



SOUTHERN FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Hot Weather Policy

The Southern Football League Hot Weather Policy has been adapted from the SANFL Hot Weather Policy and will assist Member Club's volunteers, players, officials and spectators to undertake necessary action in cases of extreme hot weather.

This is to prevent injury, and possible death, from heat illness by recognizing and managing potentially dangerous heat situations.

The Southern Football League recognizes that the risk of an elevated body temperature from high intensity sport in a hot environment is significant, and can lead to heat illness presented as heat exhaustion and heat stroke. The Southern Football League also recognizes that children are at a higher risk than adults. Symptoms can be worse if fluid replacement during exercise is inadequate which leads to fluid loss and dehydration.

Training/Competitions in Hot Weather

The Southern Football League & Member Clubs Head Trainer or person acting in this capacity where the Head Trainer is not available shall check the forecast temperature at 6pm the day before the event on the Australian Bureau of Meteorology website - www.bom.gov.au . Based on the forecast temperature, the following action will be taken regarding the event:

| Ambient Temperature | Risk of Heat Illness | Recommended Management for sports activities |
|---------------------|----------------------|--|
| 26 - 30 | Moderate | All Grades Time interval between available drinks no more than 15minutes, with a break sufficient for all players to replenish fluids. Overall duration of session to be 60-90 minutes. |
| 31 - 35 | High - very high | Seniors: Time interval between available drinks no more than 15 minutes, with a break sufficient for all players to replenish fluids. Activity intensity to be reduced to moderate pace with breaks in intensity Overall duration of session to be 60-90 minutes Juniors: Outdoor activities modified with reduction in intensity and increased drink break sufficient for players to replenish fluids. Interval between breaks no more than 10 minutes with use of shade as much as possible. Overall duration of session limited to 60 minutes. Sub Junior: All activities cancelled |
| 36 and above | Extreme | Seniors: No outdoor activities to be conducted between 10am and 4pm. Water based activities or activities in air conditioned indoor facilities may be conducted but must be modified to prevent heat stress. Modified outside activity only in consultation with Head Trainer . All Junior and Sub Junior training cancelled |



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Where there has been a change in the temperature after 6pm the evening before the training or game the trainer on duty shall refer back to the above chart to advise coaches and officials on the activity and intensity of such that can be conducted after the trainer on duty has taken the temperature prior to the activity commencing.

Players and officials shall be encouraged to drink fluid prior to and during all competitions and training sessions to avoid dehydration, and for rehydration following competitions and training sessions.

In all competitions and training sessions the Southern Football League & Member Clubs shall ensure that there is an adequate supply of water for drinking and refreshment, and the appropriate drinks breaks are taken as necessary during these competitions or training sessions.

Players and officials with any symptoms of heat illness shall immediately cease exercising. They shall have immediate first aid treatment including Strip/Soak/Fan (strip off any excess clothing and rest in a shaded area, soak or spray with water and rehydrate, and fan) to reduce body temperature as quickly as possible. This person shall immediately be referred for treatment by a medical professional.

Example:

A trainer checks the forecast 24hrs prior to a 4:30pm training session and sees a predicted temperature of 38°C, with a cool change expected in the afternoon/evening.

On the day of training, the trainer checks www.bom.gov.au at 3:30pm and temperature has dropped to 32°C. The training session may take place, modified in accordance with table above.

If no information is available to indicate that the temperature has decreased from the forecast 38°C, the training session should be postponed until further information is obtained, or cancelled.

Additional Notes

- Qualified trainers shall be in attendance at all sessions.
- Young children are especially at risk in the heat.
- Although children can acclimatise to exercise in the heat, they take longer to do so than adults.
- Coaches should be aware of this and limit training for non-acclimatised children during exposure to hot environments.
- Children tend to have a more 'common sense' approach to heat illness than adults. They 'listen to their bodies' more and will usually slow down or stop playing if they feel distressed or unwell.
- **On no account should children be forced to continue if they appear distressed or unwell or if a trainer has advised the coach that they feel the child should not continue.**



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Matches

Modifications to match conditions, as set out below, **shall** apply when the actual temperature at the start of the game is above 30 degrees but below 36 degrees. If the actual temperature cannot be determined the forecast temperature (according to from the Australian Bureau of Meteorology (www.bom.gov.au)) shall be used.

When the temperature is 36 degrees or above the game should be cancelled.

Modifications

- Timekeepers will blow a siren at the next break of play after the halfway mark of each quarter to allow a 2 minute break for all participants to take fluids and cool down.
- For an A grade game with time on the siren shall be sounded at the next break of play after the 15 minute mark of the quarter.
- Only water runners, trainers and coaches are allowed to enter the playing arena during this break.
- Players may leave the playing arena if shade is available nearby.
- A warning siren will be sounded after one minute and 45 seconds.
- If at any stage during a game a trainer indicates to the coach that there are concerns about a player's well being that player shall be removed from the game immediately and will not return until the trainer believes it is safe to do so.

More information

The full SMA Guidelines document is available [here](#), or within the "Resources & Advice" section of the SMA website sma.org.au

Smartplay "[Drink Up](#)" brochure for avoiding dehydration (www.smartplay.com.au)