



# HEAT POLICY

ADOPTED AUGUST 2007

Baseball Victoria has formulated this heat policy to minimise the risk of injury, illness and possible death in Victorian baseball by assisting administrators, officials, coaches and participants to recognize and manage potentially dangerous situations.

## **Background**

There is scientific evidence which indicates that undertaking moderate to high intensity exercise in extreme heat is dangerous. The scientific evidence uses Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) as the best measure of heat strain currently available. WBGT is not the same as air temperature. WBGT accounts for the levels of humidity, radiation, wind movement and air temperature. Measuring WBGT is done using a Wet Bulb Globe Thermometer. These devices are not readily available and are costly. Therefore, ambient temperatures will be measured by commercially available mercury bulb, digital or mechanical thermometers. Clubs shall have such a device available on days where the temperature is reasonably expected to be of concern.

## **COMMENCEMENT OF GAMES**

Games shall not commence if the ambient air temperature recorded by a commercially available thermometer referred to above reaches 38 degrees Celsius for Senior games or 34 degrees Celsius for Junior games. (Maximum Temperature)

The temperature shall be measured by the umpire at the Pitching mound by suspending the thermometer approximately one (1) metre above the ground and ensuring that it is shaded.

When the expected maximum for a game day is 30c or above for juniors, or 34c or above for seniors, check the temperature at the start, as well as each thirty (30) minutes of the game, upon equal innings for each team.

The umpire shall be the sole arbiter of the temperature reading.

## **CONTINUATION OF GAMES**

If a game has commenced and the umpire is of the opinion that the temperature has reached the maximums referred to above, a temperature measurement shall be taken in the manner prescribed.

If the Maximum Temperature has been reached, the game shall be stopped immediately.

A Legal Game shall apply if the conditions of Competition Rule 4 are met. Games that do not reach Legal Game status shall be deemed to be a Nil all Draw unless re-scheduled by the Pennant Committee.

As with wet weather, the umpire is empowered to suspend the game if there is a reasonable expectation that the temperature will fall below the Maximum Temperature. Should this occur, the game shall continue from the point of suspension.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Baseball Victoria recommends that all clubs adopt and implement the following procedures and strategies to minimize the risk of heat illness and injury.

### **1. Hydration**

The more a participant sweats, the more fluid he/she must consume to avoid dehydration. High levels of dehydration may increase the risk of heat stress. To diminish the risk of heat stress fluid should be consumed before, during and after activity.

It is recommended participants drink at least 500 ml within 2 hours of playing or training to promote adequate hydration and allow time for excretion of excess water.

During competition games, training or strenuous activities it is recommended that participants drink fluid at regular intervals to replace water lost through sweating. Participants should aim to drink at least 150ml every 15 minutes, however, this amount may vary dependent on the rate of sweating. Fluid taken should be cooler than the air temperature.

Water is an adequate fluid option for activities lasting up to one hour. Participants competing in games, events or training activities exceeding one hour are

recommended to use carbohydrate based sports drinks as a means of replacing fluids, carbohydrates and electrolytes lost during prolonged activity. These drinks include commercially available sports drinks.

Players should be encouraged to drink fluids in breaks between innings and should be provided convenient access to cool fluids during breaks of play without unnecessary interruption to the game or event.

### **Strategy 1.1**

Clubs should provide players with cool water or other recommended fluids to consume during breaks in games and training sessions

### **Strategy 1.2**

Players should be encouraged to use personal drink bottles for use at games and training sessions

## **2. Shade and Sun Protection**

Adequate shade is necessary for players whilst not actively participating in the game. This assists with recovery and provides protection from the Sun.

Sunscreen is also an important element of sun protection, particularly given Baseball's clothing culture of short sleeves and peaked caps. Sunscreen should be applied before, and at recommended regular intervals throughout the game.

### **Strategy 2.1**

Sunscreen (SPF30+) should be provided for use by all players

### **Strategy 2.2**

Where fixed shade is unavailable, it is recommended that portable shade such as umbrellas or such be erected

## **JUNIORS**

### **(Tee ball, Under 12 & Under 14 and Under 16)**

The physiological and structural difference between children and adults places children at a greater risk of suffering from heat illness. These differences impact on a child's ability to respond to environmental heat and acclimatize to heat. These differences include:

A larger surface area/body mass ratio, which affects their ability to dissipate heat when environmental temperature is greater than skin temperature. This can be an advantage when heat loss is necessary, but is a disadvantage when radiant or convective heat gain occurs.

At air temperature greater than or equal to 34° Celsius there is extreme risk of thermal injury to all children and adolescents participants

### **Juniors Playing Seniors**

Juniors who participate in senior competition must be the subject of special support and scrutiny by club administrators and coaches. If senior games are played in temperatures exceeding 34 degrees Celsius, Juniors **eligible to play U16 or below** shall not participate.

### **Junior Scheduling**

All Junior games and sessions should be scheduled, where possible, between 9 00 am to 11.00 am and 6.00 pm to 8.00 pm during the hottest months of the year.

### **Player Rest and Rotation**

In conditions of high risk participants should be provided opportunities to rest through the use of player interchange or substitution.

In the summer months and in situations where the temperature is uncharacteristically high, drink breaks shall be enforced every 15 minutes should the inning not be completed.