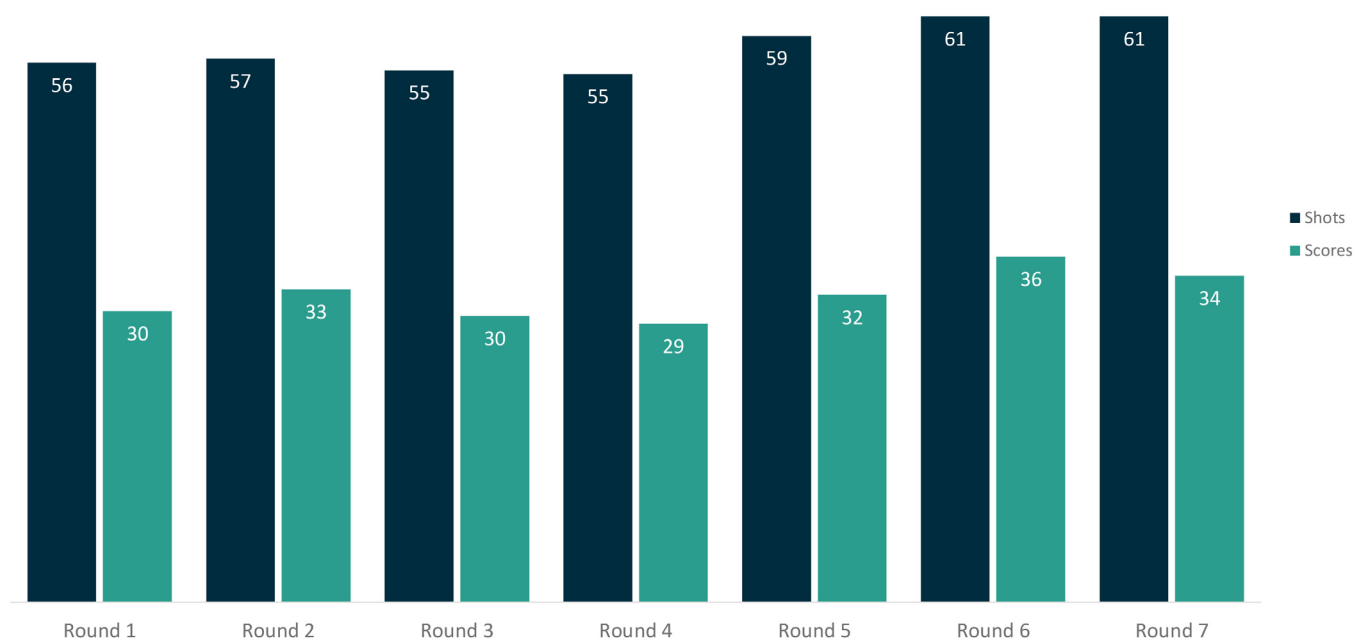


FIGURE 6. AVERAGE SHOT/SCORE RATIO (%) FROM 2 POINT SHOTS SO FAR IN THE NFL PER DIVISION

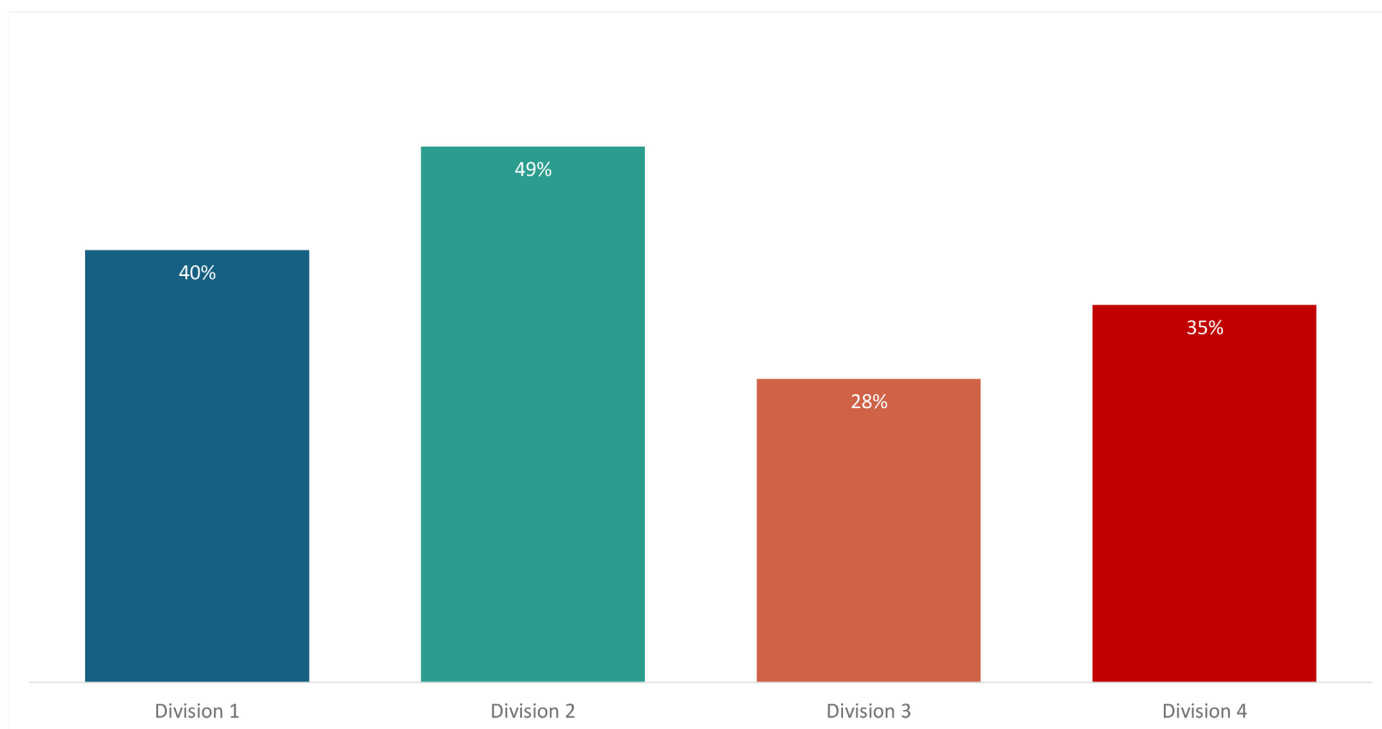
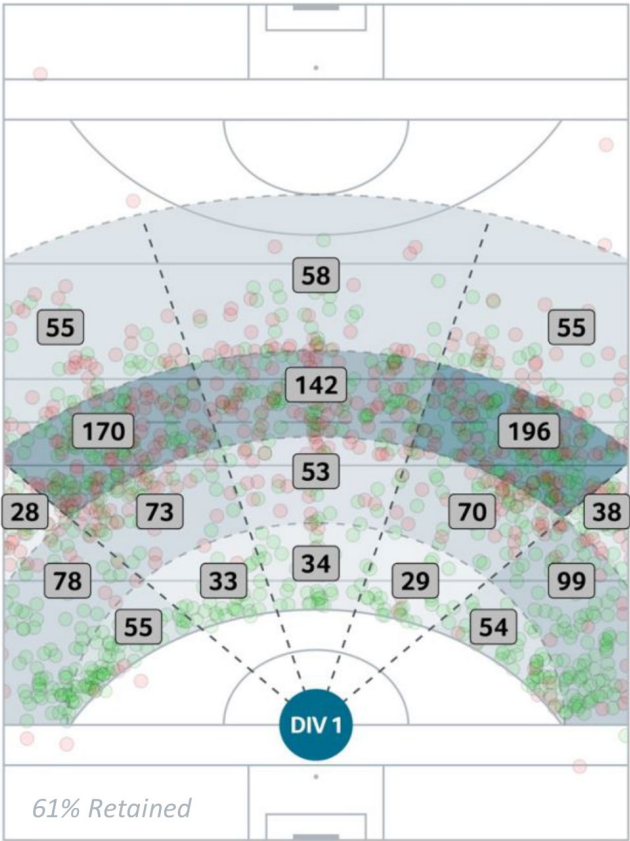


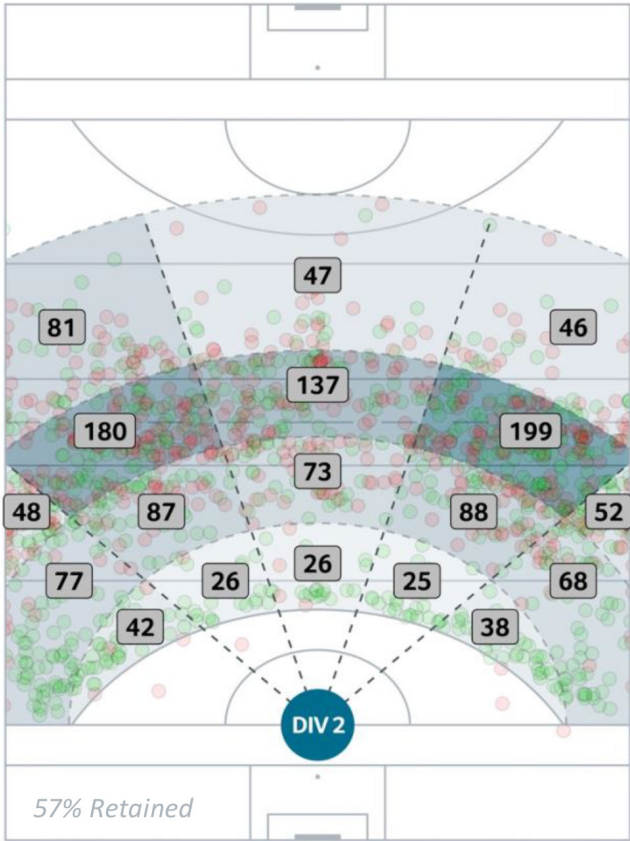
FIGURE 7. KICK-OUT MAPS FOR EACH DIVISION

All won/lost kick-out locations | AFL Rounds 1-7

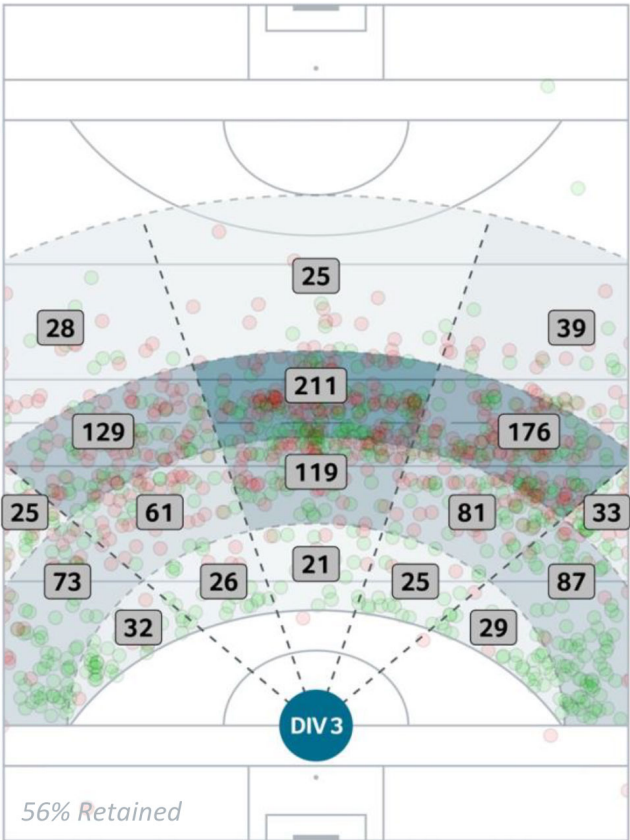
AFL Division 1 Kick-outs



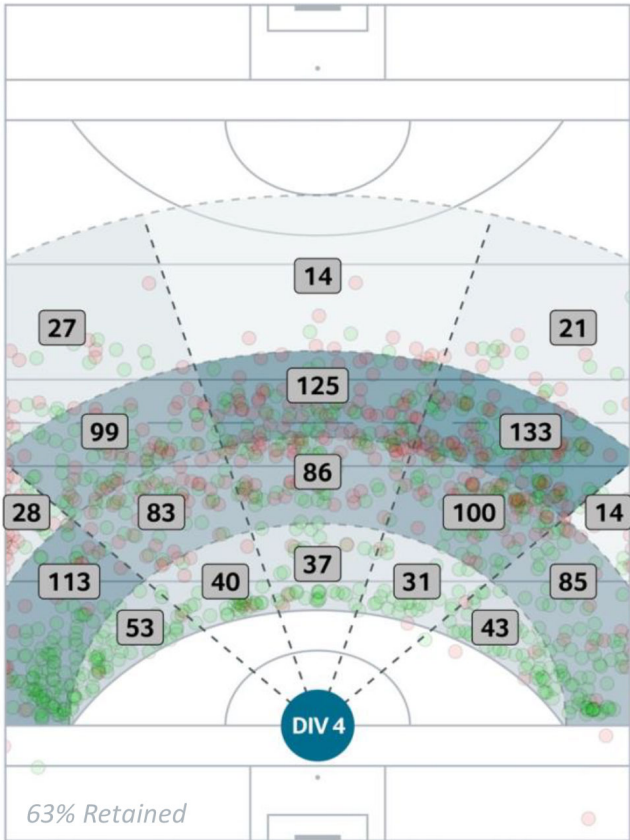
AFL Division 2 Kick-outs



AFL Division 3 Kick-outs



AFL Division 4 Kick-outs



Not included in the sample:

R3: Wexford v Carlow

R5: London v Longford

R6: Leitrim v Fermanagh

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Shane Flanagan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**Shane Flanagan,
Director of Games Development**

Project Lead: Johnny Bradley.

Insight Development: Johnny Bradley, Dr Denise Martin & Barry Cleary.

Data Collection Team: Johnny Bradley, Aoife McColgan, Katy Heron,
Abby Tarrant, Cian Flanagan, Conor Cosgrove.



PHYSICAL DEMANDS SUMMARY REPORT

AN OBJECTIVE REVIEW OF THE PHYSICAL RUNNING DEMANDS SINCE THE INTRODUCTION OF THE FOOTBALL RULE ENHANCEMENTS

Uttaran Bera, Aaron O'Neill & Prof. Mark Roantree, Dublin City University

April 2nd 2025

INTRODUCTION:

The GAA has established a Games Intelligence Unit (GIU) to support a benefits realisation framework. This initiative will enable the Football Review Committee (FRC) to monitor, track, and collect data to assess whether recent rule enhancements lead to real and measurable improvements. This aligns with the Association's goal of making Gaelic Games and in this instance Gaelic Football "the most enjoyable game in the world to play and watch."

It is envisaged that the rule changes may impact on physical demands of players. To assess these changes, the FRC has measured the physical demands during the 2025 National Football League (NFL) and compared the results against data from previous seasons. The GIU has partnered with the School of Health & Human Performance and the Insight Centre for Data Analytics at Dublin City University (DCU) to investigate this key research area on the physical demands on players. Using only the GPS devices, this provides an objective, data driven analysis.

OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of this project were to examine the physical running demands of games played during the 2025 National Football League campaign under the recent rule's enhancements, compared to the 2024 National Football League campaign across 6 different speed zones; standing, walking, jogging, running, high-intensity running and sprinting. Out of the 32 counties in Ireland competing in the NFL, four teams shared their GPS data, to which we extend our gratitude for helping us to obtain valuable insights for this project. Of the four teams, two teams competed in Division 2, one team competed in Division 3, and one team competed in Division 4 during the 2025 NFL season. For this report, we examined:

- Physical demands of the 2024 vs 2025 NFL season in Division 2 and Division 3 respectively by positional line across the 6 speed zones.
- The differences in the physical demands across Divisions 2-4 during the 2025 NFL season.

Under the new rules, we had expected to find:

- An increase in high intensity running and sprinting distance performed by goalkeepers in 2025 compared to 2024.
- An increase in the number of high intensity running and sprinting actions performed by goalkeepers in 2025 compared to 2024.
- A decrease in full-back and full forward lines total distance due to the 3v3 structure in 2025 compared to 2024.
- An increase in the number of sprinting actions performed by full back and full forward lines in 2025 compared to 2024 due to the 3v3 structure.
- An increase in high-intensity running and sprinting actions across all out-field positions compared in 2025 compared to 2024.

MAIN FINDINGS:

The main findings from analysis are:

- Across both Div.2 and Div.3 the total distance covered by players remains relatively unchanged (Fig 3. And Fig. 6)
- In Div.3 high intensity running distance per game has remained relatively unchanged in 2025 compared to 2024 for all outfield positions, except for full backs (Fig. 5; Appendix 4)
- Div. 3 full forwards, full backs and goalkeepers perform fewer sprinting actions and cover less sprinting distance per game in 2025 compared to 2024 (Fig. 4; Appendix 4)
- In Div. 2 outfield positions perform fewer sprinting and high intensity running actions and distances in 2025 compared to 2024, except for midfielders (Fig 1-2; Appendix 1)
- Div. 2 goalkeepers perform more high intensity running and cover more total distance in 2025 vs 2024 (Fig 2. And Fig. 3; Appendix 2)
- Lower Division teams perform more high intensity running actions per game compared to higher divisions (Appendix 5).
- Goalkeepers performed less jogging, running, high intensity running and sprinting and covered less total distance in R6 and R7 compared to R1-5 (Fig. 7-8; Appendix 6).

**Goalkeeper sprint data excluded from Div.2 2024 vs 2025.*

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS:

The findings of this report would suggest that the physical fitness of Division 2 goalkeepers must increase to cope with the increased running demands due to rule enhancements. In Division 2, the decrease in high intensity running and sprinting may be on account of increased focus on tactics and technical ability due to the enhancements in 2025. Lower division teams may need to account for an increased focus on technical and tactical skills and decreased reliance on physical fitness when aiming to compete in a higher division.

CONCLUSION:

With the exception of goalkeepers, the physical demands of Gaelic football remain relatively unchanged or have even decreased in high intensity and sprint actions under the new rule enhancements. This report is not without some limitations. While every effort has gone into creating valid and reliable results, due to the limited amount of data submitted for analysis the results for distances covered contained in this report are approximations with possible anomalies, and this should be considered when interpreting results. It is intended that with a more in-depth analysis and a larger volume of data collected throughout the Provincial and All-Ireland Championships that the reliability and validity of our findings will increase.

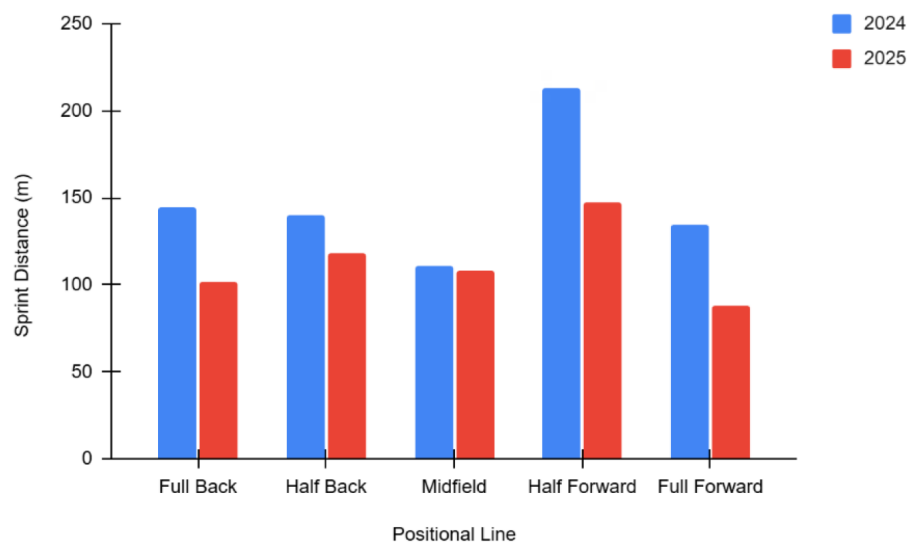


Figure 1. 2024 vs 2025 Div.2 average sprint distance per game per respective position line

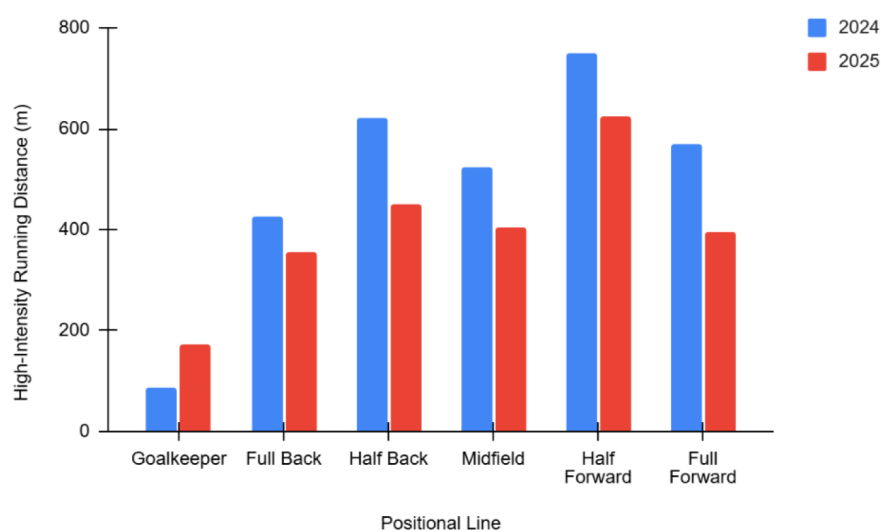


Figure 2. 2024 vs 2025 Div.2 average high intensity running distance per game per respective positional line

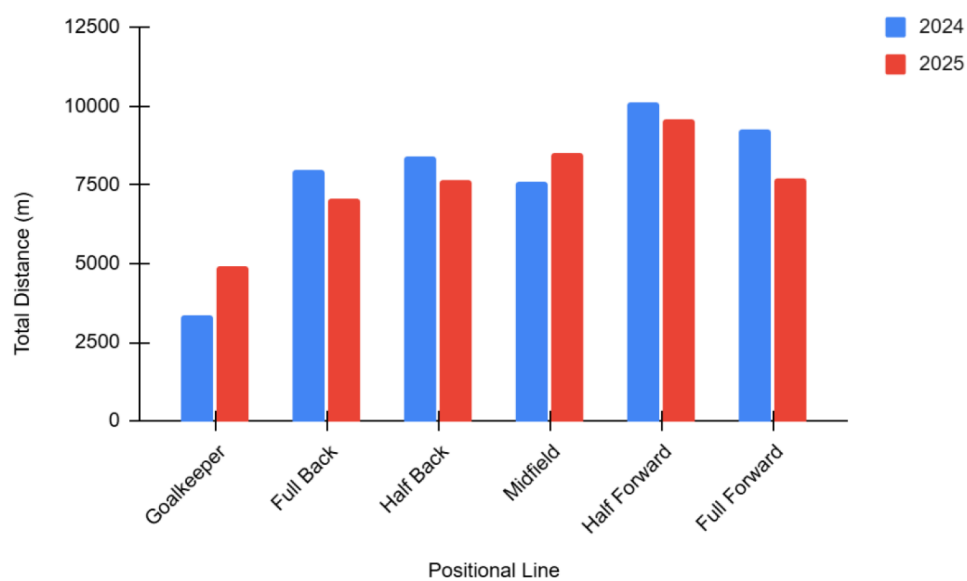


Figure 3. 2024 vs 2025 Div. 2 average total distance per game per respective positional line

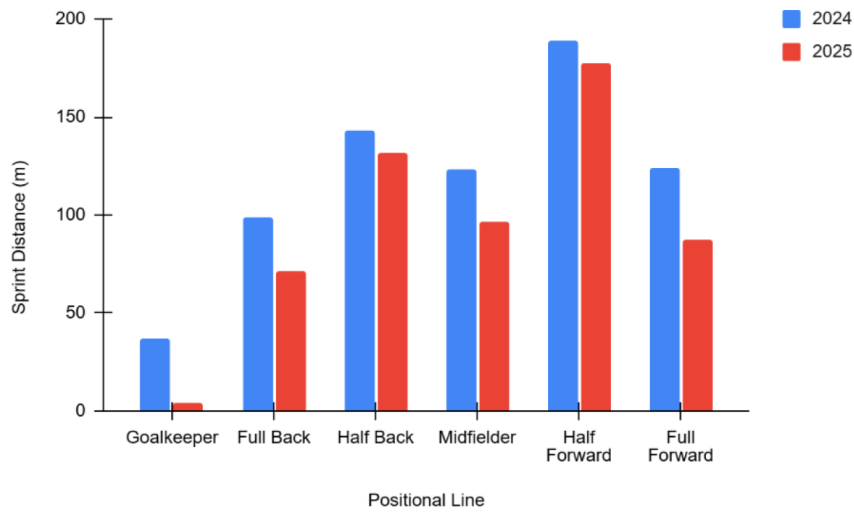


Figure 4. 2024 vs 2025 Div.3 average sprint distance per game per respective position line

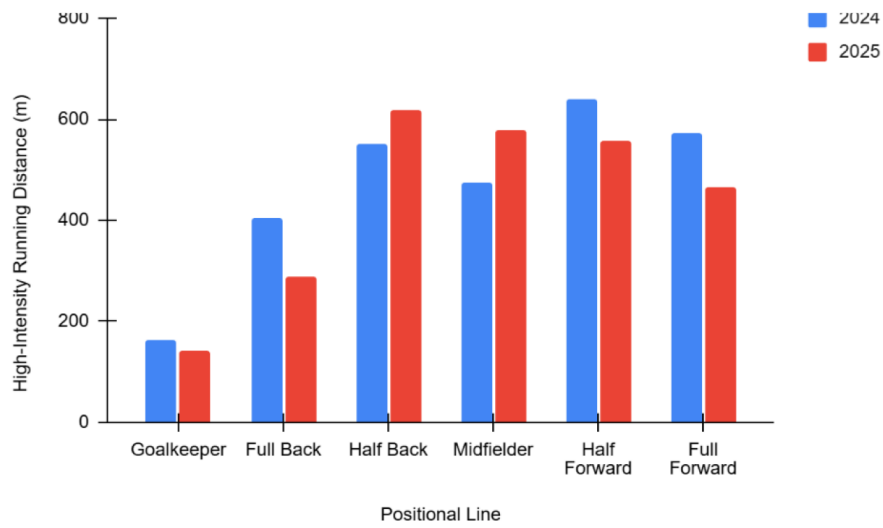


Figure 5. 2024 vs 2025 Div.3 average high intensity running distance per game per respective positional line

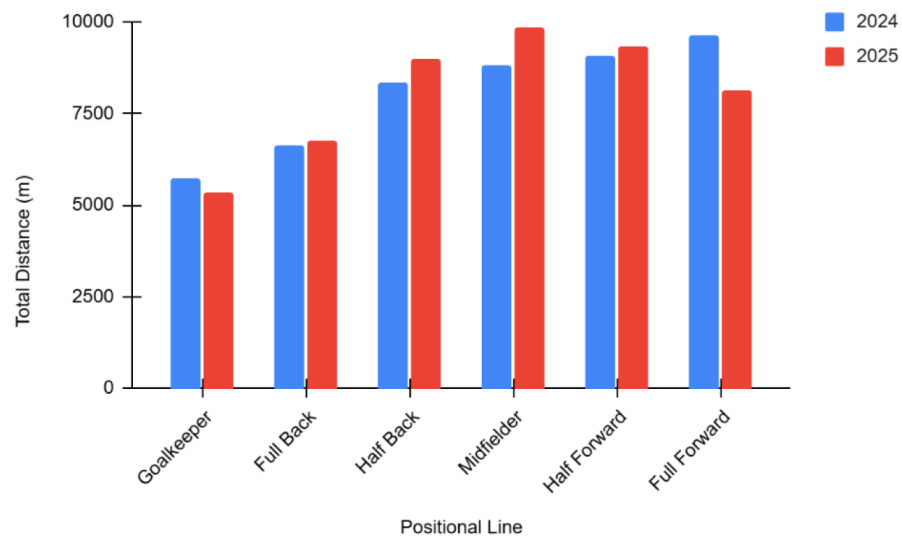


Figure 6. 2024 v 2025 Div.3 average total distance per game per respective positional line

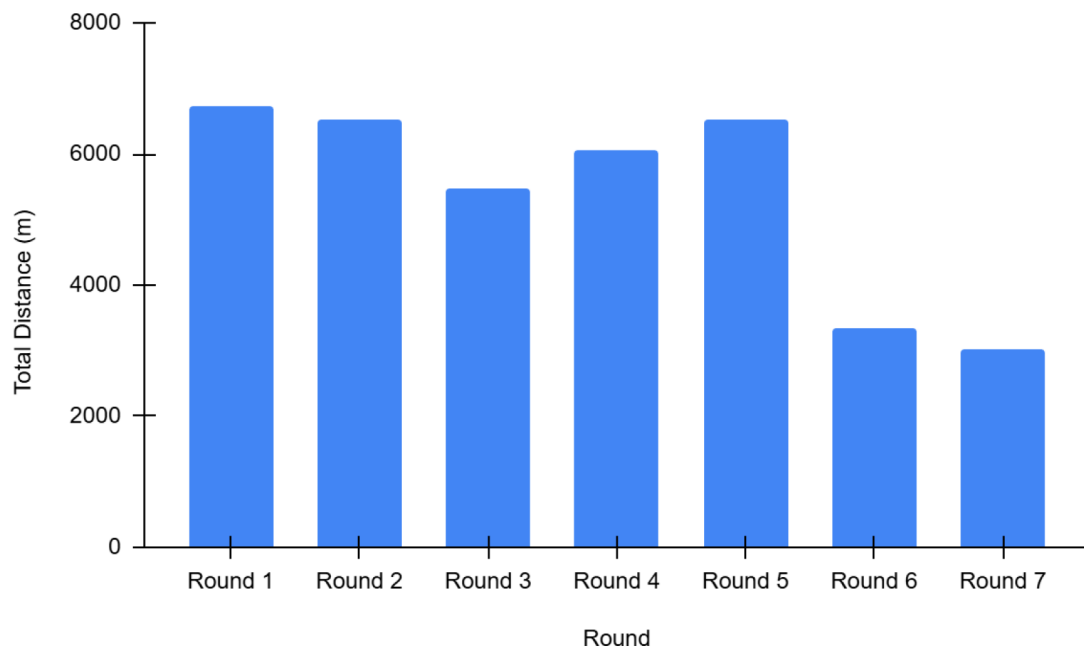


Figure 8. 2025 average total distance performed by goalkeepers in Div.2 per round

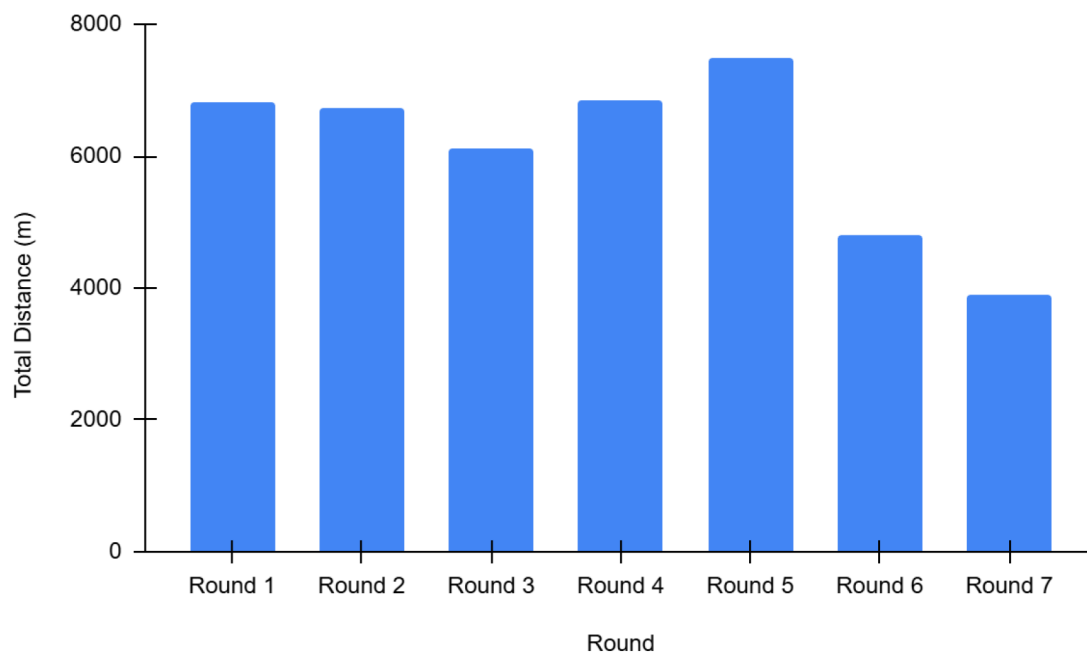


Figure 7. 2025 average total distance performed by goalkeepers in Div.3 per round

APPENDIX 1. 2024 VS 2025 DIV. 3 TOTAL NO. OF ACTIONS PERFORMED PER POSITION PER ACTION

		2024	2025
Goalkeeper	Standing	312	709
	Walking	554	1469
	Jogging	253	619
	Running	75	235
	High-Intensity Running	12	38
	Sprinting	0	3
Full-Back	Standing	864	954
	Walking	3888	3640
	Jogging	3209	2742
	Running	1120	989
	High-Intensity Running	364	323
	Sprinting	91	71
Half-Back	Standing	697	643
	Walking	3775	3506
	Jogging	3378	3115
	Running	1338	1242
	High-Intensity Running	478	399
	Sprinting	86	77
Midfield	Standing	378	471
	Walking	2326	2630
	Jogging	2218	2339
	Running	726	837
	High-Intensity Running	266	236
	Sprinting	52	49
Half-Forward	Standing	517	850
	Walking	4022	4192
	Jogging	4079	3828
	Running	1696	1611
	High-Intensity Running	619	525
	Sprinting	129	97
Full-Forward	Standing	952	1069
	Walking	4195	3692
	Jogging	3570	2889
	Running	1510	1228
	High-Intensity Running	466	377
	Sprinting	85	68

APPENDIX 2. 2024 VS 2025 DIV. 2 AVG DISTANCE COVERED PER POSITION PER ACTION PER GAME

		2024	2025
Goalkeeper	Walking	1923 m	2357 m
	Jogging	985 m	1457 m
	Running	342 m	884 m
	High-Intensity Running	87 m	172 m
	Sprinting	0 m	23 m
Full-Back	Walking	3315 m	3174 m
	Jogging	2989 m	2453 m
	Running	107 m	970 m
	High-Intensity Running	426 m	355 m
	Sprinting	144 m	102 m
Half-Back	Walking	2984 m	2829 m
	Jogging	3221 m	2928 m
	Running	1436 m	1318 m
	High-Intensity Running	622 m	451 m
	Sprinting	140 m	118 m
Midfield	Walking	2576 m	3243 m
	Jogging	3325 m	3405 m
	Running	1061 m	1321 m
	High-Intensity Running	524 m	406 m
	Sprinting	111 m	108 m
Half-Forward	Walking	3609 m	3475 m
	Jogging	3824 m	3650 m
	Running	1712 m	1663 m
	High-Intensity Running	750 m	624 m
	Sprinting	213 m	148 m
Full-Forward	Walking	3617 m	3410 m
	Jogging	3276 m	2571 m
	Running	1670 m	1237 m
	High-Intensity Running	569 m	396 m
	Sprinting	135 m	88 m

		2024	2025
Goalkeeper	Standing	531	642
	Walking	1372	1314
	Jogging	710	593
	Running	227	195
	High-Intensity Running	42	36
	Sprinting	6	2
Full-Back	Standing	524	1208
	Walking	2764	3949
	Jogging	2415	2634
	Running	926	869
	High-Intensity Running	318	270
	Sprinting	60	48
Half-Back	Standing	600	721
	Walking	3455	4064
	Jogging	3231	3673
	Running	1304	1611
	High-Intensity Running	425	526
	Sprinting	90	87
Midfield	Standing	368	373
	Walking	2572	2670
	Jogging	2448	2737
	Running	960	1079
	High-Intensity Running	269	310
	Sprinting	53	45
Half-Forward	Standing	692	716
	Walking	3975	4022
	Jogging	3524	3678
	Running	1370	1482
	High-Intensity Running	506	491
	Sprinting	114	119
Full-Forward	Standing	717	875
	Walking	3959	3742
	Jogging	3878	3019
	Running	1482	1211
	High-Intensity Running	491	421
	Sprinting	85	77

APPENDIX 4. 2024 VS 2025 DIV. 3 AVG DISTANCE COVERED PER POSITION PER ACTION PER GAME

		2024	2025
Goalkeeper	Walking	3010 m	3208 m
	Jogging	1879 m	1400 m
	Running	641 m	602 m
	High-Intensity Running	162 m	143 m
	Sprinting	37 m	4 m
Full-Back	Walking	2771 m	3085 m
	Jogging	2384 m	2448 m
	Running	986 m	852 m
	High-Intensity Running	405 m	289 m
	Sprinting	99 m	71 m
Half-Back	Walking	2804 m	3132 m
	Jogging	3309 m	3297 m
	Running	1529 m	1836 m
	High-Intensity Running	552 m	617 m
	Sprinting	143 m	132 m
Midfield	Walking	3255 m	3198 m
	Jogging	3423 m	4190 m
	Running	1525 m	1784 m
	High-Intensity Running	475 m	579 m
	Sprinting	124 m	97 m
Half-Forward	Walking	3248 m	3535 m
	Jogging	3515 m	3590 m
	Running	1502 m	1465 m
	High-Intensity Running	640 m	556 m
	Sprinting	189 m	178 m
Full-Forward	Walking	3440 m	3541 m
	Jogging	3889 m	2819 m
	Running	1631 m	1239 m
	High-Intensity Running	572 m	466 m
	Sprinting	124 m	87 m

APPENDIX 5. COMPARISON OF TOTAL NO. OF ACTIONS PER ROUND ACROSS R1-R5 DURING THE 2025 NFL SEASON

		1	2	3	4	5
DIVISION TWO	Standing	640	692	613	762	573
	Walking	2421	2736	2913	2964	2747
	Jogging	1902	2067	2469	2370	2465
	Running	753	739	956	930	987
	High-Int. Run	243	224	295	274	292
	Sprinting	46	36	55	40	62
DIVISION THREE	Standing	592	669	876	523	524
	Walking	2817	2852	3172	2626	2756
	Jogging	2263	2365	2244	2261	2519
	Running	914	880	884	904	1023
	High-Int. Run	265	270	310	287	330
	Sprinting	47	45	63	44	73
DIVISION FOUR	Standing	755	569	462	702	567
	Walking	2747	2528	2590	2702	2602
	Jogging	2290	2287	2448	2256	2510
	Running	232	979	1016	901	1104
	High-Int. Run	335	332	319	296	329
	Sprinting	51	46	34	43	45

APPENDIX 6. DIV.2 AVG. DISTANCE PER GAME COVERED BY GOALKEEPERS ACROSS R1-7

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
DIVISION TWO	Walking	3419 m	2872 m	2570 m	2260 m	2146 m	2371 m	2294 m
	Jogging	2106 m	2308 m	1561 m	1919 m	2207 m	667 m	584 m
	Running	870 m	964 m	1103 m	1616 m	1722 m	272 m	126 m
	High-Int. Run	191 m	314 m	151 m	256 m	407 m	25 m	19 m
	Sprinting	78 m	28 m	45 m	0 m	22 m	0 m	0 m
DIVISION THREE	Walking	3752 m	3424 m	2864 m	3013 m	2939 m	3204 m	3262 m
	Jogging	1554 m	1260 m	1231 m	2004 m	2022 m	1107 m	621 m
	Running	738 m	795 m	691 m	650 m	1082 m	249 m	8 m
	High-Int. Run	22 m	229 m	310 m	271 m	167 m	0 m	0 m
	Sprinting	0 m	0 m	14 m	0 m	14 m	0 m	0 m

Shane Flanagan
Director of Games Development

Project Lead: Prof. Mark Roantree

Insight Development: Aaron O'Neill & Uttaran Bera (Insight Analytics)

Data Collection Team: Aaron O'Neill. Special thanks to the sports scientists and coaches from the respective counties who shared their data with us for this report.

A dark teal background featuring a silhouette of a Gaelic footballer in a dynamic pose, holding a ball. The player is positioned centrally, with their arms and legs spread wide. The background is decorated with diagonal stripes and a large, faint, stylized 'G' shape.

EXPLORING ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF FRC RULE ENHANCEMENTS IN GAELIC FOOTBALL

by Dr. Peter Horgan, GAA & Dr. Michael McKay, University of Ulster

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Football Review Committee (FRC) were charged with the task of making Gaelic football the best amateur game in the world to play and watch, an onerous undertaking by any standards. Having canvassed public opinion on what was needed in order to achieve this, the FRC recommended seven core enhancements to the rules of Gaelic football. These enhancements have been in place for the duration of the 2025 Allianz Football Leagues. After Round five, the FRC ‘tweaked’ a number of these enhancements, specifically rules on passing to the Goalkeeper, and the zonal limitations on players.

Throughout the league, two surveys were in operation to gauge public opinion on how the rule enhancements were helping (or not). A more detailed methodology was described in an interim report after Round 5 of the National Football League. The first survey was a cohort study, utilising the same group of people (cohort) at each time point (after each round of games). The second was an open, public survey where anyone was free to participate. What follows is a summary of the findings of those surveys. In short and with time, participants reported Gaelic football to be a better and a more enjoyable game to watch (with a change from an average of 3.2 out of five before the leagues began, to an average of 4.2 out of five after Round 7). In terms of the need for the rule enhancements, the stated need for these remained virtually the same at Round 7 as it did at baseline. In other words, there was a strong feeling to begin with, that these enhancements were needed, and that remained constant throughout the league. Participants also reported a greater likelihood to attend both inter-County, and club games as a result of the enhancements.

In summary, the totality of the evidence contained in these surveys suggests that those who participated were and are supportive of the enhancements.

2. RESULTS – COHORT STUDY

The following sections report the results from the cohort study, with comparisons between responses from the cohort prior to the commencement of the Allianz National Football League (Baseline) and following the conclusion of Round 7.

2.1 COHORT STUDY PARTICIPANTS

A total of 1,207 participants signed up to be part of the Cohort. Their demographic details are displayed below (see Figure 1). Results show in terms of role in the GAA (green font), around two-thirds were supporters or coaches/managers (as their ‘main’ self-reported role), in terms of age (blue font) over 70% were aged 31 to 60, and around two-thirds were from Ulster or Leinster (purple font).

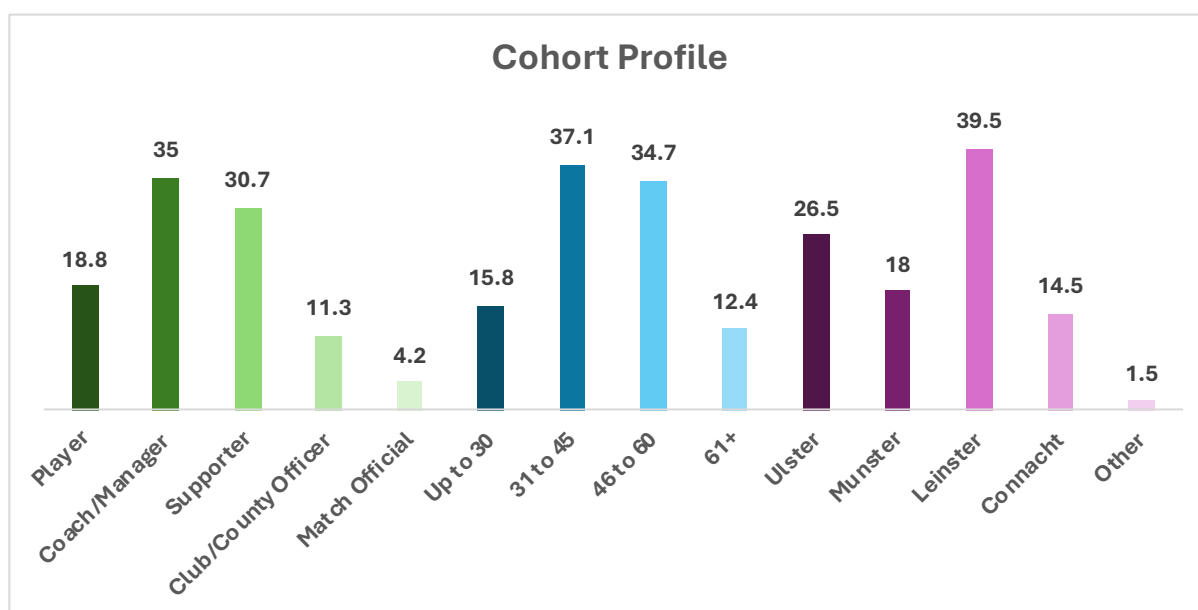


Figure 1: Demographic details for the Cohort Study

2.2 OVERALL VIEW OF GAELIC FOOTBALL AS A SPECTATOR SPORT

Participants were asked about their view of Gaelic football as a game to watch, with responses provided along a 5-point scale which was scored: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = fair; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

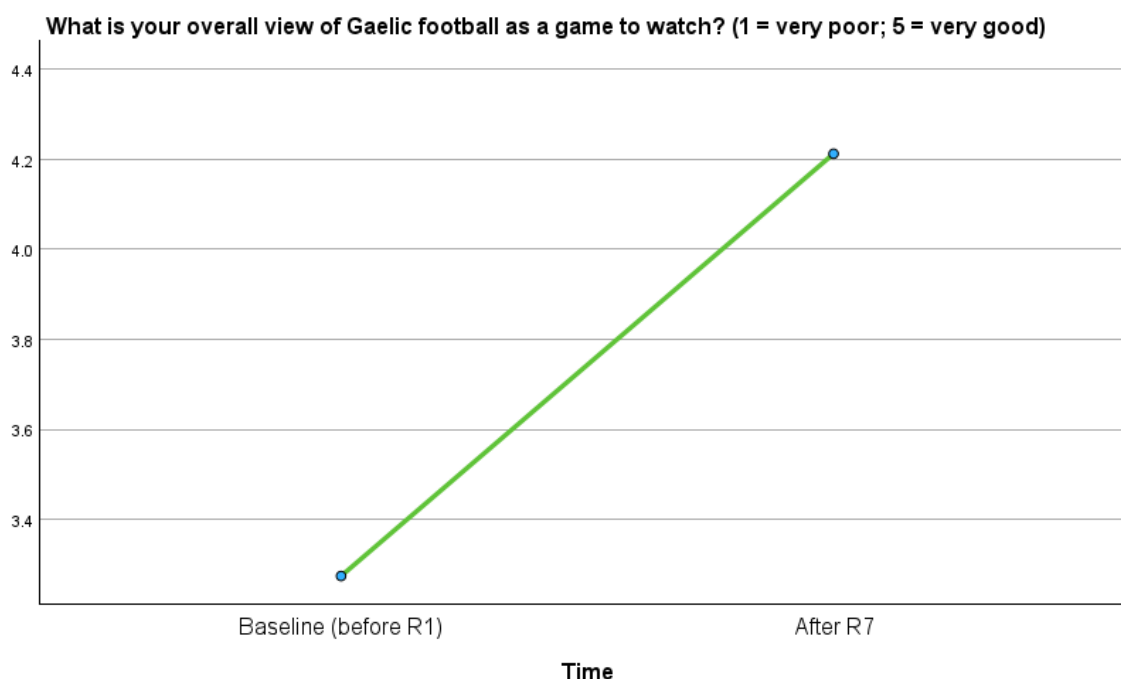


Figure 2: Comparison of Baseline Vs Week 7 Overall view of Gaelic football as a spectator sport.

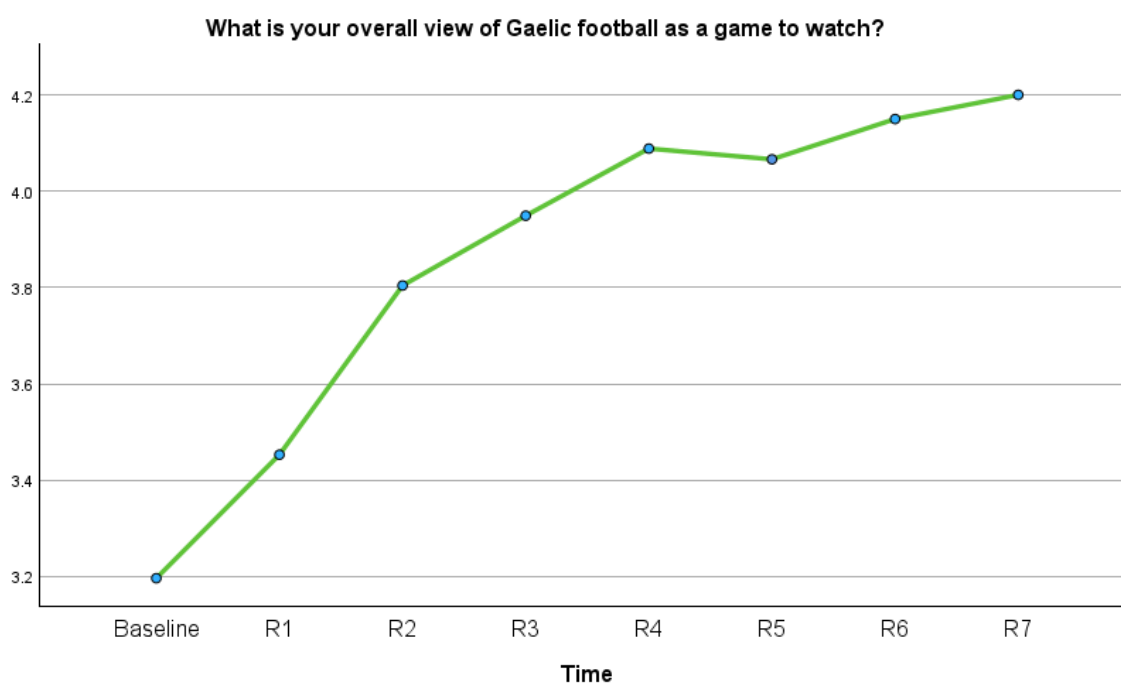


Figure 2a: Comparison of Baseline Vs Week 7 Overall view of Gaelic football as a spectator sport

Overall, the direction of travel is positive (average of just over 3.2 to just over 4.2), with the sample moving from an average score equating to 'fair', to an average score between 'good' and 'very good'. By any standards, this is a substantial change in a brief period of time (11 weeks). Below, these responses are fractured by age, role, county performance (place in respective league table after R7), and province. Figure 2a depicts week-on-week changes for the seven rounds of the league. Averages rose steadily from baseline up to R4. Between R4 and R5 there was a slight decline which was arrested at both R6 and R7. It was between R5 and R6 that the FRC announced 'tweaks' (shaded area) to the enhancements, and figure 2a suggests that these 'tweaks' were associated with more favourable outcomes. Figure 2a depicts findings for those who completed the cohort study at all time points, whereas figure 2 depicts results for those completing only at baseline and after R7.

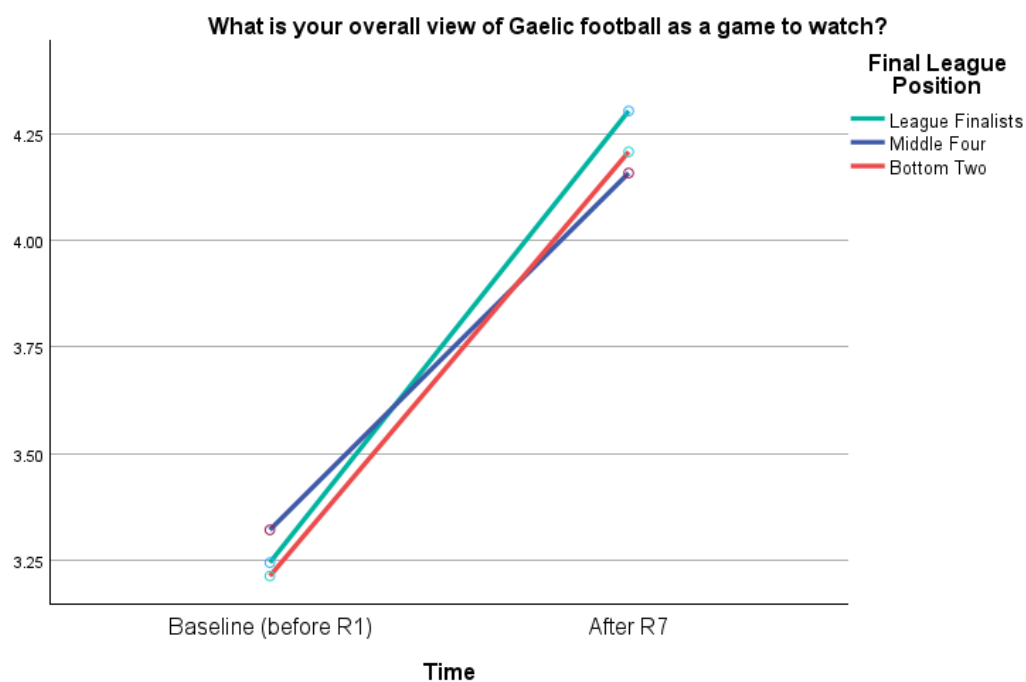


Figure 3: Comparison of Baseline Vs Week 7. Overall view of Gaelic football as a spectator sport according to position in the league table following Round 7.

The responses mirror the positive overall direction, with no indication that responses are driven by the performance of the participants' county team. After R7, lowest satisfaction is reported by those whose county teams finished in the 'middle four' places in their respective tables, while highest satisfaction was observed for those whose county team finished in the top two league places. The magnitude of differences at both time points is small. Overall, this suggests that level of County success did not substantively impact participants' views on football as a game to watch.

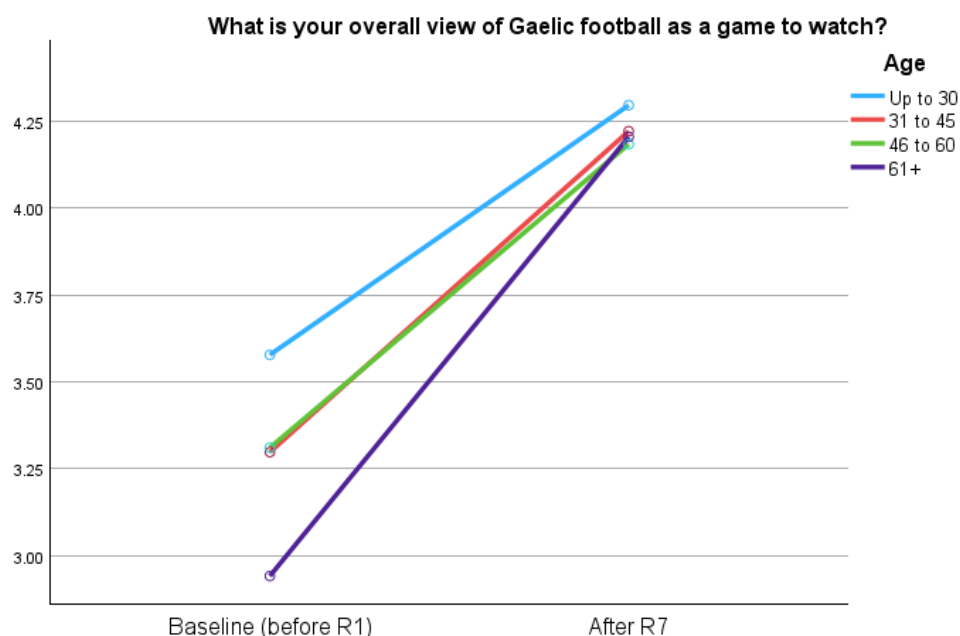


Figure 4: Comparison of Baseline Vs Week 7. Overall view of Gaelic football as a spectator sport according to the age of the respondent.

In the initial FRC report, greatest dissatisfaction with Gaelic football was reported by older participants. This is reaffirmed at baseline here. However, as is clear from the figure, there is a convergence developing by R7 (the age bands are not as widely distributed in their responses), with responses for all age groups coalescing around a value of 4.2 (indicative of a response equating to 'good').

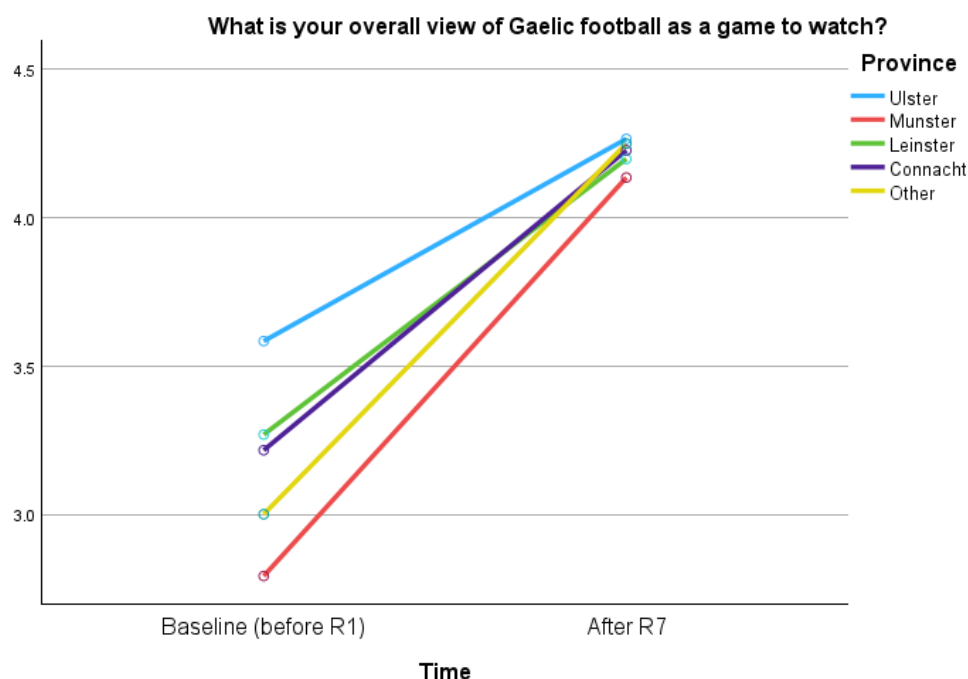


Figure 5: Comparison of Baseline Vs Week 7. Overall view of Gaelic football as a spectator sport according to province.

The figure above shows that at R7, provincial differences evident at baseline (lines separated) had largely disappeared by R7. Similar to the responses for age, there is a convergence of average scores with time, so that the variation at baseline (2.79 for Munster, compared to 3.58 for Ulster) largely disappears by R7 (4.14 for Munster, and 4.27 for Ulster).

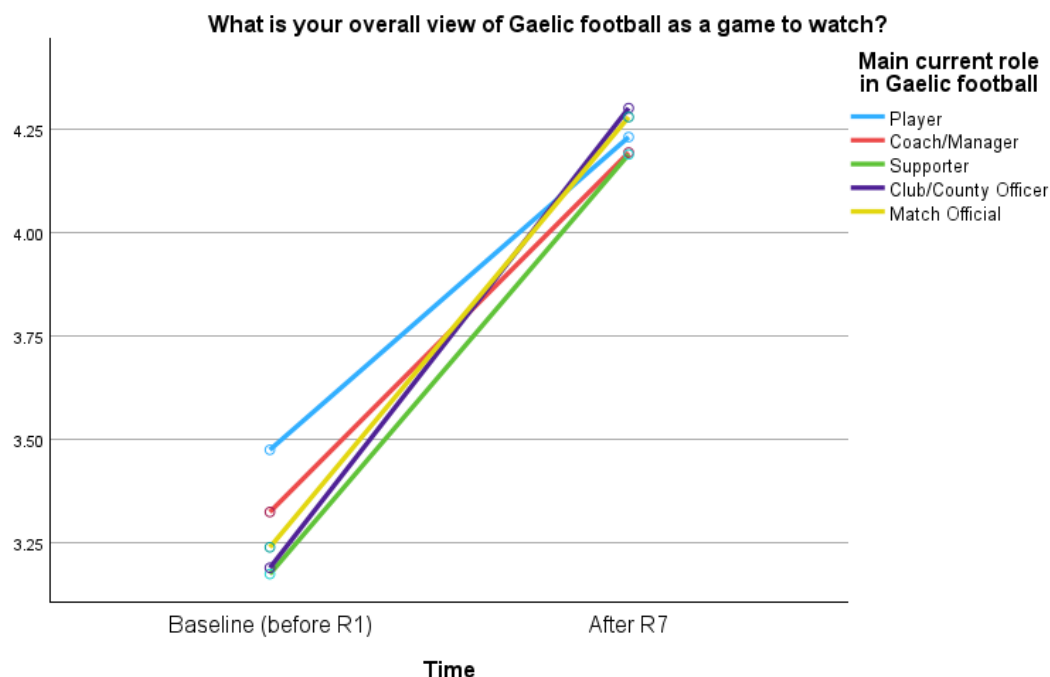


Figure 6: Comparison of Baseline Vs Week 7. Overall view of Gaelic football as a spectator sport according to role.

The figure above shows that there is relatively minor variation in satisfaction terms, by role in the GAA. In other words, the change with time in positivity about Gaelic football as a game to watch, appears not to be driven by any particular role.

SUMMARY

These results show that in the opinion of the cohort, Gaelic football has become a better game to watch. This is evidenced by the change from around 3.2 (out of 5) at baseline, to 4.2 at R7. Further, baseline differences in, for example, age and province largely disappear by R7, suggesting that this positivity is felt across all demographics.

2.3 REQUIREMENT FOR RULE ENHANCEMENTS

Participants were asked to what extent they thought that Gaelic football needed the proposed enhancements. Again, a 5-point Likert scale was scored: 1 = not needed at all; 2 = somewhat needed; 3 = moderately needed; 4 = quite needed; 5 = needed a lot.

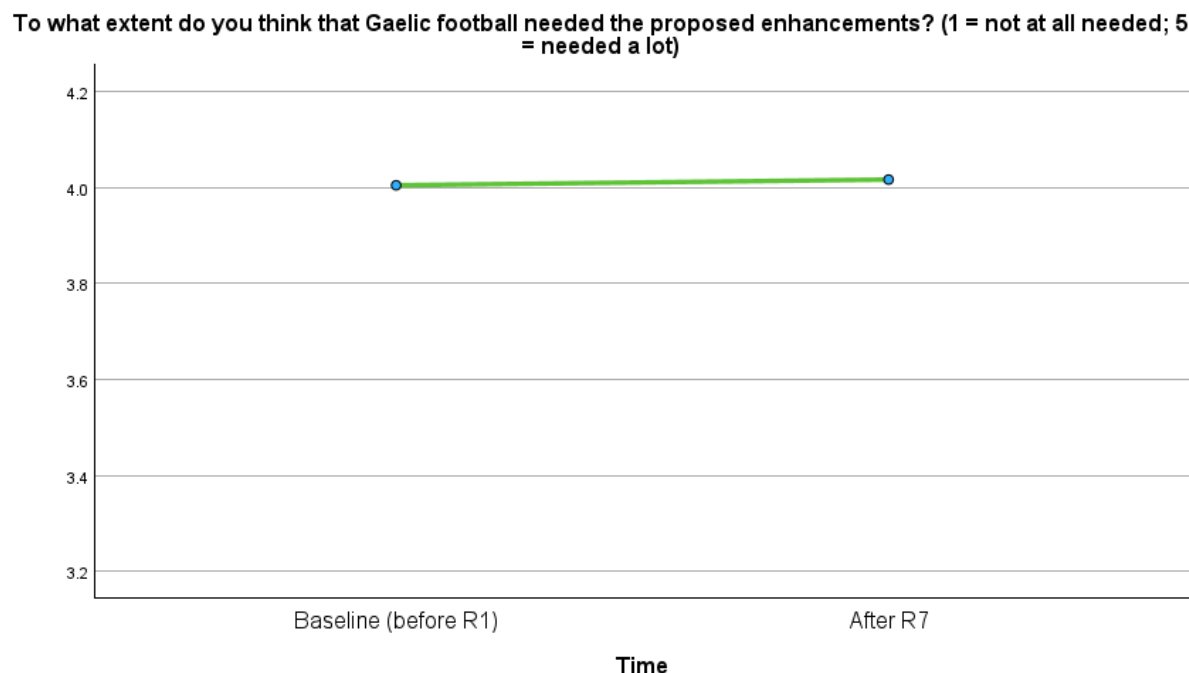


Figure 7: Comparison of Baseline Vs Week 7 for the need for the Rule Enhancements

While question 1 enquired about how good the game is to watch, this question enquired about how necessary the enhancements were (this was not specific to any individual enhancement). The figure above shows that at baseline, the average response equated to 'quite needed', and that across time, this has changed little. Therefore, with time, there has been minor variation in these responses, reaffirming the widely held view that Gaelic football did need the enhancements.

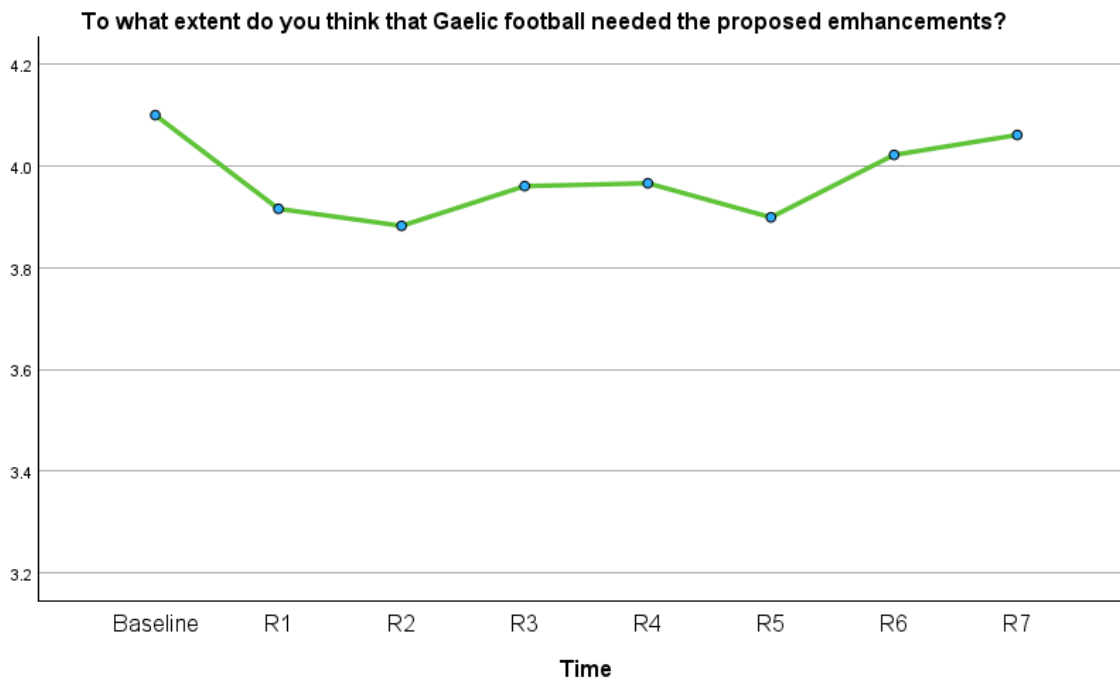


Figure 8: Comparison of Baseline Vs Week 7 for the need for the Rule Enhancements.

Figure 8 displays the results for those in the cohort who completed the questionnaire at all eight time points. As was the case for ‘football as a game to watch’, there is some evidence that an emerging (albeit slight) decline at R5 was arrested by the introduction of the ‘tweaks’ after R5.

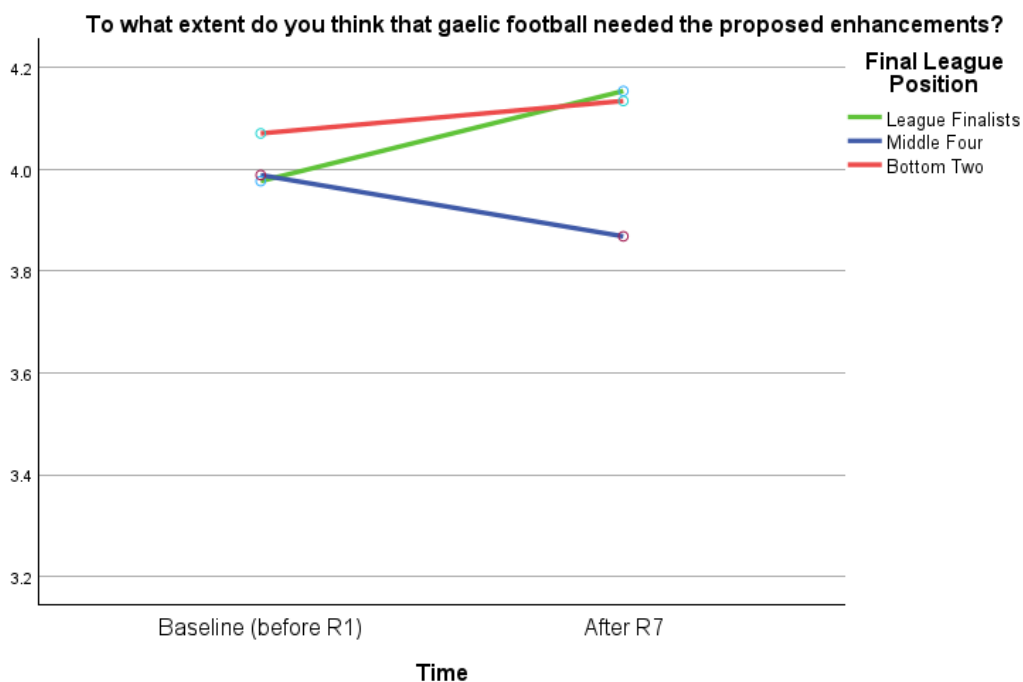


Figure 9: Comparison of Baseline Vs Week 7 for the need for the Rule Enhancements according to position in the league table following Round 7.

In terms of how the line fractures by county ‘success’, this is a complex picture, not following a simple game success (or points accumulation) pattern. At R7, those averaging highest are from counties which finished in the top two league places, but only marginally from those finishing in the bottom two. All of these differences are negligible in statistical terms.

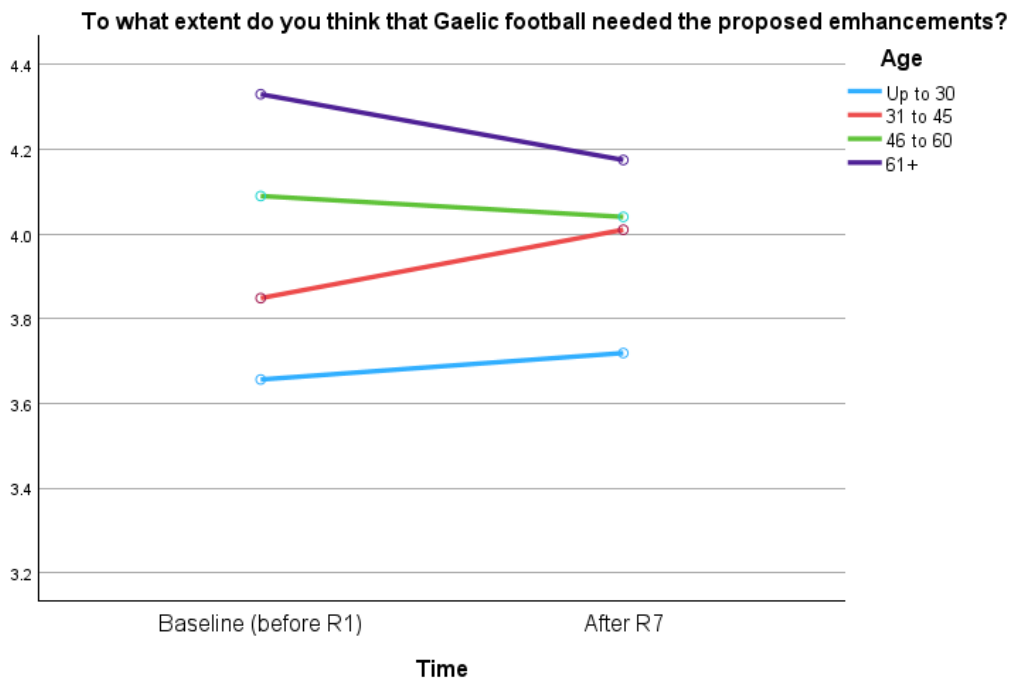


Figure 10: Comparison of Baseline Vs Week 7 for the need for the Rule Enhancements according to the age of the respondent

These findings show consistency. At baseline, the oldest participants were those who thought that Gaelic football needed the rule enhancements most. This remains the case at R7, with something of a decrease in the stated need suggested from baseline. The variation in the vertical axis is substantial. Younger participants remain to be convinced that the amendments are necessary to the same degree as the older participants.

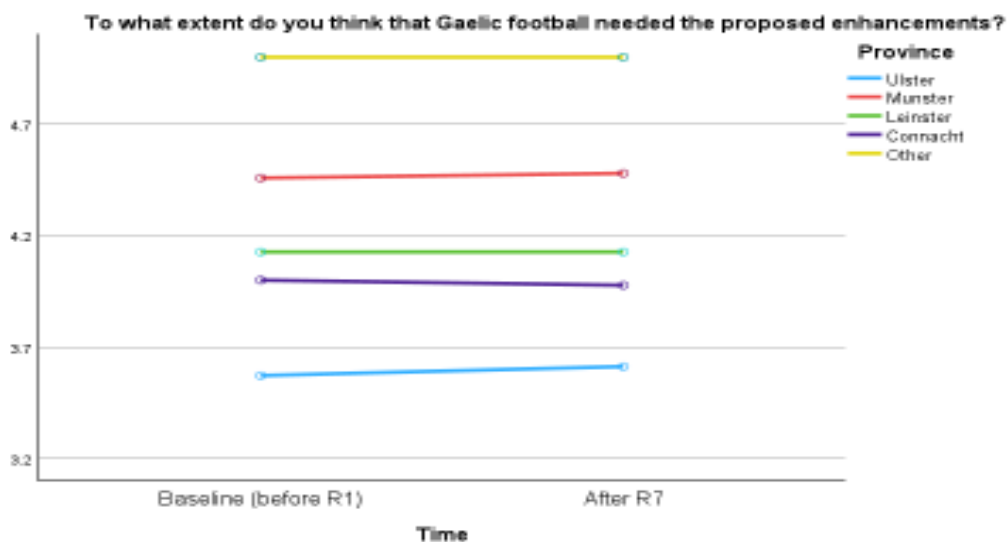


Figure 11: Comparison of Baseline Vs Week 7 for the need for the Rule Enhancements according to province.

There is also consistency here, both in terms of the ordering (top to bottom), and the consistency of average scores for each province or area. On the island of Ireland, those from Munster continue to report greatest need for the enhancements, with those from Ulster reporting the lowest need.

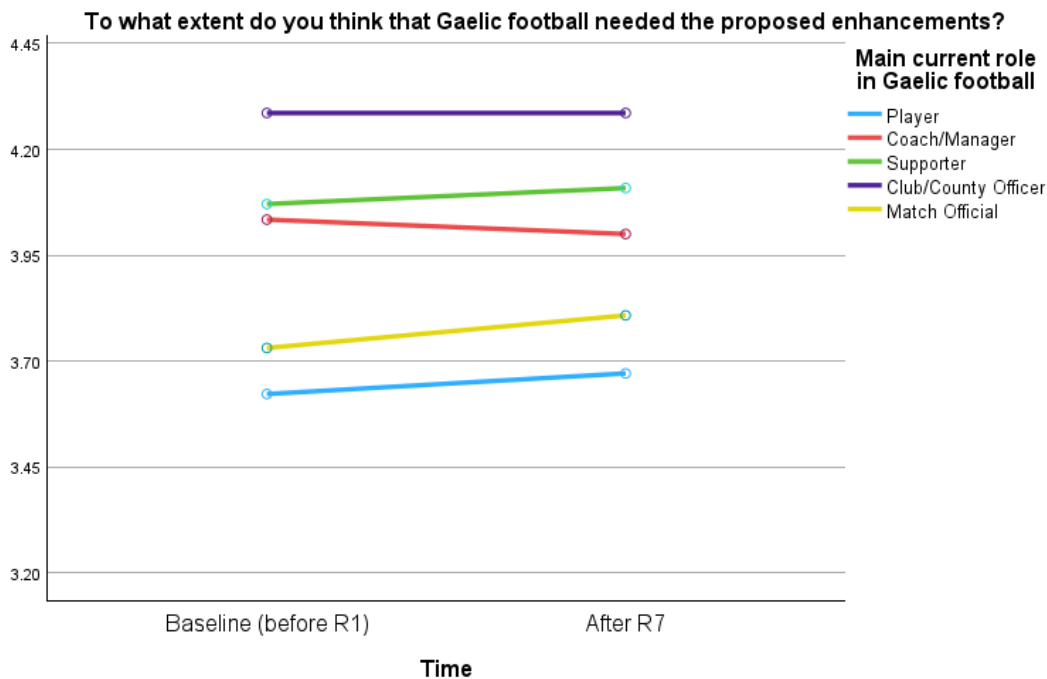


Figure 12: Comparison of Baseline Vs Week 7 for the need for the Rule Enhancements according to role.

At baseline, the proportion of Club or County Officers indicating a greater need for the enhancements was higher than for all other roles. There has been little overall variation with time (vertical axis changes are small) perhaps with the exception of scores for Club or County Officers, and Match Officials (both seeing a decrease). The only line not decreasing is that representing player responses.

SUMMARY

At baseline, cohort members were of the view that the rule enhancements were needed (average score of 4 out of five, reflecting a response of 'quite needed'). This popular view hardly wavered at all during the course of the league campaign, with some small-sized shifts in some demographics. Overall, opinion remains strong that the enhancements (as observed) are required.

2.4 LIKELIHOOD OF ATTENDING A CLUB OR COUNTY GAME

Participants were asked about how much more likely they would be to attend either an inter- County or club game. A 5-point Likert scale was scored: 1 = much more unlikely; 2 = more unlikely; 3 = no difference; 4 = more likely; 5 = much more likely. This question was not asked at baseline, given that the games had not begun, and therefore there would have been no basis upon which to have made this choice.

2.4.1 INTER-COUNTY GAMES

The first observations are that the variation on the vertical axis is small, but the direction of travel is positive (towards more likely). In other words, from a starting position that was already high after R1 (close to 3.8 out of 5), this increased with time, albeit marginally.

How much more likely would you be to attend an inter-County game? (1 = much more unlikely; 5 = much more likely)

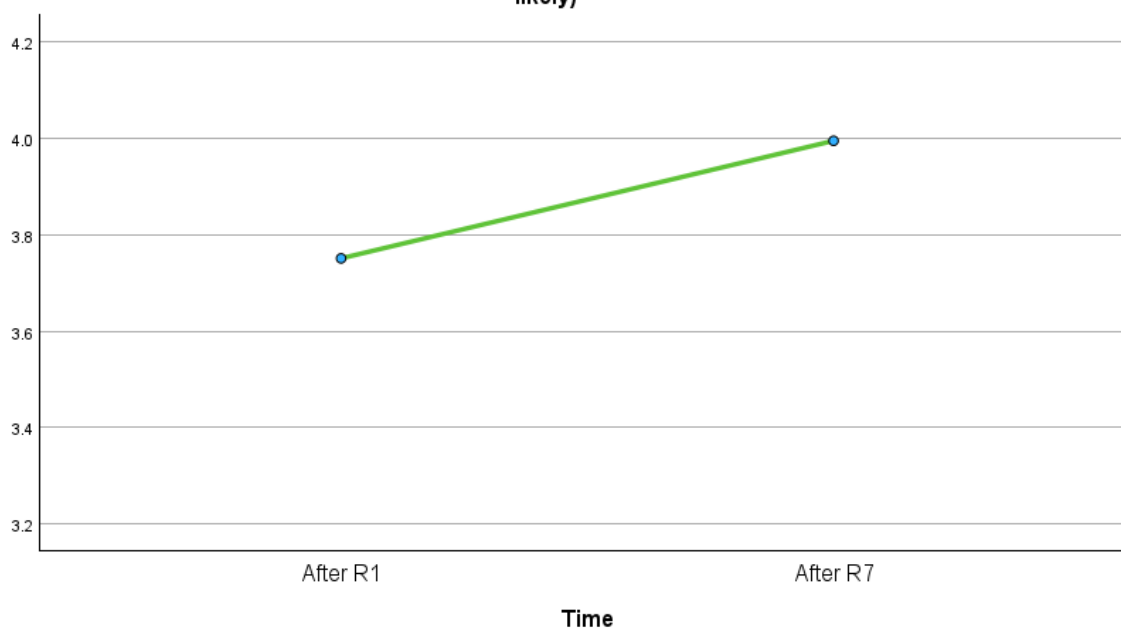


Figure 13: Comparison of Week 1 Vs Week 7 for likelihood of attending an Inter-County game.

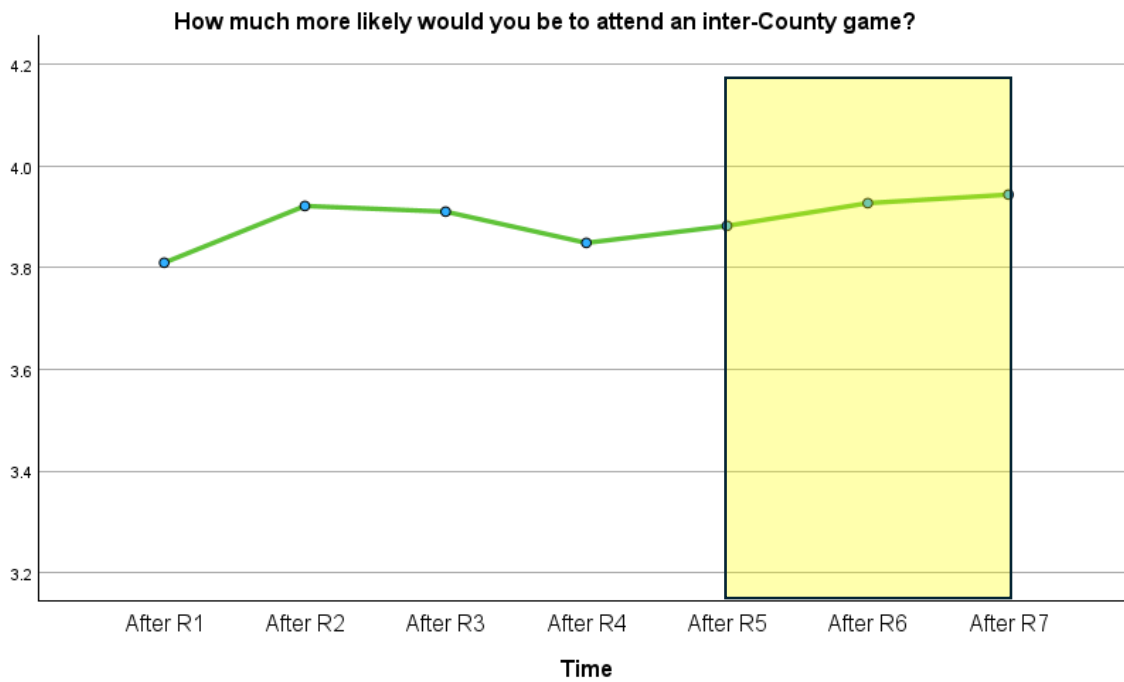


Figure 14: Comparison of Week 1 Vs Week 7 for likelihood of attending an Inter-County game.

With an overall small difference across time, detecting differences across two time points only is unlikely. Figure 14 shows that an upward trajectory continued after the ‘tweaks’.

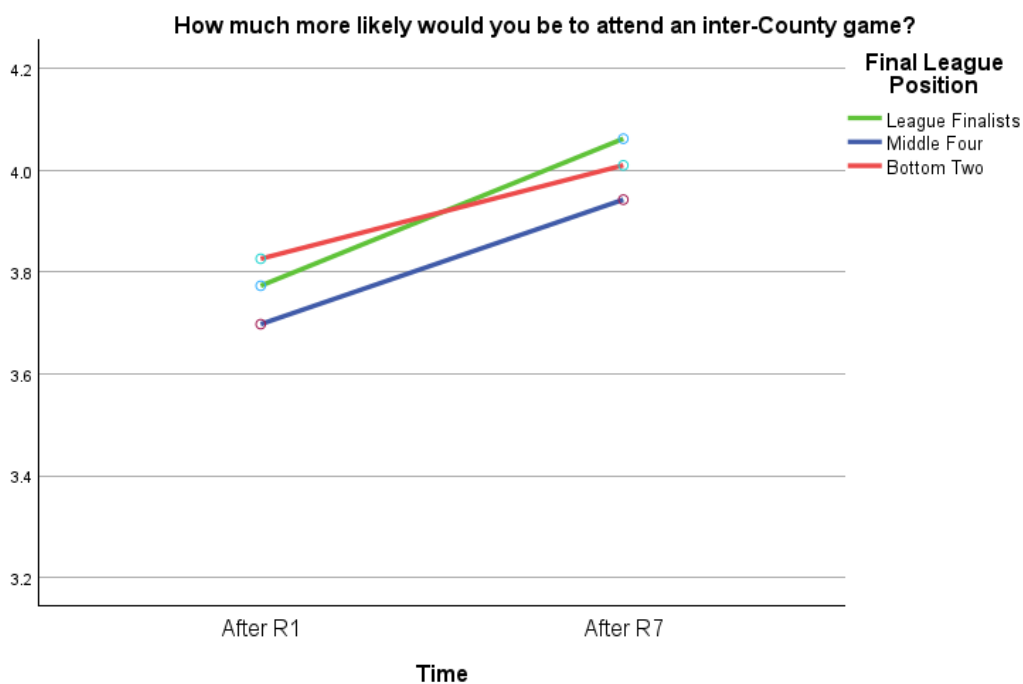


Figure 15: Comparison of Week 1 Vs Week 7 for likelihood of attending an Inter-county game according to position in the league table following Round 5.

The pattern of results by County position in League tables does not follow a linear, table-related pattern.

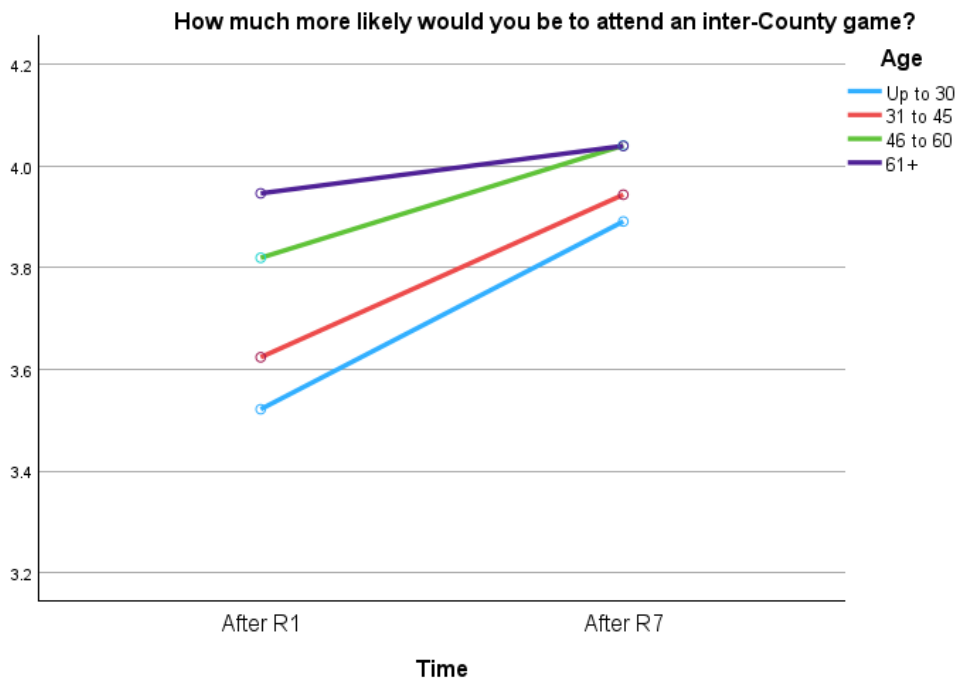


Figure 16: Comparison of Week 1 Vs Week 7 for likelihood of attending an Inter-county game according to the age of the respondent.

At both time points, older participants reported being most likely to attend an inter-County game. This is interesting as they were also the ones who marginally thought Gaelic football was least good to watch (although the score was increasing with time), and they were also the ones who thought Gaelic football most needed the enhancements. Steepest increases with time are observed for younger participants.

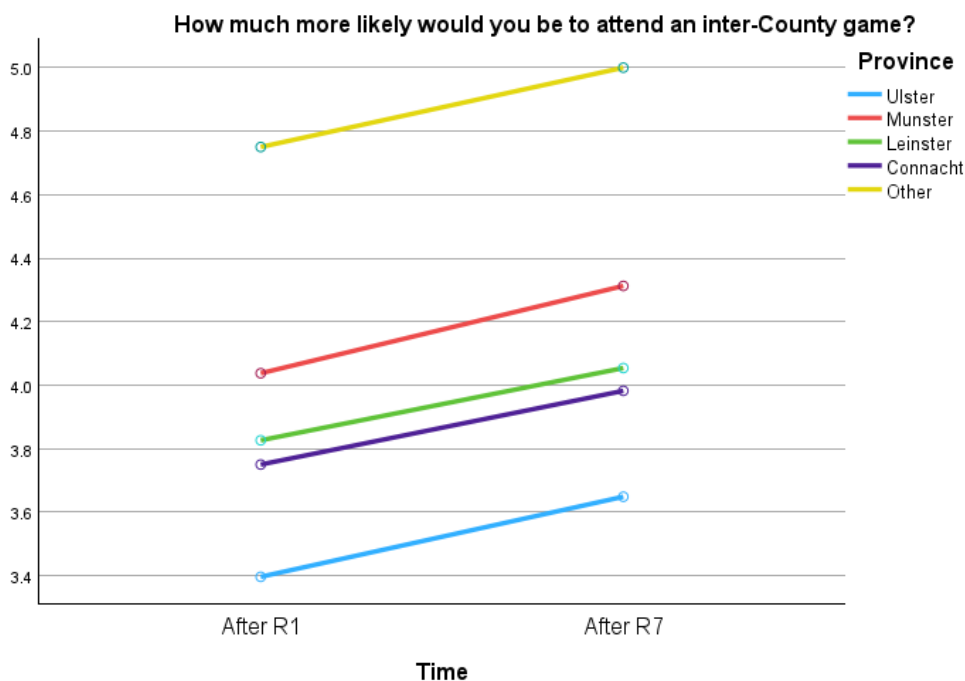


Figure 17: Comparison of Week 1 Vs Week 7 for likelihood of attending an Inter-county game according to province.

Those living abroad were consistently the highest in terms of greater likelihood to attend a game. Those from Munster (on the island of Ireland) were most likely, despite the fact that they were also the highest in terms of reporting the need for the enhancements.

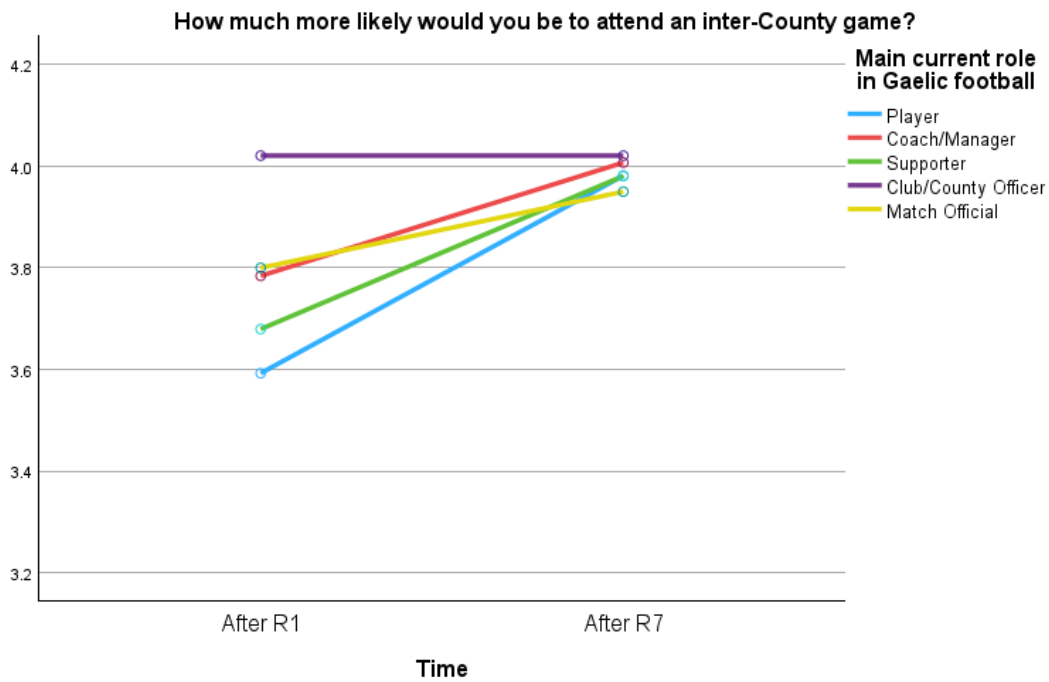


Figure 18: Comparison of Week 1 Vs Week 7 for likelihood of attending an Inter-county game according to role.

Club or County Officers were something of an outlier at baseline in these responses, scoring substantively higher than other groups. However, with their exception (where score flatlined) the direction of travel from R1 to R7 was positive in all other cases.

SUMMARY

There was a marginal increase with time (from an already high starting point) in stated likelihood to attend an inter-County game. The only anomaly appears to have been for Club or County Officers. However, the margin of difference with time was small.

2.4.2 CLUB GAMES

Like the Inter-county games, the first observation is that the variation on the vertical axis is small, but the direction of travel is positive (towards more likely).

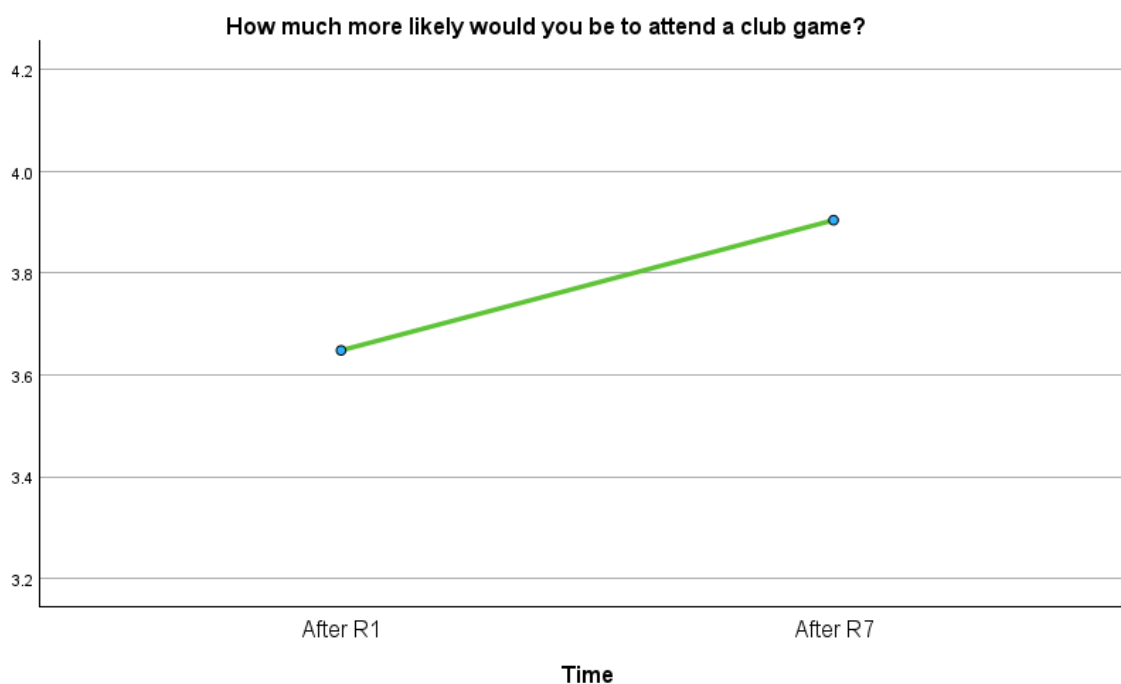


Figure 19: Comparison of Week 1 Vs Week 7 for likelihood of attending a Club game.

Again, the variation on the vertical axis is small, but the direction of travel is positive.

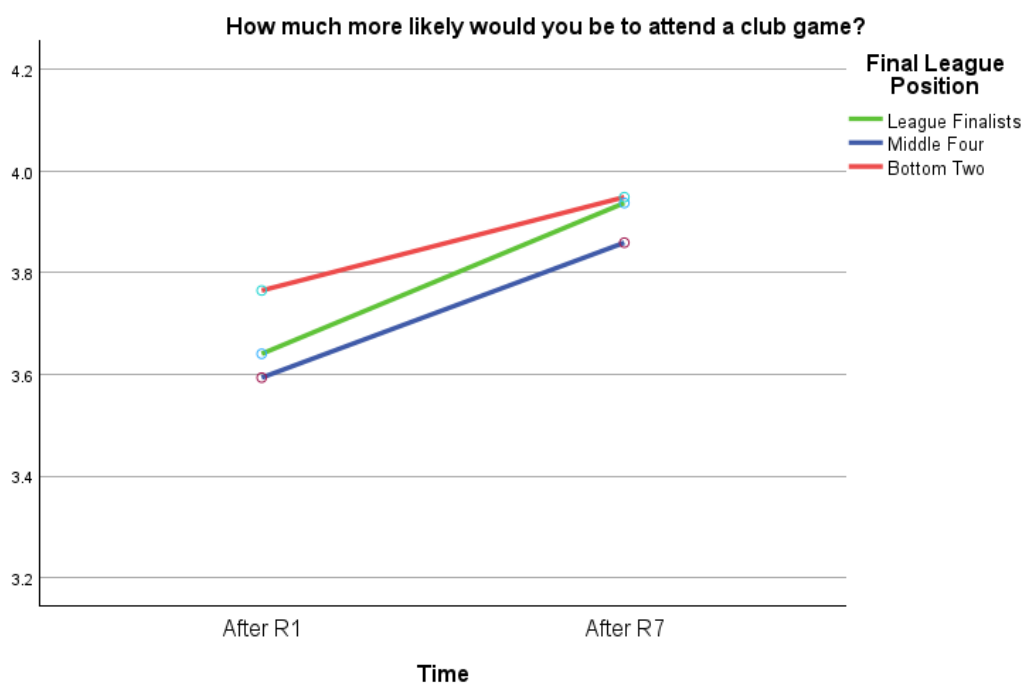


Figure 20: Comparison of Week 1 Vs Week 7 for likelihood of attending a Club game according to position in the league table following Round 5.

Results here showed a similar pattern to those for inter-county games. Essentially, responses are not directly in line with performance of the participants' inter-county team.

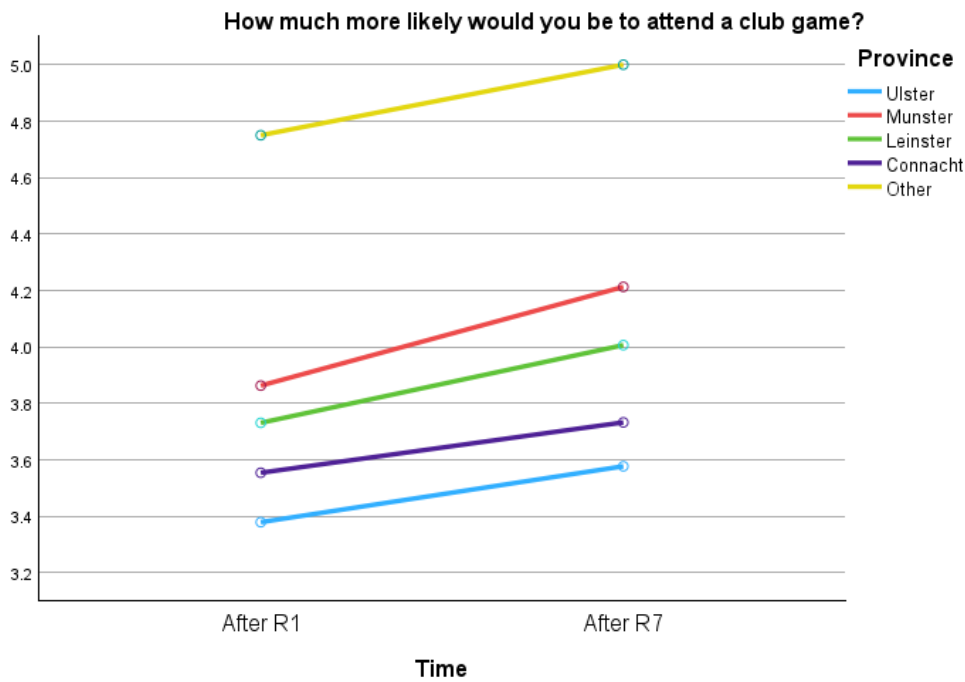


Figure 21: Comparison of Week 1 Vs Week 7 for likelihood of attending a Club game according to the Province their County belongs to.

The greatest change with time is observed for participants living outside of Ireland. On the island, the direction of travel is positive for all Provinces, except for Connacht. However, changes with time are small.

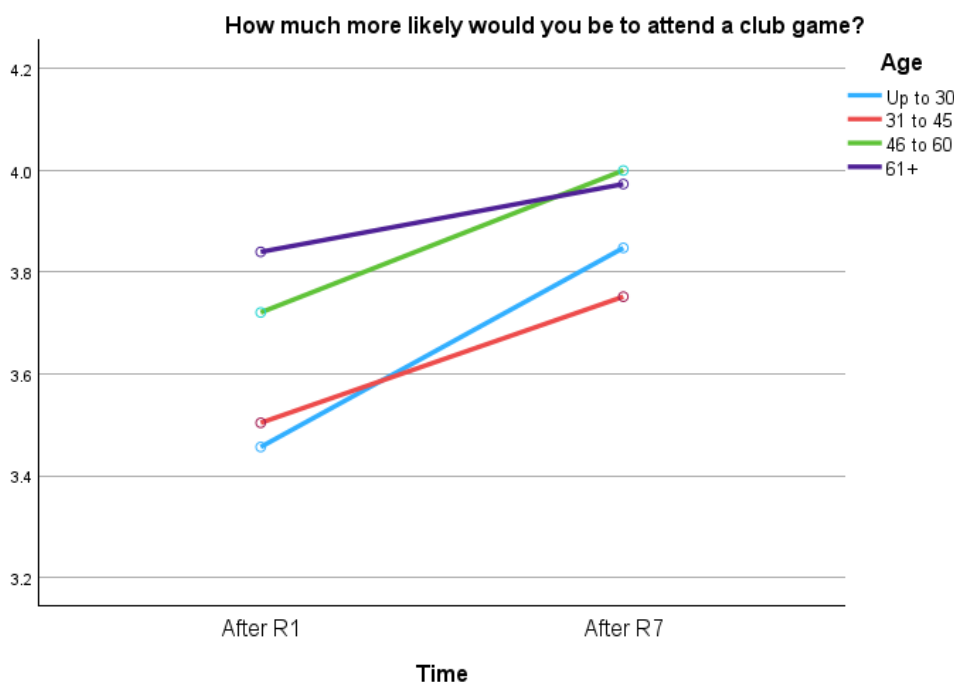


Figure 22: Comparison of Week 1 Vs Week 7 for likelihood of attending a Club game according to the age of the respondent.

Older participants were (at R1) those who reported the greatest likelihood of attending a club game. There were some minor crossovers in lines with time, however, the pattern largely remains that older participants were and still are most likely to attend a club game.

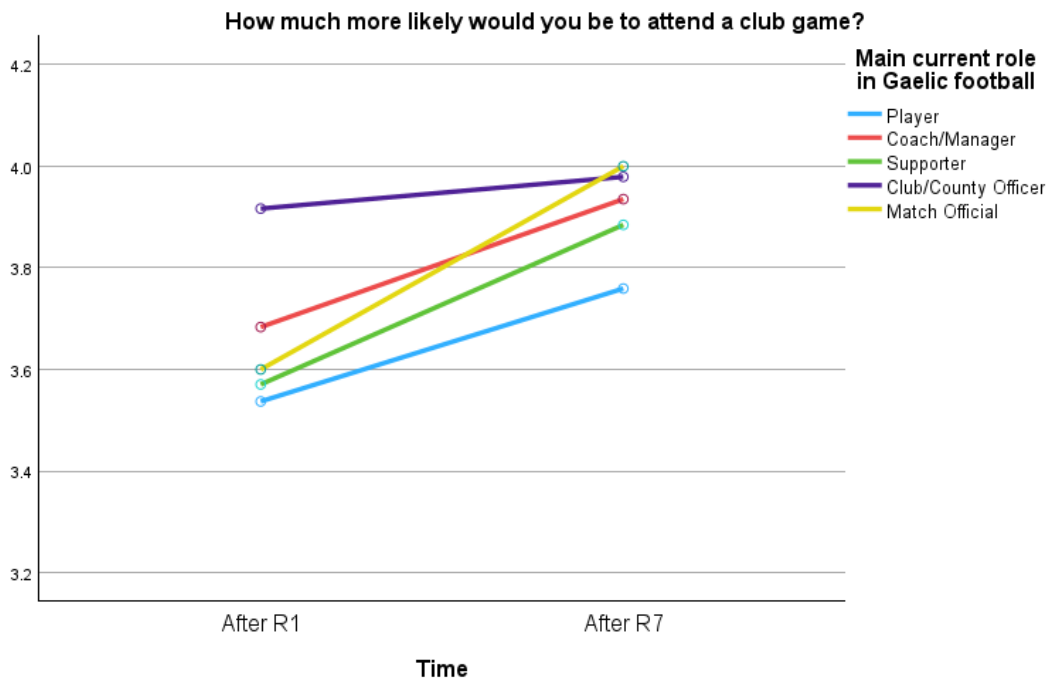


Figure 23: Comparison of Week 1 Vs Week 7 for likelihood of attending a Club according to role.

The greatest changes from R1 are observed for match officials, and supporters. All lines' direction of travel is positive apart from that for Officers (where the change is very small).

SUMMARY

On all four indicators in this section (Gaelic football as a game to watch, the requirement for the enhancements, likelihood of attending inter-county and likelihood of attending club games), the results are positive. They show:

- (i) That the popular view is that Gaelic football has become a better game to watch.
- (ii) That the view remains that the enhancements were needed.
- (iii) That people reported a greater likelihood of attending both inter-County and club games.

2.5 WHETHER THE RULE ENHANCEMENTS HAVE CHANGED THE GAME

Participants were asked whether the seven core enhancements have changed Gaelic football. These results are presented as average scores. Participants indicated responses for each enhancement as follows: 1 = substantially worse; 2 = worse; 3 = no difference; 4 = better; 5 = substantially better.

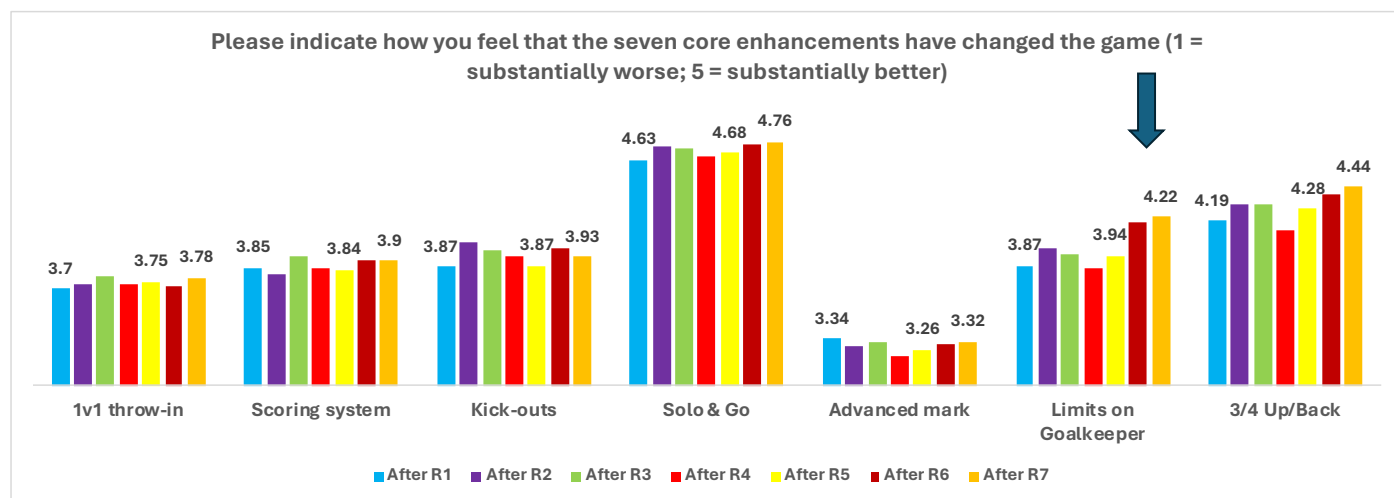
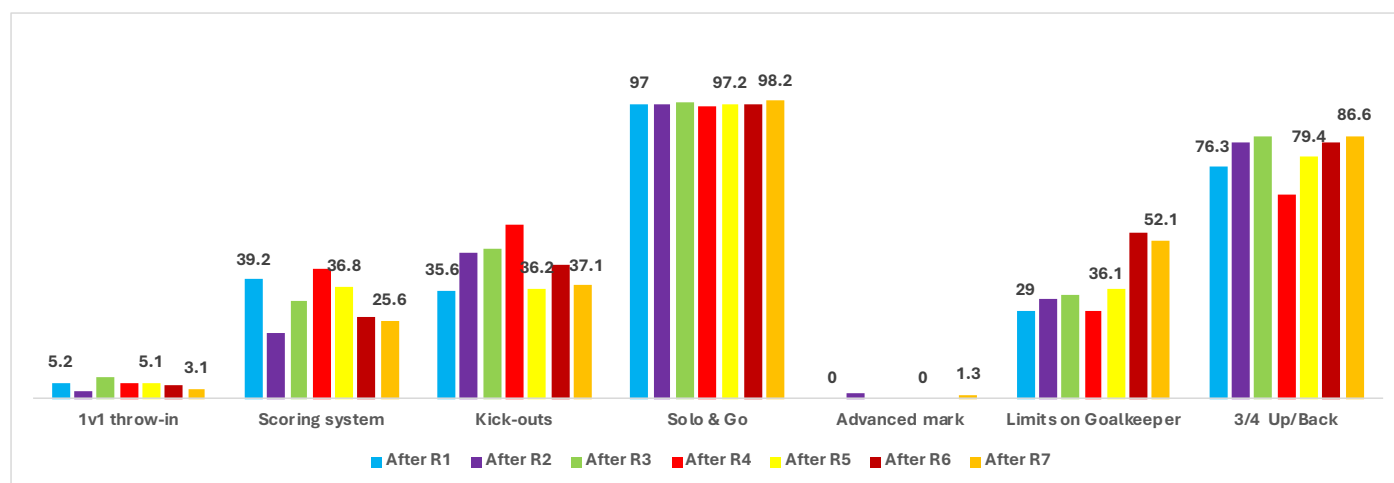


Figure 24: Whether the rule enhancements have changed Gaelic football according to each round of matches.

The vertical axis is set at an average of three (= no difference), therefore changes are indicative of no difference, or above. Results clearly indicate that the Solo and Go was thought to have made the game better or substantially better. Conversely, it could be concluded that the Advanced mark enhancement is broadly considered on average to have made no difference. Given that all other averages are higher than 3.5, the consensus is that the other five enhancements, on average, are contributing to a better game. And these scores are consistent across the survey. One thing that is interesting is the fact that at R6 and R7 (after the 'tweaks' which largely focussed on amendments to the role of the goalkeeper, and 3/4 Up/Back) the popularity of those two enhancements increased somewhat, as indicated by the arrows.

Participants were asked to indicate which of the enhancements were 'most beneficial' to Gaelic football (only one could be chosen), and which was not (again, only one could be chosen). For each of the enhancements a percentage 'positive' was calculated, based on these responses.



Results show that again, responses regarding the Solo and Go were extremely positive, and consistent across the five time points. Here, the least popular of the enhancements was the Advanced mark, closely followed by the 1v1 Throw-in. The Kick Outs, Limitations on Goalkeeper, and the 3 Up - 3 Back enhancements are also viewed as largely positive across the survey. Because participants were only able to choose one option, it cannot be definitively concluded that, for example, participants do not like the limitations on the goalkeeper – it can only be concluded that they do not like those as much as they like the Solo & Go. Increases in favourability for Limits on the Goalkeeper, and 3/4 Up/Back increased after the 'tweaks' at R5.

2.6 ANALYSIS OF TEXT RESPONSES

Participants were provided the opportunity to provide additional text-based feedback following R6 and R7. This feedback was analysed using thematic analysis as below.

1. Increased Game Excitement and Spectatorship

Many respondents highlight that the rule changes have led to a faster-paced, higher-scoring, and more exciting spectacle. The changes have kept games competitive until the final moments, ensuring that large leads are no longer insurmountable. Spectators, particularly younger fans, have shown renewed enthusiasm, making the game more engaging.

Supporting Quotes

- *“The game is so much more enjoyable to watch now, even for neutrals.”*
- *“The solo and go has made a huge difference; players are always on the move, keeping the momentum going.”*
- *“We finally have a game where every second counts, and it’s not just about teams killing time.”*

The shift towards a higher-tempo game has been well received, particularly among spectators and players who favour dynamic play. However, there are concerns about how sustainable this high intensity is over a full season, particularly at club and underage levels. Some players find it physically demanding, which ties into concerns about injuries and fatigue.

2. Concerns Over the Two-Point Scoring System

While the two-point scoring system is intended to encourage long-range shooting, many feel it has altered the game’s balance in a way that devalues goals. There is concern that teams now focus on two-pointers at the expense of working for goal opportunities, leading to a less varied attacking approach. Additionally, allowing free kicks to be taken outside the arc for two points is seen as an unfair advantage.

Supporting Quotes

- *“If you can score 3 or 4 two-pointers in quick succession, it’s almost impossible for the other team to come back without playing risky football.”*
- *“The value of a goal needs to increase to at least 4 points to rebalance things.”*
- *“Wind conditions play too big a role in determining the success rate of two-pointers, making games unfair.”*

This rule enhancement has led to unintended strategic consequences, with participants reporting that teams prioritise long-range shooting over breaking down defences. Equally, participants outlined that defenders, in response, are setting up deep inside the arc, creating a zone-based defensive approach that some fear may stifle attacking creativity.

3. Referee Decision-Making and Game Management

Many players, coaches, and fans have reinforced the need for consistency amongst referees towards the rule enhancements, particularly those that require subjective interpretation.

Supporting Quotes

- *“You can’t have a situation where one referee enforces the 50m advancement rule strictly and another lets it slide.”*
- *“There were three almost identical fouls in the game, but only one led to a free being moved up 50 meters—why?”*
- *“Referees are already under enough pressure, and these new rules require them to make split-second calls on complex situations.”*

Respondents suggest that clearer guidelines and better communication are necessary. There is also a call for more referee training and support, particularly at club level. Some suggest that a second referee or additional technology (e.g., referee microphones) could help clarify decisions for players and spectators.

4. Impact on Tactical Play and Strategy

Participants suggest that the rule enhancements have significantly altered team strategies, forcing a shift in defensive and attacking approaches, such as teams clustering around the arc to prevent easy two-pointers. Participants also noted that offensive play has also evolved, with some teams adapting well while others struggle to find an effective balance.

Supporting Quotes

- *“Defences now sit deep inside the arc to prevent two-pointers, making it harder to create scoring chances close to goal.”*
- *“We’ve seen a lot more fast breaks as teams realize that they can’t afford to let the defence settle.”*
- *“The rule changes have made kickouts much more unpredictable, which is great for spectators but hard on teams without strong midfielders.”*

The shift in tactics is still evolving, and teams are adjusting to new challenges. Some argue that the changes have made games more unpredictable, while others believe they have made defensive play more passive, with teams focused on blocking the arc rather than pressing aggressively.

5. Fitness Demands and Player Welfare

Many players have reported that the increased pace of the game has led to higher levels of fatigue, greater physical demands, and a rise in injuries. Some respondents are particularly concerned about the long-term sustainability of these changes for club and underage players.

Supporting Quotes

- *“I’ve never seen so many muscle injuries early in the season.”*
- *“Younger players and club-level teams simply don’t have the conditioning to sustain this level of play.”*
- *“We need to seriously consider the workload on inter-county players. The season is more intense than ever.”*

While the faster pace has improved the spectacle of the game, it has also introduced new challenges regarding player welfare. Many respondents suggest introducing more substitutions or modifying training structures to help players cope with the increased demands.

6. Mixed Reactions to Game Management Rules (e.g., Hooter, 50m Advancement Rule)

The rule changes surrounding game management, including the use of the hooter and the 50m advancement rule for dissent, have divided opinion. Some believe these rules enhance discipline and ensure fairness, while others feel they are either too strict or introduce unnecessary complexity.

Supporting Quotes

- *“50m advancement is way too much; a 30m penalty would be fairer.”*
- *“The hooter rule was supposed to simplify things, but now we have even more confusion over when the game actually ends.”*
- *“Dissent rules have made the game more respectful, but some referees are using them too harshly.”*

The intent behind these rule enhancements - reducing dissent and improving fairness - is widely supported. However, inconsistent enforcement and the severity of penalties have caused frustration. Some suggest modifying these rules slightly to maintain their positive impact while addressing concerns about fairness.

3. RESULTS – PUBLIC STUDY

In addition to the on-going cohort, an open public study was also in operation. Results of this are presented below. It should be noted that while it is the same people completing the cohort survey, the responses below are open to the public, and in all likelihood, there will be little consistency in the participants at each time point. Therefore, these responses are presented at each time point.

3.1 WHO ARE THE PUBLIC SURVEY PARTICIPANTS?

The figure immediately below illustrates that at all time points, around (or more than) half of the public survey participants were from counties playing in Division 1.

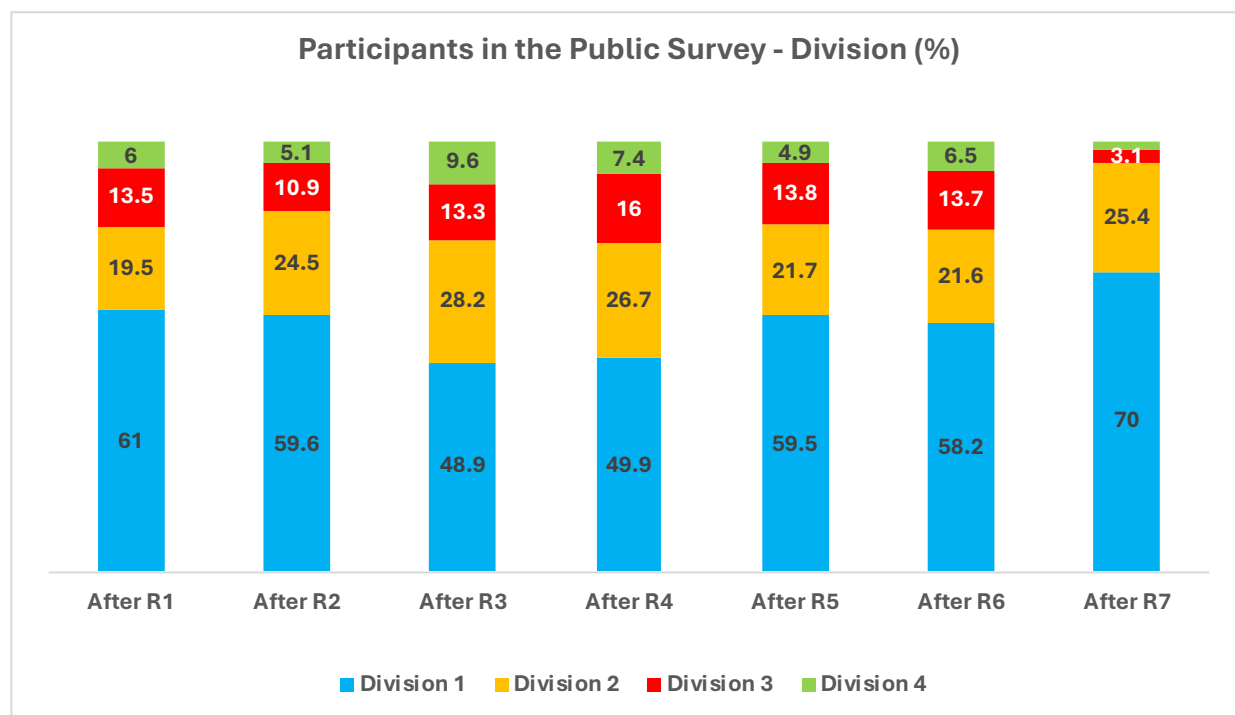


Figure 26: Public survey participants by division of the Allianz National Football League according to Round week.

The figure immediately below displays the age distribution at each round of the public survey. Results suggest variations at each time point.

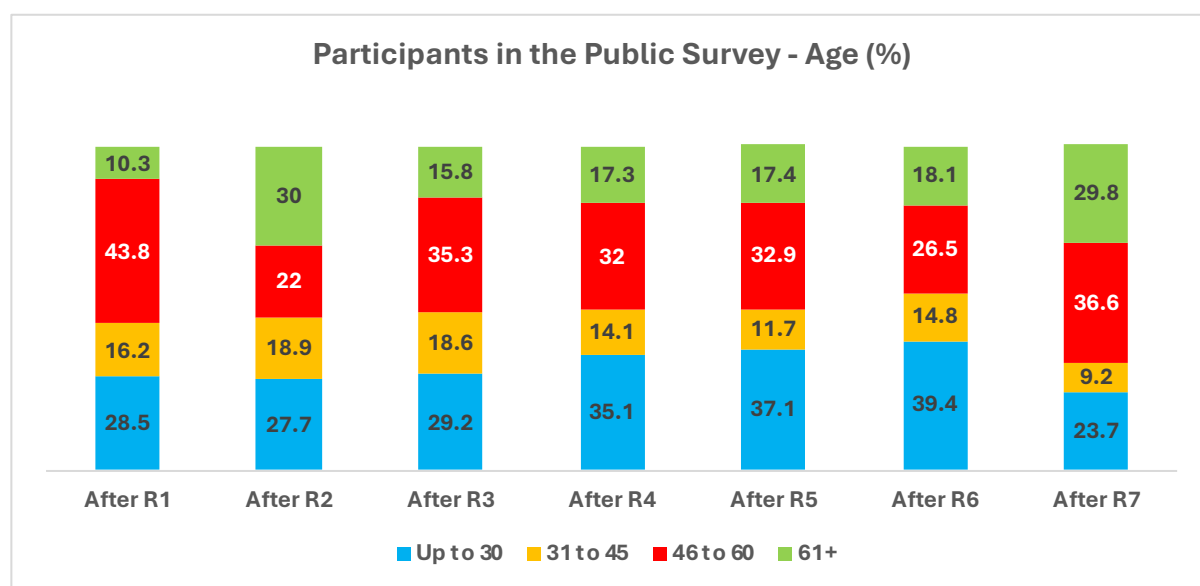


Figure 27: Public survey participants by age group according to Round week.

The figure immediately below displays that there was no real pattern in terms of provincial residence at each of the time points. For example, while a high proportion at time 1 were from Leinster, this almost halved at time 2.

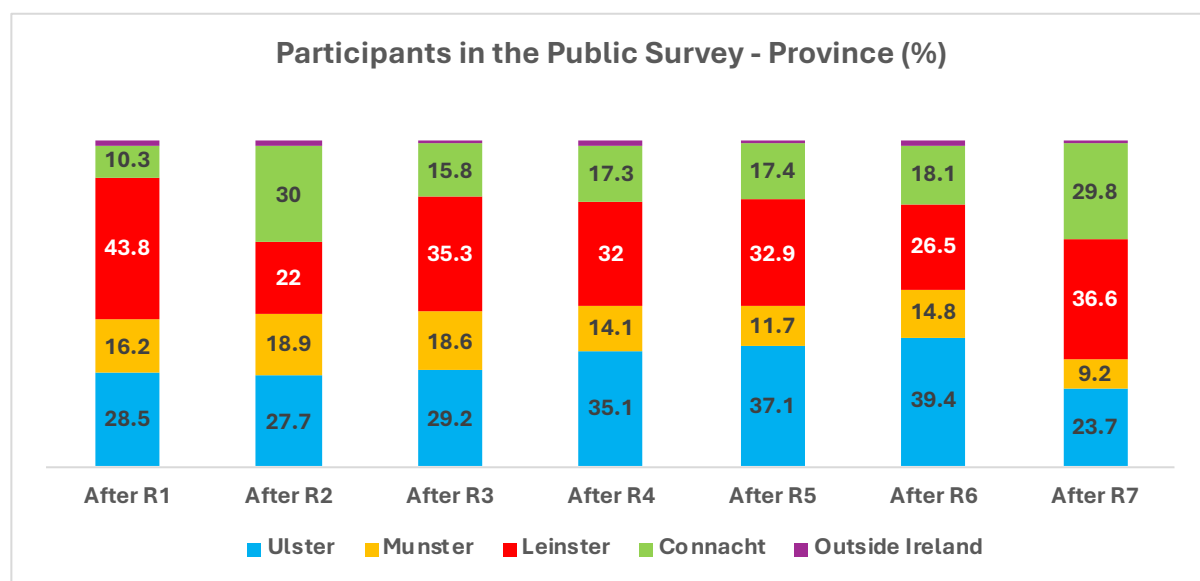


Figure 28: Public survey participants by province according to Round week.

Finally, in terms of main role in the GAA, large proportions at each time point self-reported as supporters, while the proportions self-reporting as Club or County Officers, or as Match Officials, were relatively low. It should be noted that the profile of participants at R7 was somewhat unlike all other profiles, and this may lead to different response patterns.

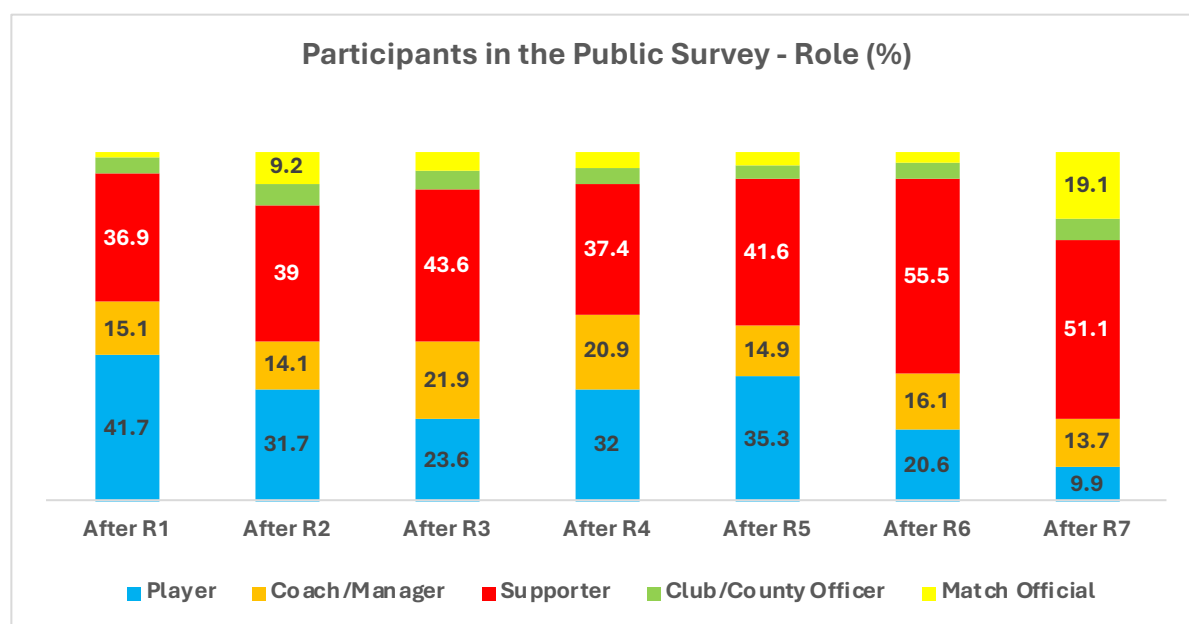


Figure 29: Public survey participants by role in the GAA according to Round week.

3.2 OVERALL VIEW OF GAELIC FOOTBALL AS A SPECTATOR SPORT

Participants were asked about their overall view of Gaelic football as a game to watch. The figure below displays that, with time, those replying to the public survey reported higher levels of satisfaction with Gaelic football, as a game to watch.

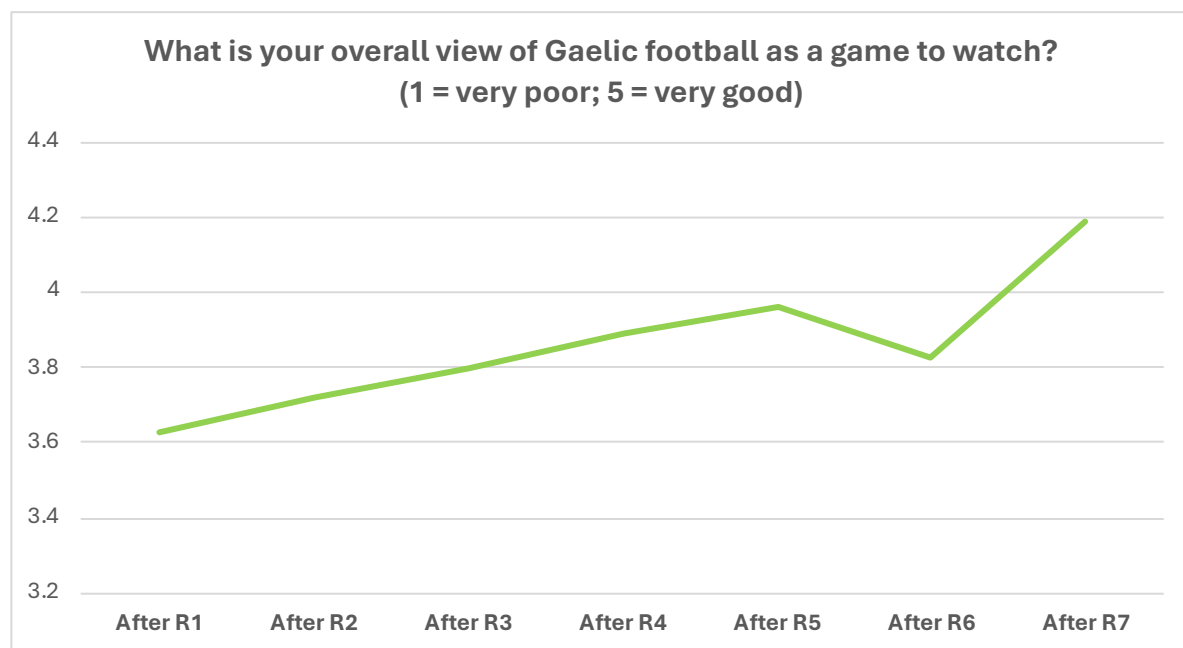


Figure 30: Comparison of Round week for the perception of Gaelic football as a spectator sport.

The figure below displays that when this line is fractured by where the participants' team finished in its' respective league table, satisfaction does not reflect table position (magnitude of the difference is small).

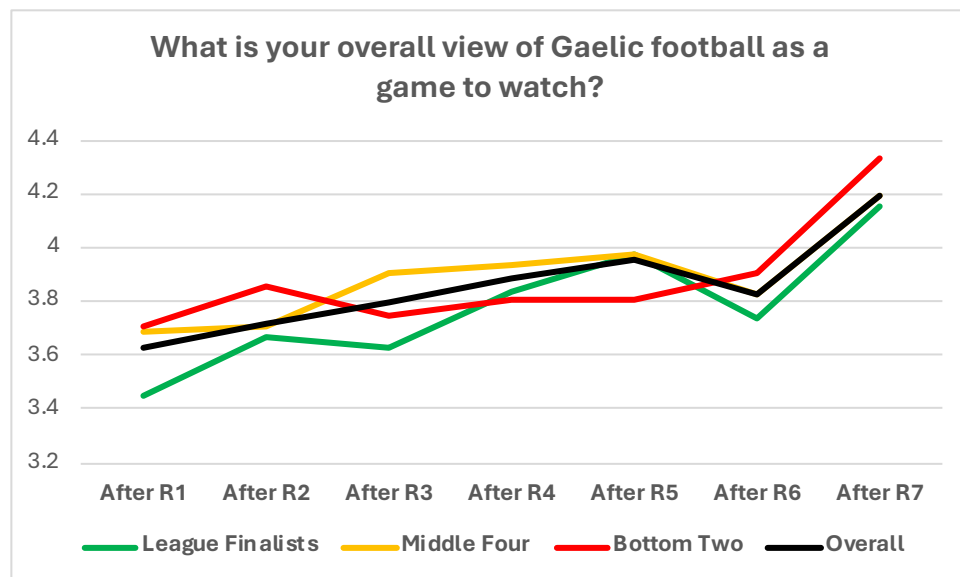


Figure 31: Comparison of Round week for the perception of Gaelic football as a spectator sport according to position in the league table following Round 7.

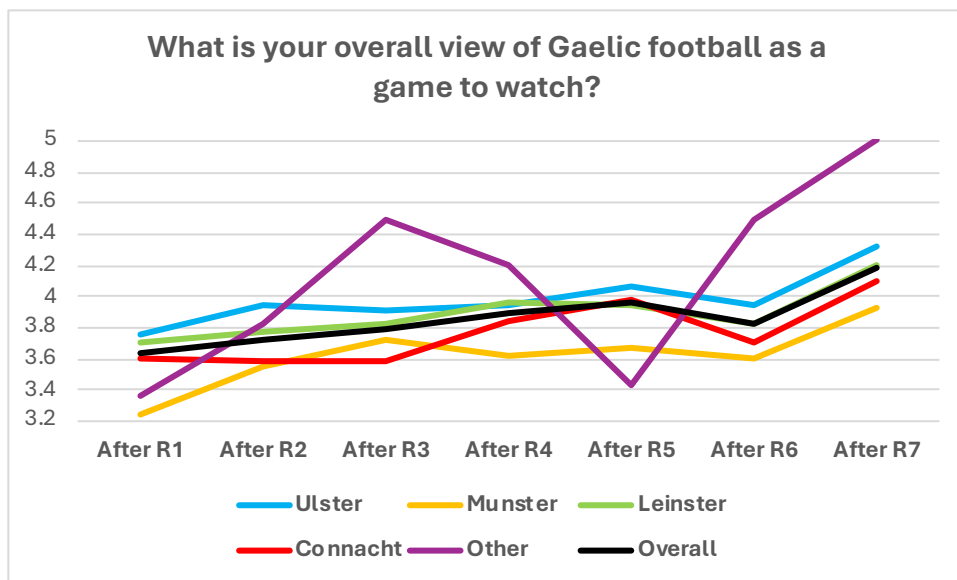


Figure 32: Comparison of Round week for the perception of Gaelic football as a spectator sport according to province.

The figure above displays that the findings for those living outside of Ireland are somewhat of an outlier. These, and those from Ulster are above the 'overall' or average line.

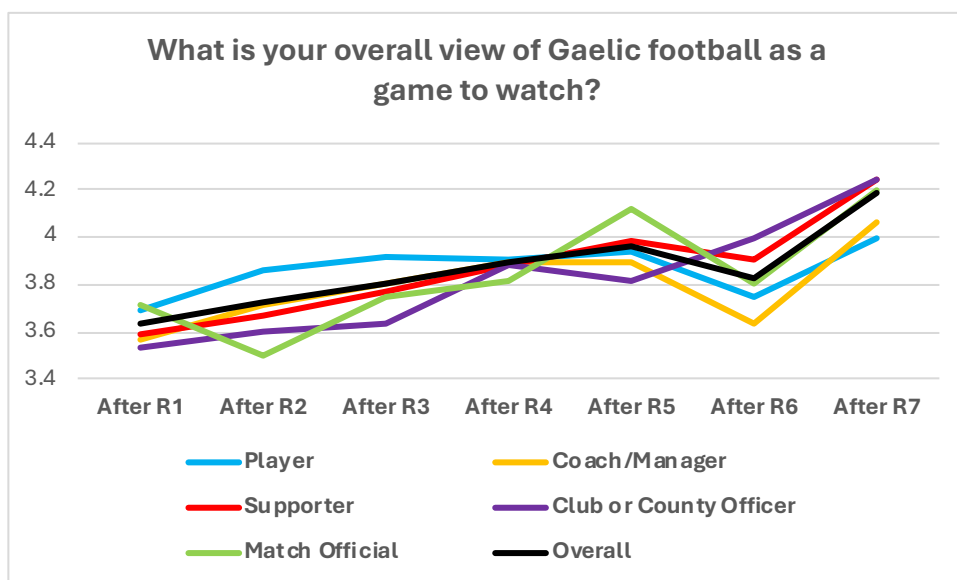


Figure 33: Comparison of Round week for the perception of Gaelic football as a spectator sport according to role.

With the previously stated caveat that the magnitude of differences overall is small, the figure above shows that Player and Coach/Manager responses are below the overall average.

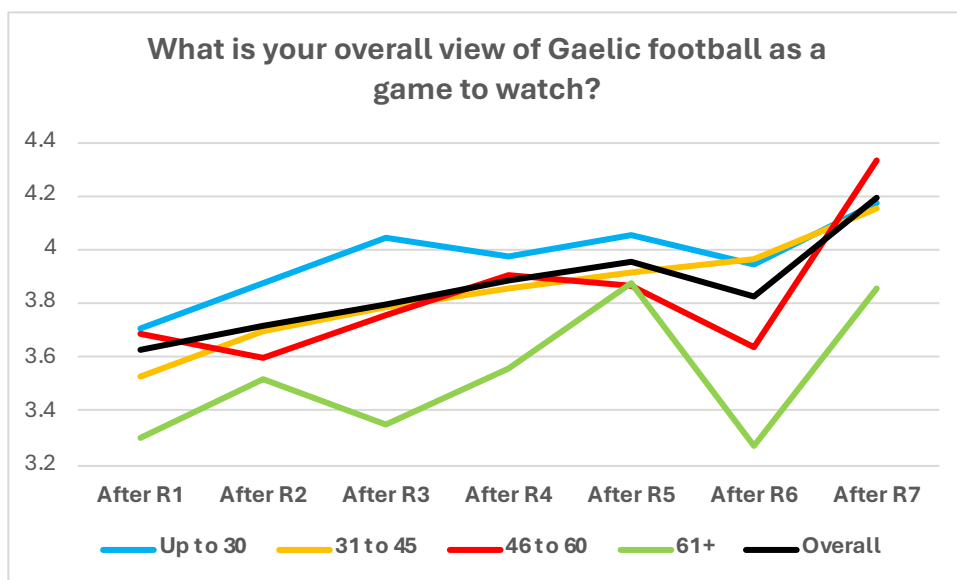


Figure 34: Comparison of Round week for the perception of Gaelic football as a spectator sport according to age.

Again, with time (or League games) there is minor variation in terms of the ranking order (younger participants among the highest and older participants among the lowest). However, the magnitude of differences at some time points is very small.

Finally, the responses below indicate that in the opinion of those taking part in the public survey, the overwhelming majority at all time points believe that with the rule enhancements, Gaelic football has become a more enjoyable game to watch.

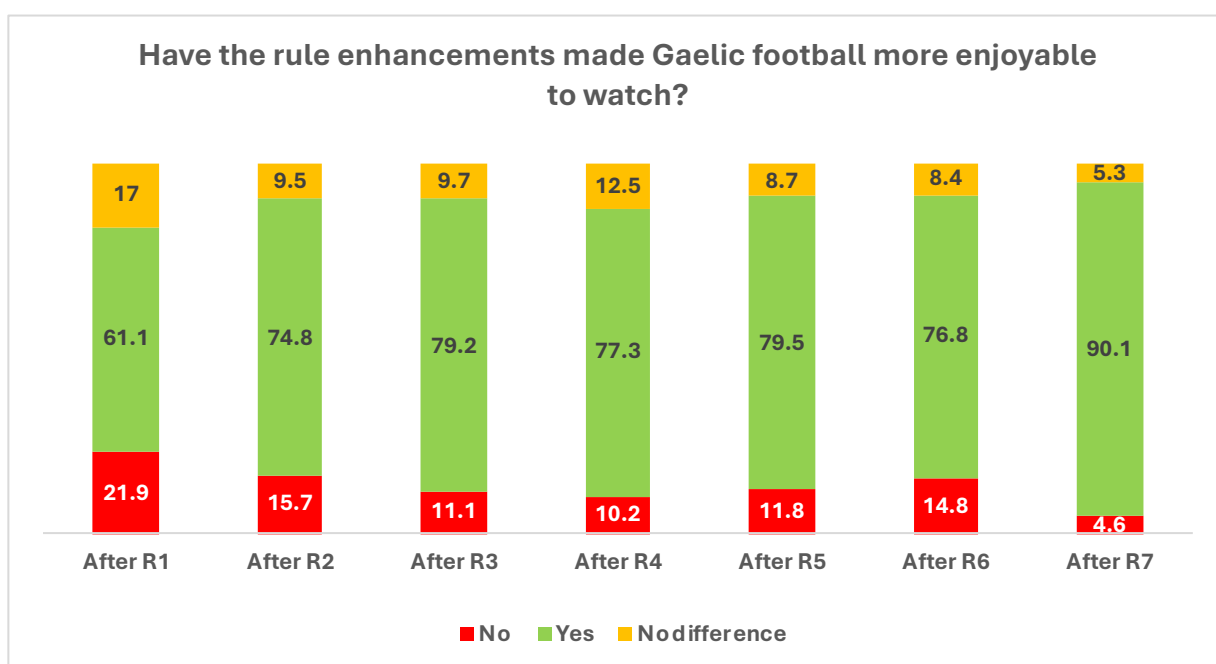


Figure 35: Comparison of Round week for the perception of whether Gaelic football is a more enjoyable sport to watch.

SUMMARY

These results show that in the opinion of the public survey respondents, Gaelic football has become a better game to watch. While the initial view of Gaelic football as a sport was higher than the cohort group (3.6 out of 5 at baseline vs 3.2 in the cohort study), scores at R7 were 4.2 for the public group, similar to the cohort. Further, baseline differences in, for example, age and province largely disappear by R7, suggesting that this positivity is felt across all demographics.

3.3 REQUIREMENT FOR RULE ENHANCEMENTS

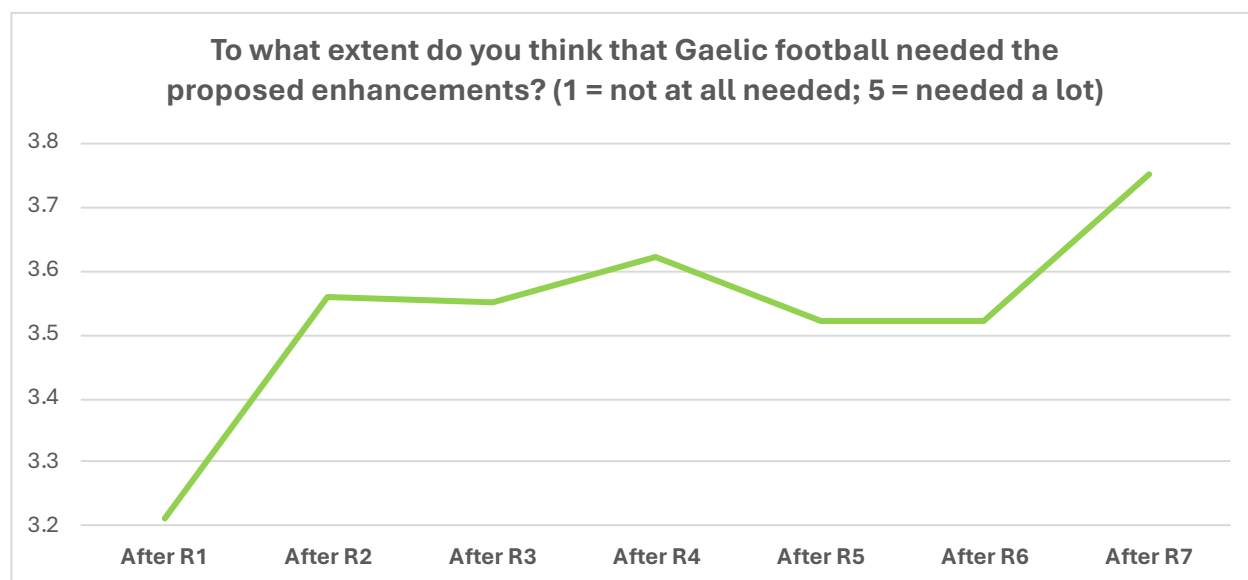


Figure 36: Comparison of Round Week for the need for the Rule Enhancements.

The above figure displays that with increasing exposure to games, the public were of the view that, on average, the enhancements were needed to a greater degree (change in average from around 3.2 to 3.75).

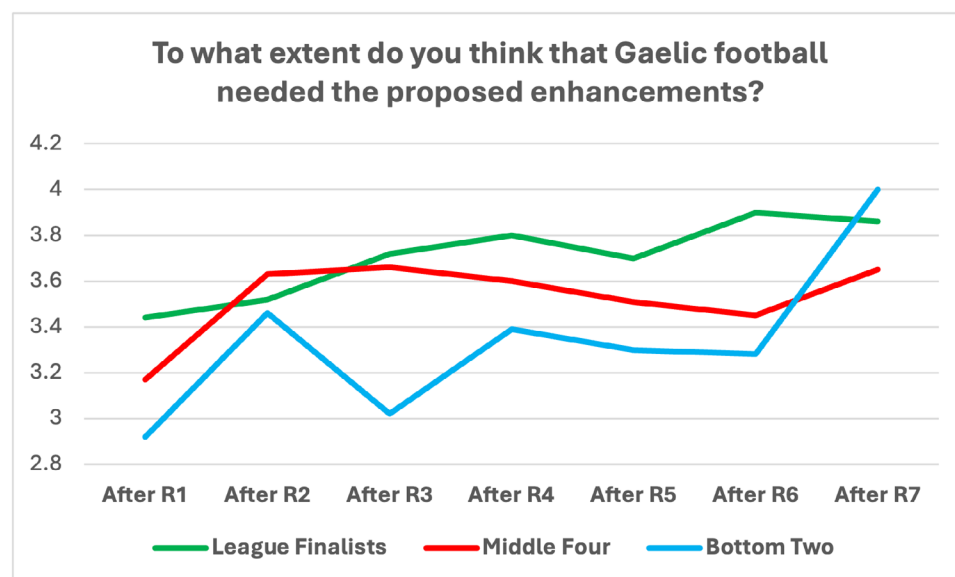


Figure 37: Comparison of Round Week for the need for the Rule Enhancements according to position in the league table following Round 5.

As was the case in the cohort, responses to the public survey here do not map neatly onto R7 table position. However, by R7 highest suggested need for the enhancements was seen in participants whose Counties finished in the bottom two league places in their respective leagues.

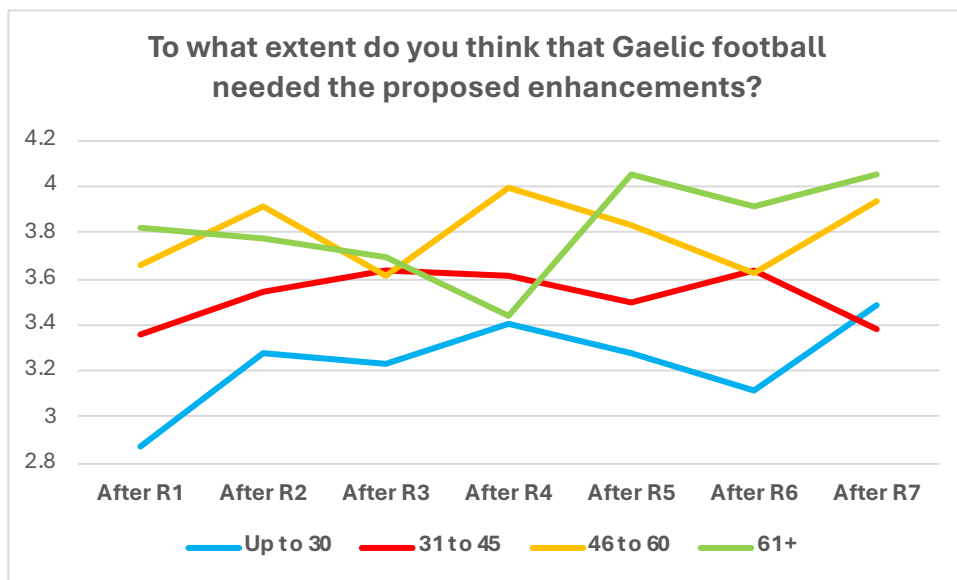


Figure 38: Comparison of Round Week for the need for the Rule Enhancements according to the age of the respondent.

As was the case in the cohort, the pattern in the public survey is that younger participants indicated (on average) a lower need for the changes than older participants.

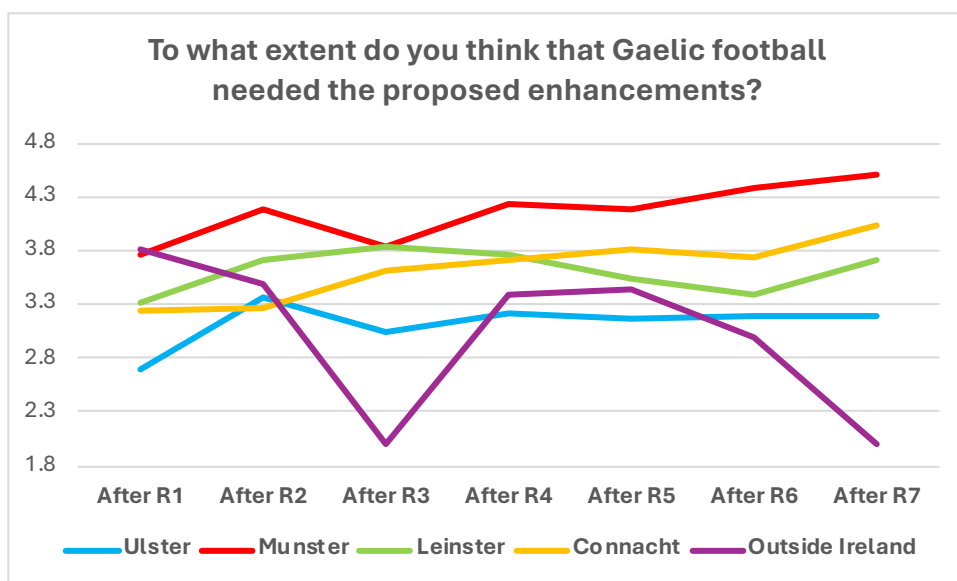


Figure 39: Comparison of Round Week for the need for the Rule Enhancements according to province.

Participants from Munster score (on average) consistently highest, and in some cases (for example after R1 where the comparison is around 2.7 compared to 3.8) the magnitude of that difference is quite striking. On the island of Ireland, those in Ulster generally reported lower scores, indicating the least need for the enhancements.

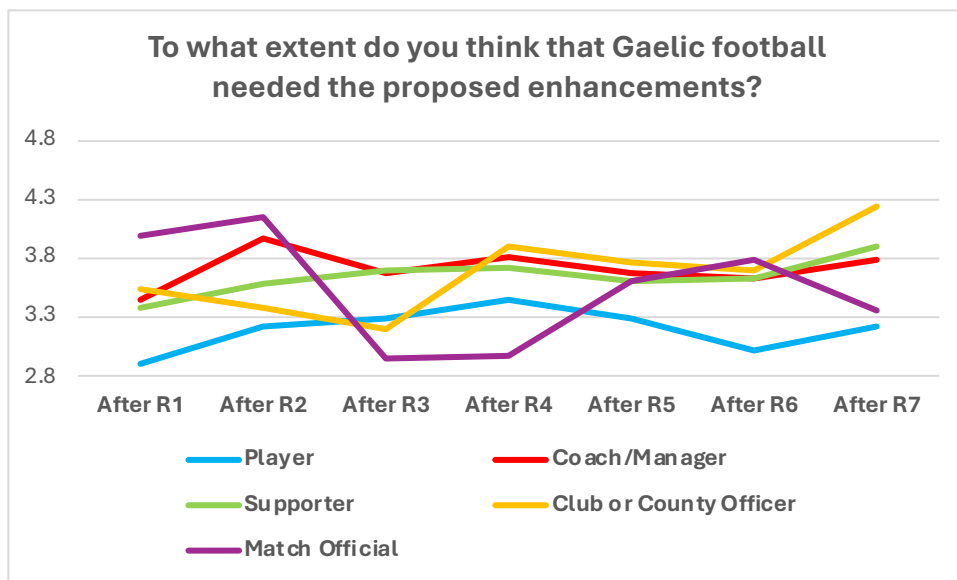


Figure 40: Comparison of Round Week for the need for the Rule Enhancements according to role.

Regarding the role in Gaelic football, there is some variation in the ‘running order’ of responses at different time points. For example, whereas Officers are highest at R5 and R7, they were quite low at R3. Players (on average) tend to be lowest, or generally low in these responses.

SUMMARY

At baseline, public members were of the view that the rule enhancements were needed though less so than the cohort (average score 3.2 out of five as opposed to 4 out of five for the cohort). This score reflects a response of ‘needed’. This popular view wavered little during the course of the league campaign, with some small-sized shifts in some demographics. Overall, opinion remains strong that the enhancements (as observed) are required.

3.4 LIKELIHOOD OF ATTENDING A CLUB OR COUNTY GAME

Participants were asked about how much more likely they would be to attend either a County or Club game.

3.4.1 INTER-COUNTY GAME

A 5-point Likert scale was scored: 1 = Much less likely; 2 = less likely; 3 = no difference; 4 = more likely; 5 = much more likely. As before, this question was not asked at baseline, given that the games had not begun, and therefore there would have been no basis upon which to have made this choice.

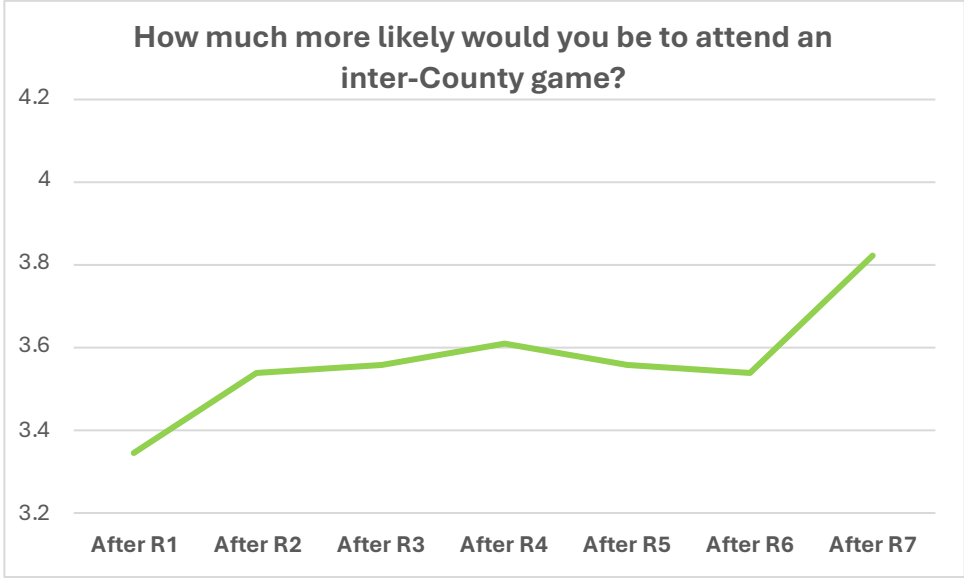


Figure 41: Comparison of Round week for the likelihood of attending an Inter-county game.

Overall, the average public survey score here went from just above 3.3 at R1 to just above 3.8 at R7. The figure below appears to reflect County performance, in these responses.

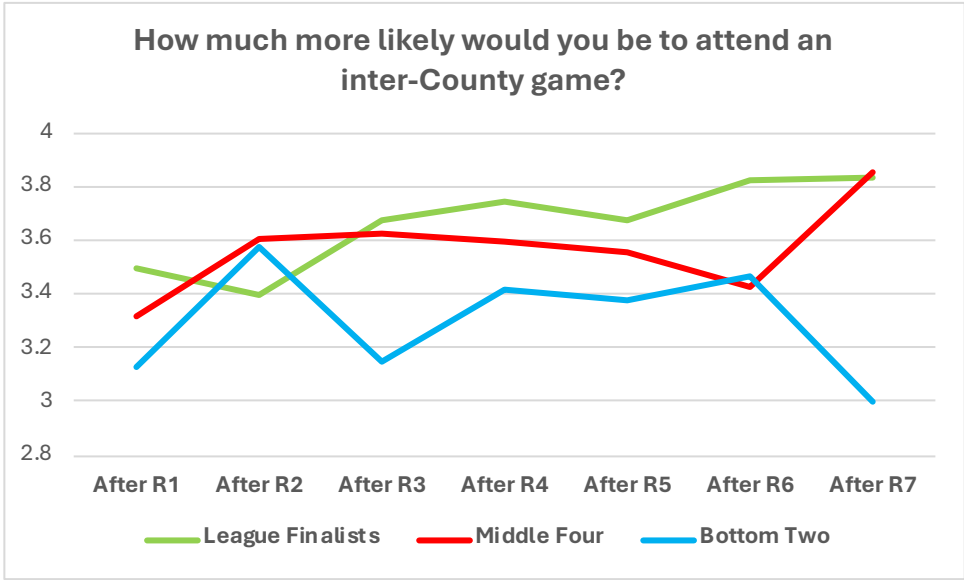


Figure 42: Comparison of Round week for the likelihood of attending an Inter-county game according to position in the league table following Round 7.

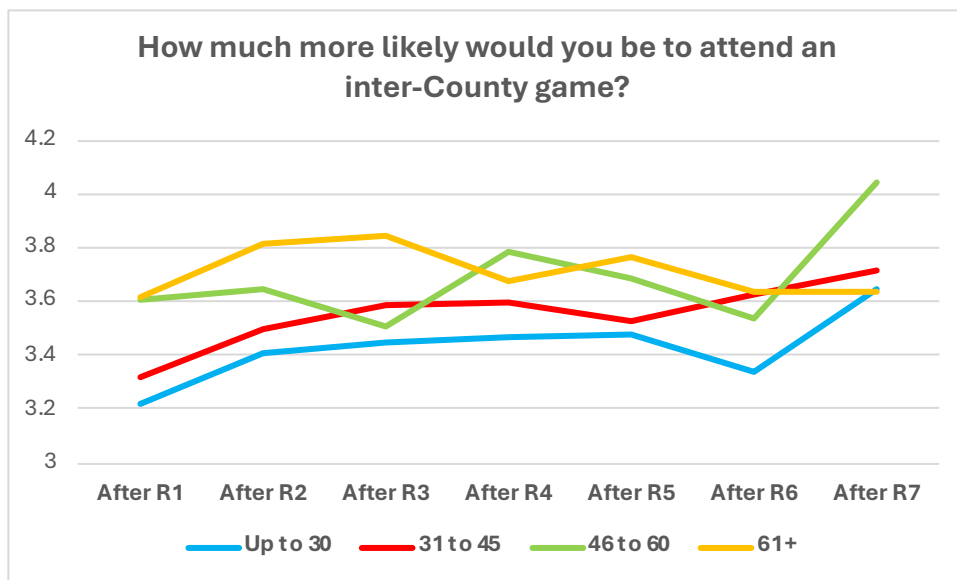


Figure 43: Comparison of Round week for the likelihood of attending an Inter-county game according to the age of the respondent.

Across the five different sets of responses, younger participants reported lowest likelihood to attend an inter-County game, with the reverse true for older participants.

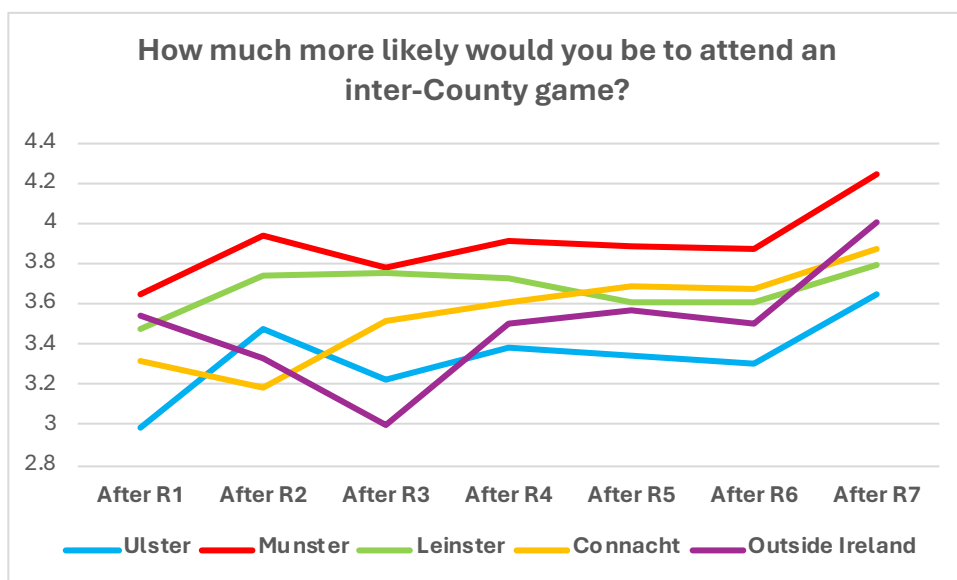


Figure 44: Comparison of Round week for the likelihood of attending an Inter-county game according to province.

Focussing on responses from the island of Ireland, and those from Ulster were largely lowest in these responses, with those from Munster consistently highest. There was a reasonable amount of variation in responses (for example, around 3.0 compared to 3.6 at R1; Ulster v Munster).

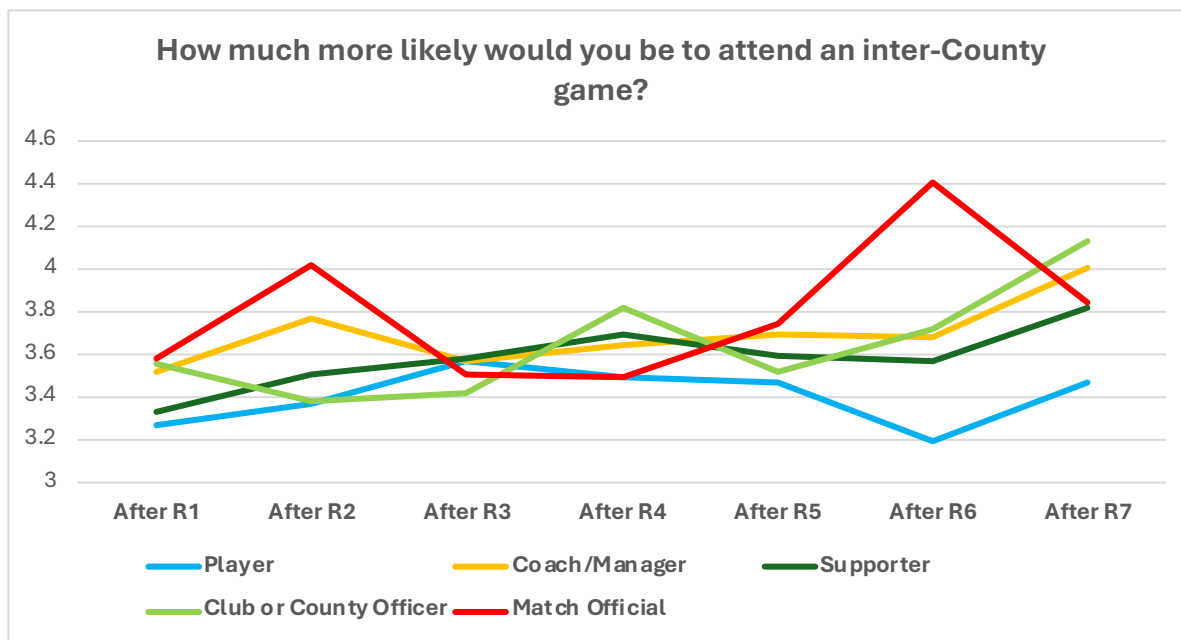


Figure 45: Comparison of Round week for the likelihood of attending an Inter-county game according to role.

Depending on the particular sample, there is clear variation in the nature of the responses. For example, while Match Officials were highest at R1, R2, R5 and R6 (on average), they were also among the lowest at R3 and R4 (with the caveat that the magnitude of differences at any time point is quite small, apart from Players vs Match Officials at R6).

SUMMARY

Again, at baseline the public survey respondents expressed a lower likelihood of attending an inter-County game than their cohort comparators with the score increasing over the course of the league but remaining below the cohort group at R7. There is some evidence of an effect based on league position, with those whose teams were in the top or bottom two were the most/least likely (respectively) to report interest in attending an inter-County game.

3.4.2 CLUB GAME

A 5-point Likert scale was scored: 1 = much less likely; 2 = less likely; 3 = no difference; 4 = more likely; 5 = much more likely. As before, this question was not asked at baseline, given that the games had not begun, and therefore there would have been no basis upon which to have made this choice.

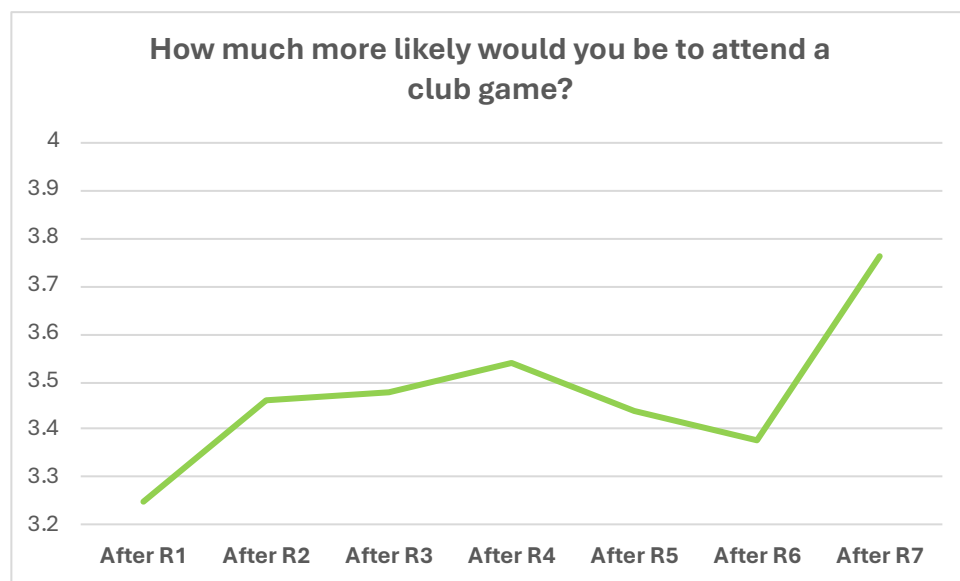


Figure 46: Comparison of Round Week for the likelihood of attending a club game.

Across the seven data collection points, there was an increase from around 3.25 at R1, to 3.75 at R7.

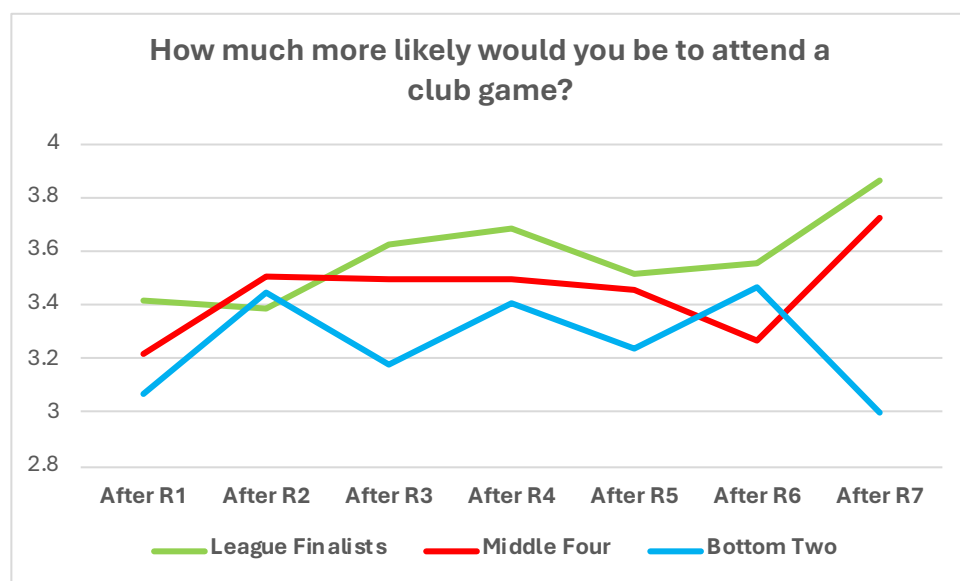


Figure 47: Comparison of Round Week for the likelihood of attending a club game according to position in the league table following Round 7.

The same pattern that emerged for League position and likelihood to attend inter-County also emerged here (at R7). Those whose teams were in the top or bottom two were the most/least likely (respectively) to report interest in attending a club game.

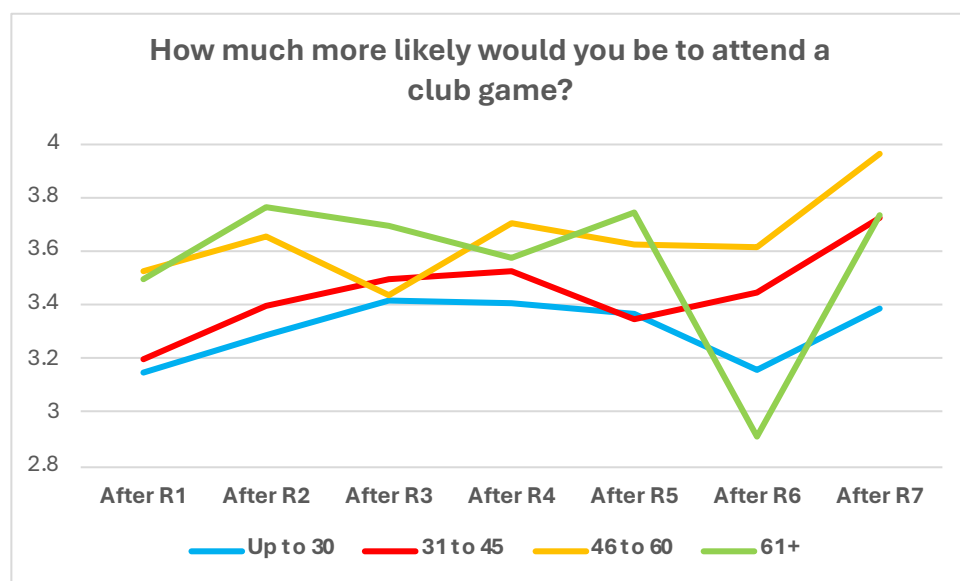


Figure 48: Comparison of Round Week for the likelihood of attending a club game according to the age of the respondent.

Here again, the general trend was for older participants to report higher likelihood, and younger participants to report lower likelihood (there is a clear anomaly at R6 for age, with responses from the older participants at that stage being something of an anomaly).

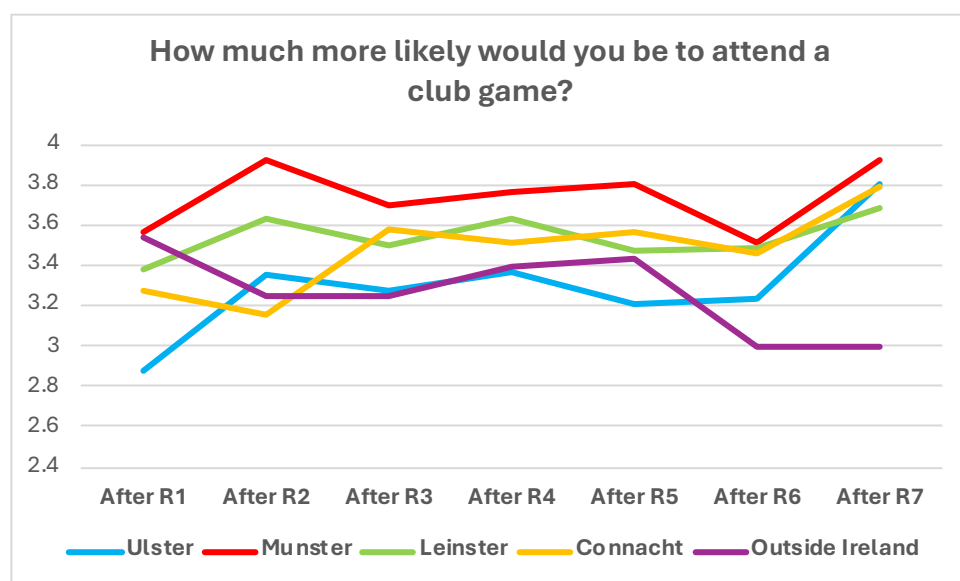


Figure 49: Comparison of Round Week for the likelihood of attending a club game according to province.

Again, when fractured by Province, those in Munster report (in general) greatest likelihood, while those in Ulster (in general) report lowest likelihood (on the island of Ireland).

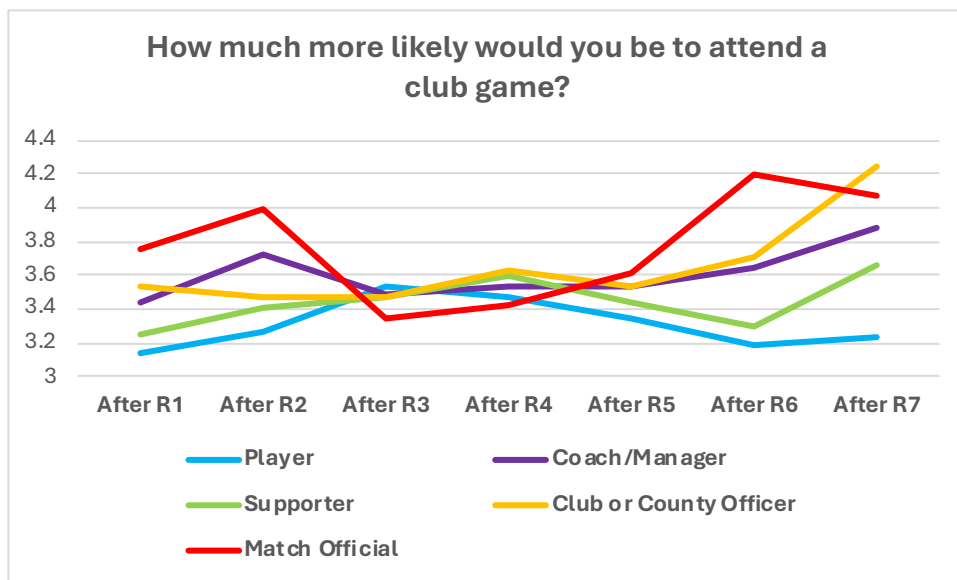


Figure 50: Comparison of Round Week for the likelihood of attending a club game according to role.

The main observation about these results is that the apparent difference of opinion by role in Gaelic football, early in the League, coalesced at R5. However, the divergence re-emerged at both R6 and R7. This illustrates the sample-specific nature of cross-sectional (as opposed to cohort) responses.

SUMMARY

Across the seven data collection points, there was an increase from around 3.25 at R1, to 3.75 at R7. As per the inter-County game, those whose teams were in the top or bottom two were the most/least likely (respectively) to report interest in attending a club game, with other differences based on province and age apparent.

3.5 WHETHER THE RULE ENHANCEMENTS HAVE CHANGED THE GAME

Participants were asked whether the seven core enhancements have changed Gaelic football. These results are presented as average scores. Participants indicated responses for each enhancement as follows: 1 = substantially worse; 2 = worse; 3 = no difference; 4 = better; 5 = substantially better.

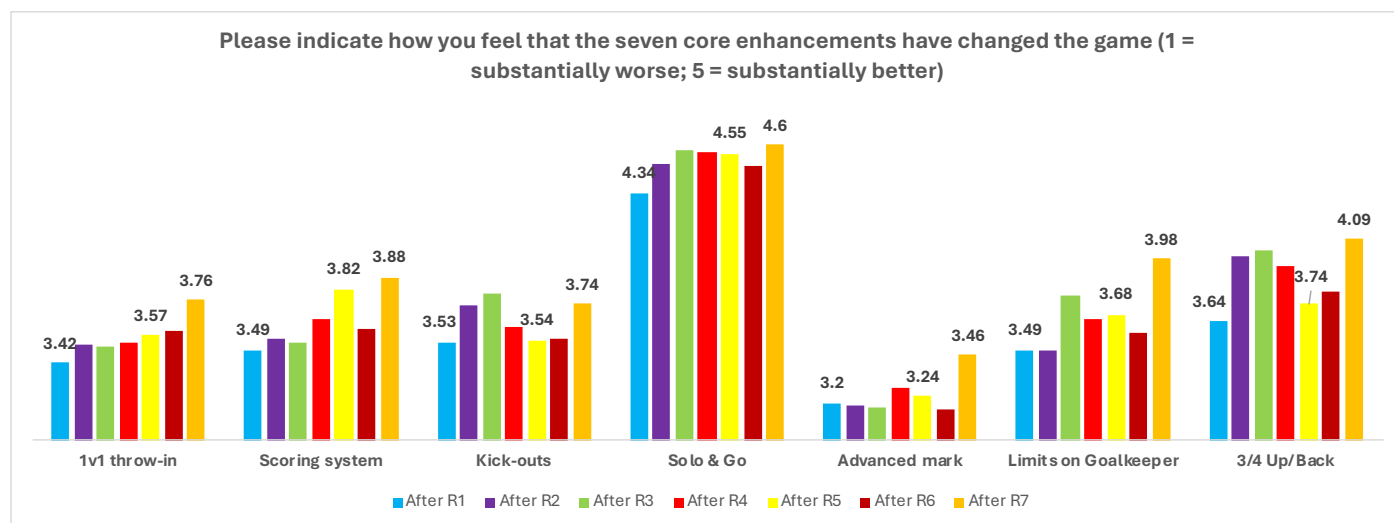


Figure 51: Whether the rule enhancements have changed Gaelic football according to each round of matches.

The vertical axis was set at 3 here, in order to have 'no difference' as the reference point. Participants reported that the Solo & Go, and the 3 Up/4Back in particular, were enhancements that made Gaelic football a better game. The average scores are displayed at R1, R3 and R5 only for visual purposes.

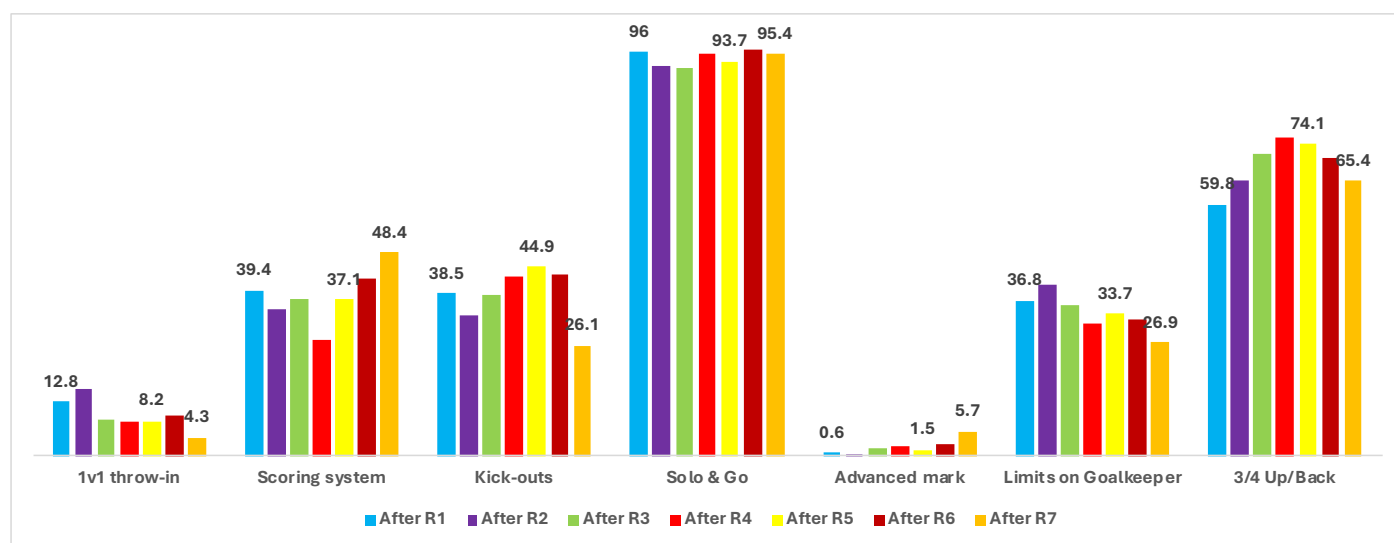


Figure 52: Which of the individual Rule Enhancements have been most beneficial to Gaelic football.

The above figure displays that in terms of positivity, the Solo & Go, and the 3 Up/4 Back, were overall viewed (proportionately) particularly positively.

4. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

The results reported herein offer broad support to the enhancements proposed by the FRC. Participants continue to view the enhancements as necessary and are strongly of the view that these enhancements have made Gaelic football a better game, and a better game to watch. Overall, the cohort and public surveys support each other in terms of the macro, or overall items. However, there are some differences.

For example, whereas support for the scoring system declines with time in the cohort, it actually increases with time in the public survey. Rather than steer the reader in the direction of firm or definitive conclusions, we objectively offer these results for the reader to draw his or her own conclusions.

There are some limitations which the readers of this report should consider. Firstly, all data were self-reported. Secondly, the demographic information is interesting. In the public survey there was a bias in respondents towards those whose Counties were playing in Divisions 1 and 2 of the Allianz National Football League. In the cohort, there was a relatively high proportion of Coaches/Managers and Supporters, a high proportion of participants from Leinster, and a high proportion aged 30 to 60, with a relatively lower representation of under-30s, and those aged 61+.

For some questions, participants were 'forced' to choose one option, for example the question about which one enhancement had made Gaelic Football better, or worse. Here, there is no indication as to the extent of that difference, and just because someone chose Solo and Go as the most beneficial, or the Advanced Mark as the least beneficial, does not mean that there were no other enhancements that they believed to be equally helpful or detrimental to the game.



NATIONAL REFEREE'S PANEL FEEDBACK

As part of the ongoing Benefits Realisation review conducted by the Football Review Committee (FRC), an online survey was distributed to all referees on the National Referee's Panel following Round 5 of the 2025 Allianz Football League. This initiative aims to gather valuable feedback regarding the new rule enhancements introduced for the 2025 season.

The responses collected will play a crucial role in assessing whether the intended benefits of these rule enhancements are being realised. By analysing the referees' observations and experiences on the field, the FRC will be better positioned to evaluate the impact of the changes and determine any necessary adjustments for future implementation.

We appreciate the efforts of the 38 referees who participated in the survey and contributed their insights. Their firsthand perspectives will be instrumental in ensuring the continuous improvement of the game.

1. ONE V ONE THROW-IN

- The consensus is that this rule enhancement is accruing the benefits intended.
- Some comments on players encroaching from the side line before the ball is thrown in.
- One comment suggested players should start at the centre-half back position.
- No comments to rescind this new rule.

Comments include:

"Makes life easier for referees, working very well."

"No issues with this enhancement in the games I have refereed. Stops the pulling and dragging that always used to happen and gets a good quick movement to begin proceedings".

"Less fouling to start the game and no observations of players encroaching from the side line before ball is thrown in. Positive development."

"No issues to report. Easy manage player on sideline with Sideline Official, opposite player might break line before throw-in."

"This new rule appears to be working well. there is less wrestling during the throw-ins"

"Should be changed to have additional midfielder standing at centre half back position. At club level we can't see behind us and at pitches with two dugouts on opposite ends it is problematic."

2. KICK-OUT

- The consensus is that this rule enhancement is accruing the benefits intended.
- Feedback indicates that the contests for the kickout are not causing a problem to officiate.
- A number of comments suggest that the 20 second guideline for kick-outs needs to be revisited.
- One comment suggested to remove the 13m semi-circle.

Comments include:

“Much improved. More contested kick outs”

“Again this has been a positive and probably easier to manage as a referee than the previous kick-out rules over the last number of years”

“No issue with this enhancement. In the games I have refereed, Keepers have got the kick-out dispatched within the timeframe (20 secs) of the guideline provided. Only one example of a short kick-out which was claimed by the defender inside the 40m arc. Well over 2/3rds of kick-outs are going long in the games I refereed making it a true contest in midfield, and strong fielders being rewarded”

“Works well, a lot of congestion around the middle but no problems. Very few availing of a shorter kickout”

“In the main works well. I would be in favour of adjusting all infringements on the kick-out by defending teams to be 13m free and take away the variables of (1) Free kick from where defender receives ball, (2) Defender arc inside or less than 13m before ball is kicked, (3) Taking longer than 20 seconds. Etc. Just harmonising all with same punishment”

“Again works very well, have only had one game keeping an eye on the 20 seconds, didn’t always remember to check the start time, most kick outs happened quicker than this”

“Too much focus on delaying / getting Goalies to hurry up - time limit should not be introduced & is too hard to be consistent on”

“Penalty for the delay (free against) is too severe - return it to a hop ball (makes it more appealing for a referee to use instead of giving a score to the opposition)”

“Feel 20 sec as a guide line is a bit tight”

“Need to get rid of small arc. Only one arc on pitch. Use same 40m arc for hurling and penalties”

3. GOALKEEPER

- The feedback suggests that this rule enhancement is accruing the benefits intended for the rule where there is no back passing to the goalkeeper in his half of the field. However, several referees commented that the goalkeeper was contributing to slow play in the opposition half of the field.
- Referees, in the main, are finding this rules easy to officiate. One comment said that it can be difficult to referee.

Comments include:

“OK from refereeing perspective”

“No issues with this so far, adds to the game”

“No issues to report. We probably haven’t seen much of the back pass in own half etc.”

“A lot of stipulations / rules around goalkeeper - can be difficult to referee but I have no solutions to offer”

“I think this rule is working well”

“Limiting passes to the goalkeeper has reduced the level of holding possession in defensive half. The goalkeeper being used as an extra attacker in the attacking half is prevalent but it’s a risk and reward strategy”

“Very noticeable that defenders can’t play the ball back to the goalkeeper in defensive half. Meaning anything coming out of the defensive half of field is normally moved quickly past half-way. Offensive half of field is different story. Keepers normally just hang in pocket between the 45’ and 65 metre line. Usually just trying to move the ball from side to side especially with no pressure been applied by opposition. When goalkeeper does have a cut and it breaks down and defensive side overturn possession, it does provide some exciting moments. Showing if defending teams do break things up the structure below works”

“Goalkeeper spends most the time up the field now so needs to be watched that he doesn’t gain possession in own half but so far so good”

“12 v 11 means that overlap is still ensuring slow play as the opposition protect the arc while the team in possession go sideways and back and forth trying to break the line”

“Goalkeeper are being used more out the field now when their team is attacking. We have seen some fine scores from goalies, in some games I’ve officiated in I feel that sometimes the keeper is slowing up the play when their team is attacking”

“I think the keeper shouldn’t be allowed past the half way line and join the attack, other than that no issue”

4. 3/3 STRUCTURE

- Although a number of referees indicate that they have no issues officiating this rule, the majority indicate they find it difficult.
- A number suggest to allow inadvertent breaches.
- Several referees comment that if a team has a player red/black carded that they must keep 3 up.

Comments include:

“No issues, it is actually becoming less of an issue where players are self policing”

“Good from a visual and game improvement point of view. Will cause some close calls but I imagine it will ref itself in due course”

“It’s okay, really relying on linesmen. Players breaking the line by accident the majority of the time”

“No issues over all, just needs to be amendments on the a team that is reduced to 14/13 etc... both teams need to be equal here, can’t have 3 back against 1”

“Difficult to officiate. Too much emphasis on 3v3 and line umpires missing other items. In the NFL we have support panel members with little knowledge of rules, not attending meetings which we cannot give this responsibility to”

“Needs to be an allowance in rule for officials to adjudicate on inadvertent breaches of the rule”

“3/3 structure will be extremely difficult to referee at club level. Inter-county is only possible with 2 neutral linesmen and a sideline official”

“When acting as a linesman, I feel the 3v3 is making the linesman job more harder and that when we are looking for a 3v3 infraction we are going to miss some major incident in front of us”

“At club level this is impossible to police. At inter-county with your team around you I feel we are still missing some breaches due to the infractions going on in the game. Possibly for Championship we need to look at a line referee and take the responsibility away from linesmen and 4th officials”

“Couldn’t police without help. Radios aren’t as clear as they might be which makes communication difficult. Maybe we need the buzzer just for 3x3 and the official gives a signal as to who breached. But I accept the rule is necessary”

“Allowing defending team bring extra players back instead of keeping 3 up is crazy. Much harder to police also”

“Need to look at giving teams a 5 second opportunity to correct the 3v3 breach, punishment too severe for teams crossing over for a second or two. Some referee’s lenient on it, others strict. Need consistency”

5. SOLO & GO

- The feedback provided is extremely positive regarding the Solo & Go and suggests this rule enhancement is accruing the benefits intended in making the game faster and discouraging fouling.
- Feedback suggests that this is a great addition to the game and make it more exciting for all.
- Several comments suggest some discrepancies around infringements and punishments being too severe.
- Further comments suggest a disagreement that a player be allowed to take 4m before taking his solo and go and a further 4m before he is challenged.

Comments include:

“Brilliant rule and great for the game speeds it up”

“Love this enhancement, has really accelerated the speed of the game. Has provided a different viewpoint and really enjoy this aspect. Positive.”

“Major positive for the game in my opinion - quicker/more exciting game with less incentive for fouling.”

“Works very well. Only difficulty is with players not going immediately and the different penalties for different circumstances”

“Great enhancement. Just if we can get really clear rules surrounding the infringement side... exactly when you bring back for the original free kick, hop ball. Or free to opposition”

“No issues to report (personally). If a player delays the S&G we should make him take the free. There is some discrepancy between referees application here, where some are giving free against as the ref deems that the player has taken a S&G after indicating they’re taking a free etc. We need to be consistent”

“The solo and go is brilliant I think this is really enhancing the game but my negative on this would be the 8 meters before the player can be tackled this needs to be looking at”

“Works very well. However, it should be aligned with the mark where you will get just 4m - not 4m plus 4m before you’re tackled. Streamline both of them so they are consistent with one another”

“Delay a solo and go, we ask player to go back and take the free kick, however if he lines up to take a free and then solo and go, penalty is free against, I feel we need to apply the same approach to both scenarios as it is down to our interpretation completely. Great example in Mayo v Armagh. I would also like to see the rule tweaked, so that the solo and go, solo must be taken on the spot from where the foul occurred, and he then has 4 STEPS, not METRES before he can be challenged (this would align with a kickout mark when a players decides to play on, he cannot be challenged for 4 steps or a play of the ball)”

“Fantastic addition. I feel the punishment is too severe (free against) for a player to take a Solo & Go after signalling they are taking a free”

6. SCORING SYSTEM

- Comments indicate that this rule is positive, more shooting, excitement.
- Referees note there is less fouling, huge punishment.
- Feedback indicated that lines being clear and communication key.
- Some comments suggest that the 2pt score devalues a goal.

Comments include:

“Positive for the game - more long range kicking. I’ve noticed a lot more shooting in general from outside the arc so I would expect more wides than last year as teams seem less conservative when attacking. Positive - more long range points. Negative - less goals.”

“No issues to report. Once a pitch is well marked and there’s good communication (verbally and physically) the 2point 1 point has worked well.”

“Easy enough to control, certainly helps to keep the game exciting.”

“This rule is working well I feel there is less fouling inside the scoring area as defenders are more disciplined trying to make their opponents shoot from further out. Some Counties have adapted very well to this rules, and we have seen some fine 2 pointers throughout the NFL”

“This is working fine. The option of the 2 pointer is a huge punishment regards the dissent and 3v3 breach”

“Tricky at times to see if foot is inside 2 point arc or not. Line must be clearly marked or different colour”

“I’d be in favour of the ‘2 pointer’ but perhaps the goal is undervalued in the new scoring system and should be increased from 3 to 4 points. There is a challenge for pitches, even some inter-county ones, to mark the 40m arc clearly and accurately in order to support the referee’s decision making.”

“2 point arc is great once it’s marked! I think the value of a goal should go back to 4”

“The 2 pointers are an improvement. I am not sure if they should be allowed for frees while a 45 is only one point and is further out. Although there are consequences in cynical fouling if that was changed”

7. ADVANCED MARK

- Consensus that there is an improvement to previous rule
- Feed suggests that not many advanced marks have been seen.

Comments include:

“Working fine. Not many of them in games so far. Definitely improvement on old advanced mark”

“Very few of them in the games so far but again very manageable to referee”

“Yeah I think advanced mark is good and the fact it has to be inside the 20m it’s bringing kicking much more into the game”

“I don’t think teams have adjusted to this rule I feel they don’t use it enough in games.”

“I think the automatic advantage for the forward for the advanced Mark is very unfair on a defender.”

“No issues however please include a piece in the rule to ensure that the defender can also claim his mark in the same scenario as the attacker and gets the same advantage etc”

“Hasn’t occurred too often, however can be hard to gauge if the ball was kicked from outside the 45m line.”

8. KICK-OUT MARK

- The consensus is that this is working well.
- A lot of comment that the penalty if the catcher is impeded should be a delay penalty with the ball advanced 50m.

Comments include:

“Very few occurring but working well”

“Yes kickout mark is working well don’t see any difference”

“Again this seems to be going pretty good as well. It was mentioned to me that there is a bit of bumping into catchers around the middle but I have not noticed anything out of the ordinary.”

“Positive feedback throughout the NFL the majority of the kick outs are going long and this has introduced some fine high fielding throughout the game”

“Same as always, easy to referee”.

“No issues”

“A lot more of them in the game as more kick outs are going long. Teams setting up ‘rings of steel’ out by sidelines making it difficult to referee. A lot of blocking and holding by both teams”

“A player doesn’t claim the Mark and is tackled before he has time to take a play of the ball. I feel this can and could be exploited so the penalty should be a 50m advancement instead of just a free kick”

“Once player catches ball. If he’s impeded it should be 50m moved up”.

“No problem here all good, but I would love to see a 50 m penalty if the player calls a mark and is tackled in the 4m space not 13m”

“No issues except that when a player plays on from a kick out mark and they are tackled or delayed the free is only from that spot and not a 50m advancement.”

9. DELAY FOULS – HANDING BACK THE BALL

- Feedback suggests that this rule is, in the main, well received by the referees.
- However a number question the need of handing the ball back and that possibly placing on the ground where foul occurred would suffice.
- Comments include that players are still adjusting.

Comments include:

“I find it very good”

“Working very well, again cuts out a lot of messing around free kicks”

“Great rule cuts out all the messing”

“I believe this is beginning to work really well and is becoming more of a habit as the weeks pass. I wouldn’t like to see this change as in time it will become the norm.”

“The majority of players are obeying this rule and on the whole, this rule is assisting a quicker game”

“No Issues”.

“Don’t agree with handing back the ball - leave it on the ground immediately would work better. Opposition are now hounding players to retrieve the ball, players are already getting wise on how to cause a minor delay in handing the ball back that would require refs to be overly pedantic - this will only get worse, I believe leaving the ball down makes it easier for everybody (players & referees)”

“Disagree with the “handing” back the ball. The offending player should be allowed place the ball on the ground and remove himself from the area. I also think this will actually speed the game up further”

“A bit draconian. Dropping the ball or throwing to the player will suffice here. A referee can judge this. If it is a delay tactic move it up. If not, get on with it.”

“Easy to adjudicate however not sure it adds hugely to the entertainment factor of our game. Perhaps leaving the ball down on the ground on the spot of receipt is sufficient.”

“We need to be consistent on this Handing ball back in full - when does it happen. Culture Change for players Referee plays advantage for foul, the play continues and opposition turn the ball over. Referee stops the play and awards original free. Surely the opposition player does not have to hand the ball back in full at this point. IS Handing back in full really required - throwing the ball back or setting it down could be acceptable - throwing it or kicking away no issue with 50m advancement.”

10. DELAY FOULS – DELAYING THE PLAYER TAKING SOLO & GO OR A FREE KICK

- The consensus is that this is positively received.
- Comments suggest that players refraining from delaying – stops interference.
- Players adjusting – discipline has improved.
- One comment – attempt to gain advantage.

Comments include:

“These make refereeing easier. Cut out the pushing and shoving matches.”

“Very positive from a refereeing perspective. Creates so much more openness in the game as no-one wants to concede 50m. Has significantly reduced unwanted congregations of players and potential for melees which are further positives associated with these rule changes.”

“Players tend to refrain from delaying fouls”

“Maybe one or 2 incidents a game but the punishment is deterring the players from delaying”

“Has happened a number of times for me and penalised with 50m of which most resulted in scores. It is also becoming less common as players adjust to higher discipline standards.”

“Players discipline has improved since last year. Fewer instances of this.”

“Works well... but we must be careful that the player taking the solo and go doesn't purposely run into opposition player to try gain an advantage”

11. BLACK CARD FOR CYNICALLY HOLDING UP A PLAYER

- Feedback indicated that little experience of this yet, working well.
- Some referees suggest that there might be different interpretations – may need further expansion.

Comments include:

“Very few of them in game as teams are aware of it, so again working well.”

“Players now know if they don’t get their tackle technique correct and go for the ball they will be punished. We will see more of this rule applied when games have greater importance down the line.”

“Again I only seen 1 black card issued for this foul so far. Does not seem to be a problem for now.”

“Haven’t seen any incidents of it yet, but it needs to be expanded to cover cynically denying a goal scoring opportunity (the rules still allow for professional type fouls that result in notings / yellow cards - eg a clear jersey pull with no release to stop a player going through on goal)”

“The hardest of the black cards. Every ref will have a different interpretation”

“Needs to be expanded to include holding onto the jersey”

“Have not seen any as of yet. Would like to see some examples of where we could apply via game footage”

12. DISSENT FROM A PLAYER – 50M ADVANCEMENT

- The consensus is that this is working very well – very little dissent.
- Change in culture required and that punishment is a deterrent.

Comments include:

“Very little dissent in the games, working very well.”

“I have not had any dissent yet where I had to advance 50m”

“Extremely positive enhancement from a refereeing perspective so much so that I haven’t had to penalise any player for dissent in my two Div 1 league games to date!”

“Excellent. Dissent has nearly been eradicated from the game which is great”

Excellent. Doesn’t happen too much when you give first time

“Advancing the ball 50m appears to have reduced the incidences of dissent”

“No problems straight forward”

“Much improved. This is how we change the culture. Stiff penalty on the field. Reporting things afterwards, at club level, will never work.”

“We may need to apply it a bit more - possibly letting a little too much chirping happen, but a good tool for a referee to use if required.”

13. TEAM CAPTAIN COMMUNICATING WITH A PLAYER

- Mixed responses – communication has improved but not just captain.
- Comments around all players being allowed to speak to referee once in a respectful manner.

Comments include:

“Communication with all players has improved, speaking to all officials with a lot more respect. Working very well.”

“Works well and cuts out dissent from other players”

“Very good system as have been able to communicate decisions that have occurred without multiple voices butting in to try and get their point across. Also has allowed me as a referee to provide the reasoning for the call in a clear and concise manner.”

“All okay here. I have no issue with communicating with a different player why a free was awarded if they ask in a courteous manner.”

“Think it’s harsh it needs to be the captain as Im a firm believer that if a player asks u what that foul was for I think we should be letting them know why we are blowing the free”

“When refereeing games if a player asked a question I feel that it is only courteous to answer that player. This rule where only a captain can speak I’m not in favour, I feel that we as referees are not being respectful to players, and I do realise that it has to work both ways.”

“Good, however I do still think if other players are respectful we should be able to communicate in general contexts”

14. STOP CLOCK AND HOOTER

- Mixed reviews – some feel it takes pressure off referees, others feel it will cause problems.
- Some small technical difficulties.
- Could improve the signals given.
- Many hadn't refereed with this in place – needs to be in place in all divisions.

Comments include:

“Good rule takes pressure off the referees about the time.”

“Very helpful and less questions/issues over time keeping/additional time”

“In the games I have watched in regards to the operation of the Stop clock & Hooter it has been clear, consistent and easily picked up on the screen and at the grounds.

Any breaks in play are clearly seen and also with the clock stopped it prevents any mismanagement of the time. It seems to take a pressure off the referee with a time official present and again allows the referee to concentrate on the job at hand.”

“In principle this is Brilliant and takes a workload away from the referee. I experienced some sync issues but they may have been more human than equipment.”

“The signals to restart clock is not great could we not use the same signal for stop and restart”

“Haven't refed with it yet but I would have concerns about it, in very tight games at game end with the several different scenarios that can occur”

“Would prefer once the hooter sounds that the game does not end until the ball goes out of play”

15. EMPOWERING LINE UMPIRES

- Majority have said no issues and helpful.
- Differs on happy receiving more input and whether there is a significant change.

Comments include:

“Always happy to have more input from all other officials.”

“Great help with 3 v 3, 2 point arc (inside or outside) and gauging advanced marks”

“Working well. Positive change”

“I don’t see any significant change to the level of support offered by line umpires pre the FRC rule amendment, nor did I feel it was necessary.”

“The line umpires now have to be capable and fully tuned in for the duration of the game. Although I can see a more serious incident being missed due to them trying to observe for the 3v3 incursions.”

“Line Umpires have been vitally important along with side-line official in regards to observing anything happening behind my back and also in regards to the 3/3 infraction. Very much working well as a team across the 3 fixtures I refereed.”

“I’m not sure that there is any real change here”

16. CROSSING THE LINE

- Some difficulty in observing/overseeing.
- Consistency required.

Comments include:

“Extremely difficult to police and will be cause of many frustrations in club games”

“I feel this has been an issue where some officials are too quick to make a ruling. There are 2 situations on this, accidental and deliberate. I feel that linesmen are taking every incursion over the line as deliberate which is not the case, some are accidental whereby it’s only a free on the half way line.

If a player crosses the line for a second and then steps back there should be advantage played only. Linesmen are calling this and referees are giving 20m frees immediately with a 2 point option. The offending team are not interfering with play whatsoever and a 20m free should not be the ruling, as it’s accidental. This has been a grey area across the board and needs to be addressed”

“This is ok, however not simple to oversee / adjudicate on.”

“I think it must be both feet outside while kicking a 2 pointer”

“Makes things simpler, maybe an faq for all the scenarios is needed. Some queries on this from club refs at home”

17. OTHER THOUGHTS

Comments from referees:

"Club referee has been forgotten about. Rules working OK for now, it will be different later in the year and in Club games without neutral officials"

"I'm all for it. It's for the betterment of our game"

"Has made refereeing a lot more enjoyable, great games with great excitement. A lot more technical fouls for the referee to think of, but with the time being taken away from the referee, this lets him concentrate more on those technical fouls."

"I'm going to give a huge positive feedback personally on a rule enhancement which may have gone under the radar but in my eyes personally has been one of the most enjoyable to implement in game time. The Advantage rule. Allowing it to the discretion of a referee has given a confidence when in charge of a game to allow an advantage knowing that a team who is fouled is able to benefit without the restraint of 5 seconds there. Referee is able to see if a creation of space is done by a team which could result in a score. Being consistent and strong signal is important. Allowing a flow to the game has also benefited the speed of the game which the players are enjoying."

"Main thing now is to come up with protocols for what we do in the edge cases, e.g. foul 23 metres out, free to attacking team, player goes 4 meters then solos inside 20 meter line, do we go back for the original free or give a free out. Many other edge scenarios we just need to document what we should do"

"Very good for me and enjoying them, a lot more to think about when you blow the whistle"

"The implementation has felt somewhat rushed from a refereeing perspective. I would have preferred not to be 'learning on the job' within the national league but it is what it is and I do believe that the national panel of football referees has risen to the challenge handed to it by the FRC and the Association"

"We learn more as we go along. The 3V3 is the problem child along with the goalkeeper overloading the defence. These need tweaking."

"Happy that they are having a major positive influence on the game but think we should still be open to tweaks in the rules going forward."

"By and large they had gone very well so far in my opinion. I have left a few wee issues on the earlier questions but I am a very positive about most changes".

"I think it has gone well so far by enlarge considering the volume of changes that has happened"

"Overall with some minor tweaks this has been a positive move"

"Black card for contributing to a melee is also a good ruling, too many referees weren't using it by rule previously (red card)"

"Games are certainly more entertaining and chaotic. A lot going on but much more enjoyable to referee"

"All going ok and seems to be positive. Plenty of learning happening and more required.

If a team is a man down (black, red or otherwise), it should not pay to foul and they should still need to have 3v3 or similar etc (many examples of this in R3 & R4). I'm sure this is being reviewed. Always happy to chat through any of the above"

"I think these enhancement have lent to easier refereeing of games. Yes we are much busier and ON all the time but it is more enjoyable to officiate as it was a struggle over the last few years and switching off in boring games was a struggle. Previously screening was common in the two thirds in front of each goal where defences were packed and space at a premium. I have noticed this has now moved to the middle third where primary ball getters and players looking to win breaking ball are being screened by opposition players holding them off to allow a teammate gather freely. Off the ball holding in the middle third has been noticed. But in the main most items are working well, keep up the good work"

"Due to the sheer volume of changes, the games are not as enjoyable to referee, which is important. I find that it requires your attention in too many places at once, and therefore risks missing something else as a result. There seems to be added pressure / attention on referees too. Communication has increased significantly with umpires. One query - will there be a streamlining of the black card rule with regards timing? Where the stop clock is being used, the players on black card will serve the full 10 minutes, however in non stop clock games, it is still the 'old' method, where injuries etc can 'eat into' the 10 minutes. If we were allowed stop our watches for same, it would be a far fairer system"

"Has gone very well. Maybe some tweaks to be had going forward"

"For solo and go not taken immediately or from outside 4m I would like in these cases that player is put back to take free rather than free against player or hop balls".

"Very well"

"Overall rule enhancement has gone well. Players have really been working on the new rules and there is an improvement from them from round to round. Going forward any adjustments, however slight, should be clearly communicated. These changes also impact on club games which have just began in earnest"

"They have gone very well, I think the game is much easier officiated. Couple things, for a delayed foul inside the large arc, the rule says move the ball 50m more advantageous but we are not allowed to bring this outside for a 2 pointer.. this seems unfair to the team losing by 2 points and time up. I've seen on a few occasions how it really frustrates spectators and players when a player is called back to original place of foul after no advantage accruing after the referee playing advantage. Despite the fact the player is within 4 metres of the original foul he is not currently allowed to take solo and go as its not deemed immediately... maybe in scenarios where players are within 4 meters of original foul the solo and go could still be allowed... just a thought."

"A lot working well - but tightening up / alignment on some of the rules as highlighted above (all delays should be a hop ball - some are free against & some are hop balls etc). & rulebook simplified - the wording is very complicated & convoluted, needs to be clearer."

"So far, games appear to be easier to referee since the new rules were implemented. A referee needs to be mentally turned on the whole time as with the solo and go, play resumes much quicker after a foul compared to 2024. With regards to handing back the ball to an opponent - If a player is not within a certain short distance of their opponent, e.g. 5m, can they be allowed to drop the ball dead on the ground?"

"I think the solo and go is brilliant the 3v3 is very hard implement correctly my concerns here is club football and how we will get this correct"

"I feel they are working well as a whole. Small tweaks where things are aligned might make it easier for us. Consistency is key, and mistakes on rules by analysts on tv and radio are not making our job easier"

"All is very positive, the Black and Red Card rules probably needs tweaked to give the team that still have 15 players on field some sort of advantage for the indiscipline of their opponents"

"Working fine overall."

"Would like to see the current scenarios and updates published and have the FAQ updated on a regular basis where needed so that players, officials and the public get all of these ongoing clarifications, thanks".

"I think the new rules are working with a few small changes, football is more exciting & attractive under the new rules."

"I feel they have gone well, but Championship is a different gravy. 3v3 needs looking at I feel we need to take the responsibility away from the linesmen and 4th official and possibly introduce a line referee to monitor the 3V3".

"I understand the thinking behind the 3v3 but it's very difficult to manage especially when teams have reduced numbers. If it is to stay then I feel teams should have to maintain 3 players at all times in each half."

A dark teal background featuring a silhouette of a basketball player in mid-stride, dribbling a ball. The player is positioned centrally, with their body angled slightly to the right. The floor is represented by several parallel diagonal lines that create a sense of perspective and motion. The overall aesthetic is modern and athletic.

GPA MID ALLIANZ NFL PLAYER FEEDBACK

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF SURVEY DATA (N=310):

OVERALL SENTIMENT TOWARDS RULE CHANGES

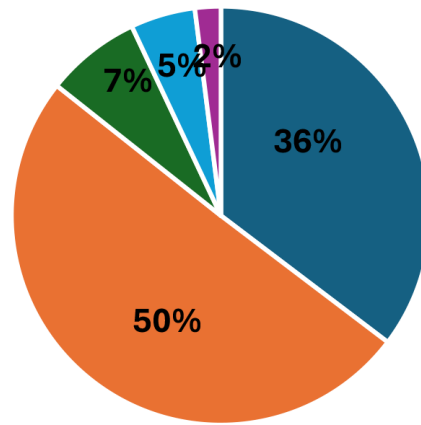
- The majority of respondents had a positive outlook on the rule changes, with:
 - 36% (Very Positive) and 50% (Somewhat Positive) responses, making up the bulk of opinions.
 - Only a small portion of responses were Somewhat Negative (5%) or Very Negative (2%), indicating a generally favourable reception.

KEY INSIGHTS FROM INDIVIDUAL RULE EVALUATIONS

- **Rules with Strong Support (Keep ≥ 50%)**
 - Solo & Go (95% Keep) – The most well-received rule, with almost no opposition.
 - 3 v 3 Structure Rule (76% Keep) – Strongly favoured, with minimal calls for removal.
 - 1 v 1 Throw-In (64% Keep) – Generally supported, though some neutrality exists.
 - Limits on Pass Back to Goalkeeper (56% Keep) – More than half favour keeping it, but nearly a third remain neutral.
 - 2-Point Scoring Arc (54% Keep) and 3-2-1 Scoring System (51% Keep) – Both have slight majority support but also notable neutral or removal sentiment.
- **Rules with Mixed Support (Keep between 40-50%)**
 - Advance Mark (43% Keep, 27% Remove) – Divided opinion, with a significant neutral stance (30%).
 - Abusive/Questioning the Referee (48% Keep, 28% Neutral, 24% Remove) – Many support the rule, but nearly a quarter oppose it.
- **Rules with Strong Opposition (Remove ≥ 35%)**
 - Kickout Adjustments (45% Remove, 27% Keep) – The most disliked rule change, with nearly half of respondents calling for its removal.
 - Goalkeepers Attacking Half Involvement (37% Remove, 34% Keep) – Highly contentious, with divided opinions.
 - Not Handing the Ball Directly Back After a Foul (68% Remove) – The most unpopular rule, with overwhelming support for its removal.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- While most rule changes are positively received, there are strong objections to kickout adjustments, goalkeeper involvement in attack, and the rule requiring players to hand the ball back after a foul.
- Some rules, like the Advanced Mark and Referee Interaction, have divided opinions, suggesting room for refinement.
- Rules such as Solo & Go and the 3v3/4v3 Structure have near-universal approval, indicating successful changes.



■ Very positive ■ Somewhat Positive
 ■ Neither positive or negative ■ Somewhat Negative
 ■ Very Negative

Players views on individual rules:

Rule	Keep (%)	Neutral (%)	Remove (%)
1 v 1 Throw in	64	24	12
3 v 3 structure rule	76	15	9
Limits on pass back to goalkeeper	56	29	15
Goalkeepers attacking half involvement	34	29	37
Solo & Go	95	5	0
Advance Mark	43	30	27
Kick-out adjustments	27	28	45
2 point scoring Arc	54	21	25
3 - 2 - 1 scoring system (3 point goal, 2 point 40m arc score, 1 point normal score)	51	25	24
Dissent Rule - Abusive Questioning the referee	48	28	24
Dissent Rule - Not handing the ball directly back to opponent after foul	16	16	68

DIRECT PLAYER FEEDBACK ON RULES:

We have just provided feedback on the 3 rules that presented strongest opposition. The below points have been collated from an open paragraph box in survey that permitted players to add more insight and opinions to specific rules.

(Note: We have feedback for all rule listed in above table, if the committee would like to see this we can provide on request)

RULE: GOALKEEPERS ATTACKING HALF INVOLVEMENT

ISSUES WITH THE CURRENT RULES

- **Unfair Numerical Advantage (12v11)**
 - Creates an imbalance, making it harder for defenders to press or contest possession.
 - Leads to deep defensive setups, reducing turnovers and goal-scoring opportunities.
- **Slows the Game & Reduces Contestability**
 - Teams use goalkeepers to safely recycle possession, limiting physical contests and defensive engagement.
 - Easier ball retention allows teams to slow the game down rather than attack.
 - In poor weather conditions and/or with large score leads, teams exploit this by holding the ball instead of creating scoring chances.
- **Impact on Goalkeeper Role**
 - Shifts focus from traditional goalkeeping skills (shot-stopping, distribution) to attacking involvement.
 - Forces keepers to be more like outfield players, potentially discouraging specialists from the position.
 - Some teams prioritize attacking goalkeepers over skilled shot-stoppers, changing team dynamics.

POTENTIAL ADJUSTMENTS

- **Ensure Numerical Balance**
 - Restrict goalkeeper movement— prohibit forward half involvement for goalkeeper and only allow them to receive passes inside their small square.
 - Ensure fair possession dynamics by requiring a minimum of four defenders to remain in their half, allowing a goalkeeper to attack if needed but ensuring balanced numbers (11v11 when attacking).
 - Allow an opposition forward to track the goalkeeper if he advances (12v12 instead of 12v11).

RULE: KICK-OUT RULE ADJUSTMENTS

ISSUES WITH THE CURRENT RULES

- **Lack of Variety & Creativity**
 - The rule removes strategic options, forcing all teams to play the same way. Kickouts have become predictable, with limited tactical options.
 - Goalkeepers are now required to kick long to contested areas, reducing their ability to showcase precision and tactical awareness.
- **Increased Scramble & Reduced Skill**
 - Kickouts now result in large, unstructured midfield contests, diminishing clean high fielding.
 - The removal of mid-range kickouts has reduced the role of intelligent movement and accurate distribution.
 - Instead of rewarding creative and athletic skill, kickouts have turned into random break-ball situations.
 - Momentum swings now often come down to luck rather than skilful execution.
- **Slower, Less Dynamic Play**
 - Forcing long kickouts does not speed up the game but often delays it, with teams setting up structured contests.
 - The 20-second limit is unrealistic, especially after turnovers or in windy conditions.
 - The removal of the back pass rule was already a sufficient restriction.
 - Teams lacking tall, physical players struggle significantly with the new rule, putting them at a disadvantage.

POTENTIAL ADJUSTMENTS

- **Reintroduce Short & Mid-Range Kickouts**
 - Allow kickouts inside the 40m arc to restore variety and strategy.
 - Maintain the no-backpass rule to the goalkeeper, ensuring teams still press high.
 - Let kickouts go back to outside the D rather than beyond 40m, creating space and reducing scrums.
 - These mid/short range kicks would create more space on the pitch and allow for better 1v1 or 2v2 contests in midfield.
 - If a team wants to win a kickout, they should be forced to push up rather than standing passively.
 - Pressing high on short kickouts adds excitement and forces teams to play out smartly.
 - Reward goalkeepers who take risks with precise kick-passing rather than forcing them to launch every kick long.
- **Ensure Balance Between Contest & Strategy**
 - A balance between pressing opportunities and varied restart strategies would enhance the spectacle of the game.
 - Defending teams should still have pressing opportunities, therefore the forced long-kick requirement should be reconsidered.
 - If arc kickout rule is altered to allow mid/short kickouts, this can be enhanced by only allow kickouts to be kicked following referees whistle from a re-start. Will allow players to set and mark players encouraging defensive kickout press and more contests.

RULE: DISSENT RULES & HANDING THE BALL BACK TO OPPOSITION

Note: Reducing abuse towards referees has been noted by player feedback as an overall very positive change, and there seems to be less issue with the arguing/abuse to referees. More concern and issues are with the handing of the ball back to the opposition directly.

ISSUES WITH THE CURRENT RULES

- **Handing the Ball Back – Issues & Adjustments Needed**
 - Handing the ball back is too strict; placing it on the ground or throwing it directly to the opposition should be allowed.
 - Handing the ball back can be a disadvantage—no opportunity for a quick solo or break.
 - The rule takes players out of defensive positions, giving an unfair advantage to the opposition.
 - If a player deliberately slows the game by holding onto the ball or throwing it away, only then should the ball be moved forward.
- **Inconsistent Referee Enforcement**
 - Some referees allow reasonable questioning, while others penalize any discussion.
 - Players should be able to ask questions respectfully without fear of an automatic 50m penalty.
 - Only abusive or deliberate time-wasting behaviour should be punished.
- **50m Penalty & Game Flow**
 - The punishment for minor infractions, such as not handing the ball back, is excessive. A 50m penalty should only apply if the offending player slows the game down.
 - The rule slows the game and disrupts defensive transitions, as players are removed from play when handing the ball back.
 - It creates unnecessary stoppages, making games feel less natural and fluid.

POTENTIAL ADJUSTMENTS

- **Modify the 50m Penalty**
 - Reduce the penalty distance to 25m for minor infractions.
 - Only enforce the full 50m penalty for deliberate time-wasting or abuse.
- **Allow Alternative Ways to Return the Ball**
 - Throwing the ball back to the opposition should be acceptable.
 - Players should be able to leave the ball on the ground instead of handing it directly to an opponent.
- **Improve Referee-Player Communication**
 - Players should be allowed to ask referees genuine questions without penalty.
 - There needs to be clearer direction to players and referees on acceptable and healthy discussion during games.
 - There needs to be greater consistency in how referees apply the dissent rule.

The background features a dark teal gradient. A silhouette of a person is shown in a dynamic, athletic pose, possibly a dancer or athlete, with one leg raised and arms extended. To the right of the person is a solid dark circle. The lower half of the image is filled with a series of concentric, perspective-distorted lines that create a sense of depth and movement, resembling a stylized floor or a tunnel.

APPENDIX

LEAGUE ATTENDANCE FIGURES ROUND 1-7

Year	Total Sales Rnd 1	Games	Juvenile
2025	82,804	16	10,001
2024	57,852	16	

Year	Total Sales Rnd 2	Games	Juvenile
2025	59,496	16	16,420
2024	49,244	16	

Year	Total Sales Rnd 3	Games	Juvenile
2025	51,654	16	11,043
2024	61,586	16	

Year	Total Sales Rnd 4	Games	Juvenile
2025	69,117	16	14,368
2024	33,193	16	

Year	Total Sales Rnd 5	Games	Juvenile
2025	74,963	16	19,731
2024	42,752	16	

Year	Total sale Rnd 6	Games	Juvenile
2025	69,170	15	13,540
2024	33,193	16	

Year	Total sales Rnd 7	Games	Juvenile
2025	51,993	16	12,755
2024	42,789	15	



FRC