

DUBLIN ACE IN

One more concussion and it could knock it on the head

Gormley: Let Harte rule head

By ORLA BANNON

FORMER Tyrone warrior Conor Gormley insists Mickey Harte will not let his Red Hands be bullied by Donegal in Sunday's Ulster SFC preliminary-round clash.

Despite predictions that a youthful Tyrone side will fail to match the provincial champions' physicality, Gormley reckons brains are more important than brawn.

The three-time All-Ireland winner said: "It won't come down to physicality because it will be more of a game-plan-type thing. Tyrone need to move the ball better against Donegal than they have been doing and not carry into the tackle. "They will be playing into Donegal's hands if they carry too much ball. "They must be more direct in their play."

The Carrickmore man was the one Tyrone player who famously stood up to Donegal's intimidation of goalkeeper Niall Morgan when the sides last met in Ulster two years ago.

He showed Donegal players out of the way when they tried to put Morgan off his free-kicks in Ballyboley's MacCunhaill Park.

Former Donegal boss Jim McQuinn recently pointed to overpowering Tyrone as the reason they beat them three years in a row from 2011 to 2013 in the Ulster SFC.

But Gormley, who retired last winter, does not agree.

He said: "I don't think our boys are too small or light, I would say they can take care of themselves. "When Donegal beat us the last few times in Ulster, we never chatted about how we thought they were stronger than us. They were just better."

Despite suffering relegation from Division 1 this season, Tyrone claimed the Ulster Under-21 title last month.

And even though they start the Ulster campaign as underdogs, Gormley believes Harte's team can pull off a shock.

He said: "People are talking about the Under-21 success but that will be forgotten and forgotten very quickly, if the seniors are beaten on Sunday. "If they are still thinking about being relegated, it will be a short summer but there is enough quality in the team for us to make pull off a wee upset. "They haven't shown it often enough but they have something about them. Donegal might be thinking they're going to have an easy passage because they've beaten Tyrone so often. "Hopefully, that might play into our hands."

RETIREMENT THREAT

RORY O'CARROLL

RORY O'CARROLL insists that one more knockout blow to the head could mean lights out for his Dublin career.

By CIAN MURPHY
GAA Writer

that can go in around the square in football, it is a brave move for O'Carroll to put his concussion views on the line. But it is clearly a matter he takes seriously and he is eager for the GAA not to be found wanting in this area.

The full-back is one of the most outspoken supporters of the need for strict guidelines in the area of concussion in sport.

His stance came about after the Kilmacud Crokes defender was famously clobbered and concussed and remained on the field in the closing minutes of Dublin's 2013 All-Ireland final win over Mayo at Croke Park.

There is an expert view which claims a sportsman who is concussed three times should consider not continuing to play in that sport.

Now O'Carroll reckons the issue is so serious that he is willing to consider calling time on his football career if he were to suffer a second serious bang to the head.

O'Carroll said: "Concussion can happen in anything but you have to look at where it is most likely to happen. "It's far more likely to happen in the game of rugby than GAA. "Having said that, I have experienced concussion before. "I suppose the experts in Acquired Brain Injury Ireland would say three times is a knock-out. I was to receive another serious concussion, I would very seriously consider not playing. "Your career could be ten years."

O'Carroll is anxious that he is not seen to be bashing rugby — but he thinks that concussion protocols need to be treated seriously.

He added: "I don't want to get into GAA bashing rugby. That's not what it's about. "My views don't represent Dublin GAA or anybody else, apart from myself. "Concussion happens in American football, which is played in Ireland, and many other sports which are played in Ireland. "It's not just a rugby thing. What sparked this was a letter I wrote to the Irish Times and that was in relation to rugby."

Given the his

And I'd like to welcome the first steps being taken by the GAA which could lead to teams being allowed to assess and replace a player through concussion outside of normal substitutes.

O'Carroll believes that staying on the field after being knocked out — like he did in 2013 — is not something that would be repeated now.

He insisted: "I believe that wouldn't happen again. "I also believe that there are proposals being brought to Congress. So with all these things, they take a lot of time. "O'Carroll is now an ambassador for Acquired Brain Injury Ireland.

And he has been critical in the past of rugby's approach to the area of concussion and vocal about the need to enforce as much time as possible before players are allowed to return.

O'Carroll said: "You can't treat a brain the way you treat a hamstring, you can't give deep-tissue massage to a brain."

O'Carroll said: "You can't treat a brain the way you treat a hamstring, you can't give deep-tissue massage to a brain."

O'Carroll said: "You can't treat a brain the way you treat a hamstring, you can't give deep-tissue massage to a brain."

O'Carroll said: "You can't treat a brain the way you treat a hamstring, you can't give deep-tissue massage to a brain."

O'Carroll said: "You can't treat a brain the way you treat a hamstring, you can't give deep-tissue massage to a brain."

But it is clearly a matter he takes seriously and he is eager for the GAA not to be found wanting in this area.

O'Carroll is anxious that he is not seen to be bashing rugby — but he thinks that concussion protocols need to be treated seriously.

O'Carroll said: "You can't treat a brain the way you treat a hamstring, you can't give deep-tissue massage to a brain."

O'Carroll said: "You can't treat a brain the way you treat a hamstring, you can't give deep-tissue massage to a brain."

O'Carroll said: "You can't treat a brain the way you treat a hamstring, you can't give deep-tissue massage to a brain."

O'Carroll said: "You can't treat a brain the way you treat a hamstring, you can't give deep-tissue massage to a brain."

and-a-bit weeks and have another week or so to go. "I don't want to come back too early. "It's not ideal — if I do come back when I am meant to, it's still only ten days before a Championship match which isn't ideal because I want to give myself the best chance of trying to be selected. "But I'd like to think long term I will try to get my hamstrings right, as opposed to rushing them."

O'Carroll knows that being out of the team — even for an opening-round game in Leitrim — is far from ideal in terms of commanding a spot in Gavin's starting line-up.

O'Carroll said: "That fear of missing out is always there, regardless of whether you are injured or not. "It all depends on how you play — it's just when you are injured and not there it's just even more so. "It is just kind of focusing on myself and trying to get myself right and back to training and takes it from there. "It was a little tight against Cork and then for the last ball I went for it, it went, so I immediately flagged to get myself off. "It was frustrating because I injured my left one against Monaghan and then the right one against Cork."

O'Carroll said: "You can't treat a brain the way you treat a hamstring, you can't give deep-tissue massage to a brain."

O'Carroll said: "You can't treat a brain the way you treat a hamstring, you can't give deep-tissue massage to a brain."

O'Carroll said: "You can't treat a brain the way you treat a hamstring, you can't give deep-tissue massage to a brain."

O'Carroll said: "You can't treat a brain the way you treat a hamstring, you can't give deep-tissue massage to a brain."

Ryan: ... solution

Hurl of a big fuss for Ryan

By CIAN MURPHY

PAUL RYAN reckons the GAA did not need to change the penalty rule — just stop keepers using their bigger hands if they were taking strikes.

The Ballyboden man says it was not so much the extra yards a keeper was stealing when doing the controversial forward lift and strike — it was using the goalkeeper's hurley to take the penalty. Since the 1970s keepers have been allowed use a bigger 'boos' on their hurleys.

This bigger surface area makes it easier to make contact with the sliotar. And Ryan believes using their bigger hurley is what gave Cork's Anthony Nash and others an unfair advantage.

Ryan said: "It could have been solved if they had just got rid of the goalie hurley. "If they got rid of the goalie hurley from anyone coming down to take it, and just keep three on the line, I think that might solve a lot. "There wouldn't have been any need to switch the people on the line... just take the goalie hurley out of the free and you wouldn't be connecting with it so cleanly. "Facing a lone goalkeeper instead of a keeper and two backs should make it easier to score — even if the ball must be struck before the 20-metre line. But Ryan reckons there will be added pressure on the taller. He said: "It's after going from one extreme to the other and now there's only one in the goal. "So you could say it's easier — but neither's easy in front of a few thousand. "With extra space to aim for Ryan says penalty-takers will have to pick a spot, as well as try to get a powerful connection to score. He explained: "You have to put a certain amount of power in it and pick a spot. "But you're under the threat that the keeper is just going to never. "Rather than relying on reaction, he's going to be in that spot before so he's going to pick a spot, and you're going to pick a spot, and that's going to be a guessing game. "And that's the way it's going to go."



LEARNING THE ROPES ... Rory O'Carroll was speaking at the launch of AIG's Pupil Protector insurance scheme, a personal accident plan that provides financial support in the event of an accident to a child



FREE FOR ALL ... Rory O'Carroll tackles Mayo's Alan Freeman in 2013 final, in which he sustained a concussion