

HEAT POLICY

Policy number	HT-01	Version	2
Drafted by	Peter Steve	Approved by Board on	2 MAR 2019
Responsible person	Governance	Scheduled review date	20 JAN 2020

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board shall be responsible for communicating this policy to Members of Gridiron Victoria.

The Secretary of the Board shall be responsible for ensuring that a copy of this policy is available for reference online, for easy access by Members. The Board Chair shall be responsible for making a ruling on any point in dispute in this policy.

Gridiron Victoria (GV) has a responsibility to take a positive role in educating and increasing the awareness of its registered participants towards the dangers of physical activity in the heat. With this in mind, the Gridiron Victoria, Hot Weather policy has been formulated which reinforces the guidelines produced by Sports Medicine Australia, (Vic Branch).

The policy shall apply to all members, administrators, officials, coaches and players associated with Gridiron Victoria.

Contents

Responsibilities.....	1
Part 1 Background.....	2
Part 2 Policy	2
Part 3 Non-Suspension/Modification of Games	3
Part 4 Training.....	3
Part 5 Non-Suspension/Modification of Training	3
Part 6 Education.....	4
Part 7 Policy Review.....	4
Part 8 Hot Weather guidelines checklist.....	4
Related Documents	6
Authorisation.....	6

HEAT POLICY

PART 1 BACKGROUND

1. Exercise in the heat creates competitive demands on the cardiovascular system, which is required to increase blood supply to the exercising muscles. At the same time, it must regulate the body temperature by increasing skin blood flow in order to produce the sweat that keeps the body cool. High intensity exercise in a hot environment, with the associated fluid loss and elevation of the body temperature, can lead to dehydration, heat exhaustion and eventually heat stroke. Heat stroke is a potentially fatal condition and must be treated immediately by a medical professional and can still occur in the presence of good hydration. An individual's ability to regulate body temperature is dependent on a number of physical and external factors and when considering suspending a specific sporting event, there are many factors that need to be considered. One way of evaluating the external environment is Wet-Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT). WBGT measures thermal stress. It is a more reliable indicator than ambient temperature (degrees Celsius) as it takes into account humidity. Humidity indicates how saturated the air is with water molecules. The higher the humidity, the less likely the chance to cool off, through the evaporation of sweat. WBGT is not the same as temperature in degrees Celsius, i.e. 35 degrees Celsius, 20% relative humidity, is approximately a WBGT of 27.6 degrees Celsius. Within this policy, guidelines have been produced to assist GV in deciding whether to suspend or modify games or training. However, these guidelines are not binding, and all parties must act responsibly.

PART 2 POLICY

2. Action plan for Suspension of Events

- 2.1. GV will enforce, through this policy, the following action plan for suspending gridiron/flag football games on days of hot weather:
 - 2.1.1. The GV Match Day Official will obtain the WBGT one-hour prior to the programmed start time of the game from the Victoria Weather Bureau's website page at <http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDV65079.shtml>. If the WBGT is unavailable, GV is to obtain the ambient temperature.
 - 2.1.2. The checklist, in accordance with hot weather guidelines, is to be performed by a GV representative. (An attachment to this policy contains pre-calculated values for most questions on the checklist)
 - 2.1.3. Gridiron Victoria will contact teams if the points score from the checklist exceeds sixtyfive (65):
 - 2.1.3.1. If the WBGT is above 28 (An ambient temperature of 35 degrees Celsius to be used as cut-off equivalent to 28 WBGT if the WBGT not available).
 - 2.1.3.2. If the age of the majority of participants gets a point value of 8 on the Hot Weather Guideline Checklist, it will be recommended by Gridiron Victoria that the game be suspended and re-scheduled.
- 2.2. Upon being contacted by GV, the host team contact is required to:
 - 2.2.1. Contact the participant teams and decide in consultation, whether the game is to be suspended.
 - 2.2.2. Notify the GV representative of the decision 30 minutes prior to the scheduled start time of the game.
- 2.3. For all games that are suspended, GV has a responsibility to:
 - 2.3.1. Reschedule, wherever possible, the affected match.
 - 2.3.2. Record the match as a nil all draw if it is not possible to reschedule the match. Premiership points are to be split between the two teams.
 - 2.3.3. If one or both team contacts are unable to be contacted, then the game will go ahead as scheduled.

HEAT POLICY

- 2.3.4. Games that are not suspended may still be modified to accommodate the heat, as per agreement from the two-team Head Coaches. (Please refer to Section 4 below for suggested modifications to decrease the risk of injury caused by heat.)

PART 3 NON-SUSPENSION/MODIFICATION OF GAMES

3. In the event that a game is not suspended, it is recommended that the following precautions be implemented to ensure the safety of all participants if checklist point score is from 56 to 74.
- 3.1. A reduction in playing time and extended rest periods to ensure opportunity to rehydrate during the game. This is to be actively promoted by coaches, officials and captains during the rest periods. Playing Time could be altered from 12-minute quarters, to 10-minute quarters if the checklist point score is above 65.
- 3.2. Reformatting the game to include five-minute breaks at quarter & three-quarter time if the checklist point score is above 65 and allowing for and promoting extra drink breaks and hydration by Officials calling extra water Time Outs if the checklist point score is above 55.
- 3.3. Providing adequate shaded areas (where possible) and water, if the checklist point score above 65.)

PART 4 TRAINING

4. Action Plan for Cancellation of Training

- 4.1. GV will enforce through this policy the following action plan for suspending gridiron/flag football training on days of hot weather:
- 4.1.1. GV affiliated bodies (Clubs) to obtain the WBGT within an hour prior to the programmed start time of training from <http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDV65079.shtml>. If the WBGT is unavailable the affiliated body is to obtain the ambient temperature.
- 4.1.2. The checklist in accordance with hot weather guidelines to be performed by a representative of the affiliated body. An appendix to this policy to contain pre-calculated values for most questions on the checklist
- 4.1.3. The representative of the affiliated body only to contact Head Coach if the points score from the checklist exceeds sixty-five (65). In this case if the WBGT is above 28 or an ambient temperature of 35 degrees Celsius, to be used as cut-off equivalent to 28 WBGT if the WBGT is not available, or the age of the majority of participants get a point value of 8 on the Hot Weather Guideline Checklist, it will be recommended by GV that training be suspended.
- 4.1.4. Upon being contacted by the representative of the affiliated body, the Head Coach is to decide whether training is to be suspended.
- 4.1.5. Notify the representative of the affiliated body of the decision prior to the programmed start time of training.
- 4.1.6. Training that is not suspended, should be modified to accommodate the heat, as per agreement from the Head Coach. (Please refer to Section 4 below for suggested modifications to decrease the risk of injury caused by heat.)

PART 5 NON-SUSPENSION/MODIFICATION OF TRAINING

5. In the event that training is not suspended, it is recommended that the following precautions be taken to ensure the safety of all participants, if the checklist point score is from 56 to 74.
- 5.1. A reduction in training time, extended rest periods & extra rest periods to ensure opportunity to rehydrate during the game. Hydration is to be actively promoted by coaches, officials and captains during the rest periods.
- 5.2. Providing adequate shaded areas (where possible) and water.

HEAT POLICY

PART 6 EDUCATION

6. All Clubs will be issued with the Smart Play Hot Weather Guidelines as a point of referral, (See attached) as well as being issued a copy of this policy.

PART 7 POLICY REVIEW

7. The GV Hot Weather Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it remains current and practical.

PART 8 HOT WEATHER GUIDELINES CHECKLIST

1. WBGT	to be obtained
2. Overall duration of Event	6
3. Individual Intensity during the Event	5
4. Acclimatisation of Participants	5
5. Athletic ability of individuals	6
6. Age of participants	3
7. Time between available drinks	2
8. Time of the event	5 (late games) 2 (early games)
9. Surface Type	4 (Artificial) 2 (Grass)
10. Venue	8
11. Other predisposed medical Conditions of participants.	To be obtained
12. Other factors to consider; Shade Available Water freely available Sports trainer/first aid person on site Individual body fat of participants	Home team (YES) / Away Team (NO) YES YES MODERATE
Total Point Score:	

1. Wet Bulb Globe Temperature.

0-18 degrees	2
18-22 degrees	10
23-28 degrees	14
28 + degrees	20

2. Overall Duration of Event.

0-30 minutes.	2
30-60 minutes	4
60-2 hours	6
2 hours +	8

3. Individual Intensity during the Event.

Easy pace throughout	2
Moderate pace, breaks in intensity	4
Moderate pace throughout	6
Sustained effort with some breaks	8
Sustained effort throughout	10

4. Acclimatisation of Participants.

Used to hot weather conditions	2
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HEAT POLICY

Used to warm weather conditions	5
Used to cool/cold conditions	8

5. Athletic Ability of Individuals.

Elite fitness levels	2
Good fitness level	6
Moderate fitness levels	6
Low fitness levels	8

6. Age of Participants.

18 -30	2
13 -17	5
30 -40	5
40 +	8
Under 13	8

7. Time Between Available Drinks.

0-15 minutes	2
15 -25 minutes	4
25 -35 minutes	6
35 -45 minutes	8
45 + minutes	10

8. Time Of The Event.

Before 9am	2
After dark	2
9am till 11am	5
3pm till sunset	5
11am to 3pm	10

9. Surface Type.

Water	1
Grass	2
Boards	4
Sand	6
Synthetic Surface	6
Asphalt	8

10. Venue.

Indoor air conditioning	1
Indoor no air conditioning	4
Outdoor	8

11. Other Predisposed Medical Conditions Of Participants.

Yes	6
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12. Other Factors To Consider.

Shade available during breaks	Yes/No
Water freely available at venue	Yes/No
Sports trainer/first aid person on site	Yes/No
Individual body fat of participants	High / Low

Complete your checklist

a. Determine the point score for each item.

(Some categories may not be exactly to your needs, so you will need to use common sense, if in doubt choose higher value in order to err on the side of caution.)

Total of Your Sport =



RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Ops Rules – www.gridironvictoria.com.au/about-us/

AUTHORISATION

Peter Steve – Director & Chairperson
Gridiron Victoria Ltd.

2nd March 2019