

HEAT POLICY - TRAINING

DATE OF ISSUE: February 2007

SCOPE

This policy applies to VFL umpires and AFL Boundary and AFL Goal umpires who train at Victoria Park.

POLICY

In the events that high temperatures and / or high humidity may affect the health and well-being of umpires, training may be suspended or modified.

DISCUSSION

The risk of thermal injury from high intensity training is significant. It can range from cramps, through to heat exhaustion to heat stroke, coma and death (Mitchell, 1994).

During training, a participant may produce 15-20 times the heat they produce at rest. Dissipation of this excess heat is primarily achieved through sweating. If the body's ability to dissipate heat is compromised, core temperature in an average individual may rise by one degree Celsius for every five minutes of exercise if no temperature regulating mechanisms are activated (Nadel, 1977). If an individual's core temperature is above 40 degrees Celsius (normal 37 degrees), the risk of thermal injury is significant.

Factors which impair the body's ability to dissipate heat are:

1. High ambient temperature
2. Solar radiation
3. Humidity (this compromises the efficacy of sweating)
4. Dehydration

These factors significantly increase the risk of thermal injury occurring.

PRINCIPLES

Football Victoria is responsible for the health and well-being of its employees. As such, every effort will be made to ensure that the direction to train takes into account the type of training and the weather conditions at the time of training.

As training is conducted during the hottest part of the day, every precaution must be taken to ensure that umpires do not suffer the effects of heat.

The VFL Umpiring Department will be responsible for the administration of this policy.

PROCEDURES

A Committee will be established to implement the above policy. The Committee will comprise the State Director of Umpiring, one field umpire, one boundary umpire and one goal umpire. The State Director of Umpiring will chair the Committee. All meetings / decisions are to be documented.

COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

In the event that temperatures / humidity are of concern, the Committee shall meet prior to the commencement of training. Committee members will only be required to be present on the nights they actually train.

The Committee will decide whether there is a need to:

suspend training

modify training

or make no change to training

The decision of the Committee will then be communicated to all umpires, trainers, coaches and fitness coaches.

In the interests of occupational health and safety, umpires are expected to abide by the decision of the Committee.

Should training continue or be modified, umpires may choose not to train if they feel they are placing their health at risk.

CONSULTATION

Football Victoria has consulted with the Victorian Football Umpires Association.

REFERENCES

Mitchell BH. AFLMOA position paper on the prevention of thermal injuries in football.

Sports Health. Vol.12,No.4,pp10-18.Dec 1994

Problems with temperature regulation during exercise / edited by Ethan R.Nadel. New York : Academic Press, 1977.