



FERNTREE GULLY EAGLES JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB HEAT POLICY 2025

Purpose

To establish a club policy for managing activity in extreme weather conditions that is aligned with the Sports Medicine Australia (SMA) and AFL sporting guidelines

Definitions

Heat Exhaustion: Characterised by a high heart rate, dizziness, headache, loss of endurance/skill/confusion and nausea.

Heat Stroke: Characteristics are similar to heat exhaustion but with a dry skin, confusion and collapse.

Dehydration: 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.

Ambient Temperature/WBGT: The Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) produces ambient and WBGT readings for many locations in Australia. You can check these readings and a guide for the relative risk for your location at

<http://www.bom.gov.au/app/>

Acknowledgement

These guidelines are informed by the latest research and the expertise of Sports Medicine Australia's (SMA) medical and scientific members.

A common-sense approach should be applied, prioritizing the comfort and well-being of all individuals, including participants and officials.

Event modifications, training adjustments, or withdrawal from participation may be necessary, even in situations beyond these recommendations. Various factors must be considered when deciding whether to modify, postpone, or cancel sporting events or training, acknowledging the challenge of creating universally applicable guidelines.

EXERCISE IN HOT WEATHER – CONSIDERATIONS FOR CHILDREN

- **Young children are especially at risk in the heat :**
 - The sweating mechanism, essential for effective cooling, is poorly developed.
 - The ratio between weight and surface area in the child is such that the body absorbs heat rapidly in hot conditions.

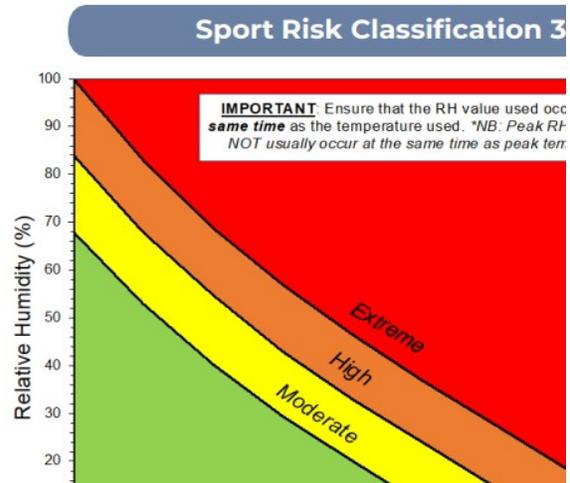
- Child athletes must be protected from over-exertion in hot climates, especially with intense or endurance exercise.
- Although children can acclimatize to exercise in the heat, they take longer to do so than adults.
- Coaches should be aware of this and limit training for children during exposure to hot environments.

Note: Children often have a more intuitive response to heat illness than adults, as they tend to "listen to their bodies" and will naturally slow down or stop playing if they feel distressed in the heat.

Under no circumstances should a child be forced to continue sports or exercise if they appear distressed or report feeling unwell

Sport Risk Classification			
1	2	3	4
Walking (leisurely)	Archery Bowls Field Athletics Fishing Golf Lifesaving Surf Sailing Shooting (Pistol/Trap) Walking (brisk)	Abseiling Australian Football Basketball Cycling Canoeing Caving Kayaking Netball Oztag Rock Climbing Rowing Soccer Tennis	Baseball Bushwalking Cricket Equestrian Horseback riding Motor Cycling Rugby Union Rugby League Softball

Each group has its own temperature/humidity graph that should be used to assess heat stress risk.



See below

The following tables provide estimates of risk related to the weather and also guidelines to managing activity in stress.

» **Ambient temperature**

Easily understood, most useful on hot, dry days.

Ambient temperature °C	Relative humidity	Risk of heat illness	Recommended management for sports activities
15 - 20		Low	Heat illness can occur Caution over-
21 - 25	Exceeds 70%	Low - moderate	Increase v Caution over-
26 - 30	Exceeds 60%	Moderate - high	Moderate early pre Reduce intensity and du Take more
31 - 35	Exceeds 50%	High - very high	Uncomfortable f Limit intensity, ta Limit duration to les
			Very stressful fo

Further guidance might be gained from the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) index. The WBGT is useful with

» WBGT

Suitable for hot, humid days.

WBGT	Risk of heat illness	Recommended management for sports
Less than 20	Low	Heat illness can occur in distant areas Caution over-motivation
21 - 25	Moderate - high	Increase vigilance Caution over-motivation Moderate early pre-season Take more breaks
26 - 29	High - very high	Limit intensity, take more breaks Limit duration to less than 60 minutes
30 and above	Extreme	Consider postponement to a cooler part of the day (allow swimming)

(SMA project team by Dr John Brotherhood and supported by the Aust. Government of Health and Aging)

Risks

- Engaging in high-intensity exercise in a hot environment can raise body temperature, increasing the risk of heat-related illness.
- Heat illness in sports may manifest as heat exhaustion or, in more severe cases, heat stroke.
- Even mild dehydration can reduce performance and increase the risk of injury.
- Overconsumption of fluids can lead to hyponatremia (low blood sodium), a potentially dangerous condition.

Responsibilities

Parents & Players

Players, and parents of junior players, must take precautions to minimize the impact of extreme heat. The following guidelines should be followed:

1. Ensure proper hydration before and during games (500-700ml per quarter).
2. Monitor hydration levels.
3. Inform medical and coaching staff if affected by heat or if performance declines noticeably.
4. Use water and electrolyte drinks.
5. Implement cooling strategies before, during, and after games.
6. Do not play in extreme heat while unwell.
7. Apply SPF 30+ sunscreen in sunny conditions.

Coach

- Follow heat management guidelines and adhere to recommendations on extreme temperature days.

Trainer

- Must be trained in the management of heat-related injuries.

Football Operations/Trainer Co-ordinator

- Responsible for monitoring the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) website for ambient temperature/Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) and communicating relevant information to coaches, team managers and teams.

Ferntree Gully Eagles Junior Football Club

- Provide teams with policy information before pre-season training.
- Ensure compliance with heat management guidelines.
- Provide cooling aids (e.g., spray bottles, sponges, fans, shade).
- Select breathable jerseys and socks.
- Report all cases of heat stress to the governing football body.
- Supply adequate fluids in appropriate bottles.
- Ensure access to cooling facilities (e.g., shade, air conditioning, fans) during both training and matches.

Scope

- Applies to all training sessions during pre-season and the EFNL season.
- Match-day decisions will be at the discretion of the EFNL and umpires.

Resources

- [SMA-Extreme-Heat-Policy-2021-Final.pdf](#)
- <http://www.bom.gov.au/app/>
- <http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDV65079.shtml>

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed biannually by the Ferntree Gully Eagles Junior Football Club Executive Group to ensure it remains relevant, practical, and aligned with community expectations and legal requirements.

Presented to the General Committee & Membership: 2025

**Ferntree Gully Eagles Junior Football Club
Executive & General Committee
2025**