



LOCAL PLAYING CONDITIONS HEAT POLICY - GUIDELINES

Version 2017.02

GWBA MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE | PUBLISHED 8TH NOVEMBER 2017
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➤ Updated rule reference in section 7(h)

1) PURPOSE

- a) To provide clear guidelines on best practice and expectations regarding player safety and enjoyment of the sport of baseball on days of elevated and extreme temperatures.
- b) This policy has been developed with reference to available resources and recommendations from medical professionals, including:
 - * *Sports Medicine Australia (SMA) – Beat the Heat.*
 - * *Baseball SA - Heat Policy.*
 - * *ACT Baseball Umpires Association – Heat Policy.*
- c) This policy is to cover all games and activities within the Greater Western Baseball Association, including its Member Clubs and Representative Squads.
- d) During the hot weather every care must be taken to look after the Players, Coaches, Managers and Team Officials. Make sure that adequate water is available. Shade is mandatory and must be provided at all diamonds. Caps/hats must be worn. Sunscreen is also encouraged to be supplied and applied.

2) SPORTS MEDICINE AUSTRALIA

- a) Sports Medicine Australia is Australia's peak national umbrella body for the prevention of lifestyle diseases through sports medicine and sports science and injury prevention. Sports Medicine Australia is widely acknowledged internationally as the world's leading multi-disciplinary sports medicine body.
- b) According to Sports Medicine Australia's "*Beat the Heat*" guidelines, it is key to note:

"Sporting organisations need to be aware of the difficulty of settling "one size fits all" guidelines in this area. For normally healthy active people, the only dangers from heat illness are likely to arise from high intensity exercise such as endurance running. Most community sport does not reach this level for periods long enough to cause serious harm. Many types of sport, such as cricket and tennis, are usually safe at higher temperatures because of the lower intensity of the play."

3) DEFINITIONS

- a) **Elevated Temperatures** – Specifically refers to Heat Index over 30°C.
- b) **Extreme Temperatures** – Specifically refers to Heat Index of 37 and above.
- c) **Dehydration** - is fluid loss which occurs during exercise, mainly due to perspiration and respiration. It makes an athlete more susceptible to fatigue and muscle cramps. Inadequate fluid replacement before, during and after exercise will lead to excessive dehydration and may lead to heat exhaustion and heat stroke.
- d) **Heat Exhaustion** - Characterised by a high heart rate, dizziness, headache, loss of endurance/skill/confusion and nausea. The skin may still be cool/sweating, but there will be signs of developing vasoconstriction (eg, pale colour). Internal temperature may be up

to 40°C and the athlete may collapse on stopping activity. To avoid heat exhaustion, if people feel unwell during exercise they should immediately cease activity and rest. Further benefit comes if the rest is in a shaded area with some passing breeze (from a fan if necessary) and the person takes extra hydration. Misting or spraying with water can also help.

- e) **Heat Stroke** - Those who show signs of altered mental function, loss of consciousness or collapse during exercise are likely suffering heat stroke. Sports participants showing signs of confusion, loss of skill, loss of coordination or irrational behaviour should be stopped and removed from the field immediately
- f) **Heat Index** - Is an index that takes account of both air temperature and relative humidity (RH) to determine the 'human-perceived' equivalent temperature – e.g. 'how hot it feels'.
See Table 1 - Heat Index Reference

Table 1 - Heat Index Reference

		Relative Humidity																		
		10%	15%	20%	25%	30%	35%	40%	45%	50%	55%	60%	65%	70%	75%	80%	85%	90%	95%	100%
Temperature °C	45	42	44																	
	44	41	43																	
	43	40	42	44																
	42	39	40	42																
	41	38	39	41	43															
	40	36	38	39	41	43														
	39	35	37	38	39	41	43													
	38	34	36	37	38	39	41	43												
	37	33	35	35	36	38	39	41	43											
	36	33	34	34	35	36	38	39	41	43										
	35	32	33	33	34	35	36	37	39	41	43									
	34	31	32	32	33	33	34	35	37	38	40	42	44							
	33	30	31	31	31	32	33	34	35	36	38	40	41	43						
	32	29	30	30	30	31	31	32	33	34	36	37	39	40	42	44				
	31	28	29	29	29	30	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	38	39	41	43			
	30	28	28	28	28	29	29	30	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	38	39	41	43	44
	29	27	27	27	28	28	28	29	29	30	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	39	41
	28	26	27	27	27	27	27	28	28	28	29	29	30	31	31	32	33	34	36	37
	27	26	26	26	26	26	27	27	27	27	28	28	28	29	29	30	30	31	33	34

TEMP RANGE	Junior Games
1 - 29	All games to go ahead
30 - 36	All games to go ahead. Additional stoppages required
37 - 39	All games cancelled / rescheduled
40 - 44	All games cancelled / rescheduled
45	All games cancelled / rescheduled

Senior Games
All games to go ahead
All games to go ahead. Additional stoppages required
All games to go ahead. Additional stoppages required
First Division only to play, restricted to 90 minutes
All games cancelled / rescheduled

4) BACKGROUND

- a) Heat illness can occur anytime a participant exercises vigorously in hot conditions. It may also occur with prolonged exposure to hot weather, even if the activity is low intensity.
- b) Heat illness in sport usually presents as either 'Heat Exhaustion' (sometimes referred to as heat stress) or, 'Heat Stroke'. Heat exhaustion is the more common sports-related heat illness. Heat stroke is rare, but it is a life threatening condition.
- c) The human body normally cools itself by perspiration. Heat is removed from the body by the evaporation of that perspiration. However, relative humidity reduces the evaporation

rate because the higher vapour content of the surrounding air does not allow the maximum amount of evaporation from the body to occur.

- d) Whilst all participants in a game of baseball can be subject to Heat Illness, umpires are generally at a greater risk due to the added protection that they wear and also that they generally have less respite from direct sunlight, given that they do not get to spend time 'on the bench' whilst the other team is 'at bat'.
- e) At all times coaches have a responsibility to ensure the safety of players at training and at games.

5) METHOD OF MEASUREMENT

- a) This policy is to be implemented in terms of the Heat Index, by factoring in both ambient temperature and relative humidity in the chart above.
- b) Club and Team Officials should use one of two methods for evaluating the Heat Index for the purpose of this policy:
 - i) Using a hand-held Extech HW30 Heat Index Meter
 - (1) Readings are to be determined in a shaded area, out of direct sunlight and as close as possible to the relevant diamond.
 - (2) The HW30 meter is to be held loosely in the fingers, or hung by the attached lanyard, for a minimum of 3 minutes. (It should not be gripped tightly or stored in a pocket).
 - (3) Firstly, the current temperature must be measured. The Heat Policy only comes into force, and the Heat Index reading considered reliable, once the ambient temperature has reached a minimum of 27°C.
 - (4) If the ambient temperature is 27°C or above, then the Heat Index should be noted and referenced against Table 2
 - ii) By obtaining the current and forecasted ambient and humidity readings for Penrith from the Bureau of Meteorology website:
<http://www.bom.gov.au/places/nsw/penrith/forecast/detailed/>
- c) Temperature should be measured ten (10) minutes prior to the scheduled starting time.
 - i) Club/Team/Game Official shall monitor the Heat Index throughout the training session or game at their own discretion, but it is recommended to do so every 20 to 30 minutes.
 - ii) For any game, the Chief Umpire may allow for a secondary reading up to thirty (30) minutes after the scheduled game time in an attempt to have a game played on the scheduled date. After forty-five (45) minutes, if the Heat Index has not reached an acceptable level, the game shall not go ahead. For any training session, this option shall be available to the Team or Club Officials.
- d) The Greater Western Baseball Association Executive or Club Secretaries may make a determination by 8pm on the night prior to any scheduled games using the 3-Hourly forecast for the predicted temperature at the scheduled game time.

- i) Where forecasted temperatures are not available within thirty (30) minutes before or after the scheduled starting time, an average between the closest times may be considered.

6) IMPLEMENTATION – TRAINING

- a) When the Heat Index is above 30, all sessions must take a five (5) minute break, every thirty (30) minutes. This includes all players and coaches for the purpose of hydration.
- b) When the Heat Index reaches 37 or higher, all Junior Competition training sessions are to be cancelled or relocated to an appropriate (cooled) indoor location.
- c) When the Heat Index reaches 40 or higher, all Senior/Open Age training sessions, with the exception of first and second grades, are to be cancelled or relocated to an appropriate (cooled) indoor location.
- d) When the Heat Index reaches 45 or higher, all Senior/Open Age training sessions are to be cancelled or relocated to an appropriate (cooled) indoor location.
- e) At all times coaches have a responsibility to ensure the safety of players at training and at games.

7) IMPLEMENTATION – GAME DAY

- a) When the Heat Index reaches 30, any half inning that takes longer than twenty (20) minutes shall take a mandatory four (4) minute break. This includes all players and coaches for the purpose of hydration.
- b) When the Heat Index reaches 37 or higher:
 - i) all Junior Competition training sessions are to be cancelled.
- c) When the Heat Index is between 37 and 40
 - i) First and second divisions shall be restricted to a maximum of two (2) hours or seven (7) innings.
 - ii) All other Senior / Open Age / Women's / Masters Competitions shall be restricted to a maximum of ninety (90) minutes or five (5) innings.
- d) When the Heat Index is between 40 and 45
 - i) First and second divisions shall be delayed by thirty (30) minutes to allow for a secondary reading, however, if the Heat Index remains above 40, then the game is to be cancelled.
 - ii) All other Senior / Open Age / Women's / Masters Competitions are to be cancelled.
- e) When the Heat Index is 45 or greater:
 - i) All competitions are to be cancelled.
- f) During a game, it will be at the absolute discretion of the Chief Umpire as to whether a game can continue based upon elevated or extreme temperatures.
- g) At all times coaches have a responsibility to ensure the safety of players at training and at games.

- h) Any games that are suspended or cancelled shall be subject to GWBA's Local Competition Rule S3.10A

8) JUNIORS PLAYING IN SENIORS / OPEN AGE COMPETITIONS

- a) All players under eighteen (18) years of age shall be subjected to the restrictions on the Junior Competitions, regardless of whether they are registered and playing in a Senior / Open Age Competition.
- b) No person under the eighteen (18) years of age shall be permitted to officiate any game once the Heat Index reaches 37.

9) OFFICIALS AND RECORDING

- a) All games that are started with an ambient temperature of thirty (30) degrees or higher should have the Heat Index readings recorded in each score book and on the official result sheet.
- b) Where the Heat Index is 37 or above:
 - i) No Umpire will work 2 games behind the plate
 - ii) Minimum 2 minute break in between each half innings
 - iii) If any half innings extends beyond 20 minutes, there will be a mandatory 5 minute break
 - iv) Home Team to provide a shade structure for the umpires.
- c) If at any time, the plate umpire believes it is unsafe to play due to extreme heat conditions, then they have the ability to suspend or cancel the game

