

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS RISK MANAGEMENT INFONET: RM3 HOT WEATHER GUIDELINES

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***The following information is an extract from Sport Medicine Australia's 'Beat the Heat' Fact Sheet (28/01/2003).***

Hot weather can harm the performance and the health of all athletes. Exercising in hot weather conditions can place participants at risk of heat illness, and in extreme circumstances, even death.

Factors which can contribute to heat injury include:

- ⌚ High ambient (air) temperature
- ⌚ Solar radiation
- ⌚ Humidity
- ⌚ Dehydration

## **HEAT EXHAUSTION**

Dehydration can lead to heat exhaustion. Symptoms of heat exhaustion may include:

- ⌚ high heart rate,
- ⌚ dizziness,
- ⌚ loss of endurance/skill,
- ⌚ confusion,
- ⌚ cool skin, but paler than normal,
- ⌚ little urine passed, but highly concentrated
- ⌚ cramps (associated with dehydration)
- ⌚ nausea

If a player is exhibiting signs of heat stress or heat exhaustion take the following action:

- ⌚ remove from the court
- ⌚ lay the player down in a cool place
- ⌚ give plenty of cool water
- ⌚ If the player is confused or unable to drink water seek medical help immediately

## **HEAT STROKE**

Severe dehydration may lead to heat stroke which is potentially fatal and must be treated immediately by a medical practitioner. Athletes who keep participating when suffering from heat

exhaustion may experience heat stroke.

Heat stroke can still occur even if the athlete has been drinking plenty of fluid. Heat stroke symptoms include:

- ⌚ dry skin
- ⌚ confusion
- ⌚ collapsing

If a player is showing any symptoms of heat stroke take the following action:

- ⌚ Call a Doctor or Ambulance immediately
- ⌚ Remove from the court and lay the player down in a cool place
- ⌚ Give cool water to drink if conscious
- ⌚ Cool the players by putting in a cool bath, shower or under hose, applying wrapped icepacks to the groin and armpits or use wet towels
- ⌚ Maximise airflow over the player through the use of a fan or fan them with towels.

## **WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR CANCELLING MATCHES?**

Association administrators and Competition supervisors have a duty of care to cancel or postpone competition or training if there is a foreseeable risk to participants.

The following information provides a clear cancellation guidelines for competition organisers.

## **1 RISK MANAGEMENT INFONET: RM3 HOT WEATHER GUIDELINES**

## **HOW DO WE KNOW WHEN IT IS SAFE TO PLAY IN HOT CONDITIONS?**

**Children** :Children’s bodies are different to adults and they are at greater risk of heat illness. At an ambient temperature greater than 34 C° there is an extreme risk of thermal injury to all children and also adolescent participants.

**Sports Medicine Australia believes that events and activities involving children and adolescents that are conducted or scheduled for times likely to present conditions where the ambient air temperature is greater than or equal to 34 C° should be postponed or cancelled.** Once puberty is completed, the WBGT applies.

**Adults**

All hot environments present athletes with some level of risk. The most effective way of evaluating the risk of playing in hot weather for adults is by measuring Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) which takes into account both ambient air temperature and humidity. This is important because the higher the humidity, the less likely cooling will occur through the evaporation of sweat.

**CALCULATING THE WET BULB GLOBE TEMPERATURE (WBGT)**

The ‘Dew Point’ measures the moisture content of the air. Ambient Temperature and Dew Point readings can be obtained on <http://www.abc.net.au/melbourne/weather/>

Dew Point	Ambient Temperature (C°)															
	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
20	27	28	28	29	30	30	31	31	32	32	33	34	34	35	35	36
19	27	27	28	28	29	30	30	31	31	32	32	33	34	34	35	35
18	26	27	27	28	28	29	30	30	31	31	32	32	33	34	34	35
17	26	26	27	27	28	29	29	30	30	31	31	32	33	33	34	34
16	25	26	26	27	28	28	29	29	30	30	31	31	32	33	33	34
15	25	25	26	27	27	28	28	29	29	30	30	31	32	32	33	33
14	24	25	26	26	27	27	28	28	29	30	30	31	31	32	32	33
13	24	25	25	26	26	27	27	28	29	29	30	30	31	31	32	33
12	24	24	25	25	26	26	27	28	28	29	29	30	30	31	32	32
11	23	24	24	25	26	26	27	27	28	28	29	30	30	31	31	32
10	23	24	24	25	25	26	26	27	27	28	29	29	30	30	31	31
9	23	23	24	24	25	25	26	27	27	28	28	29	29	30	31	31
8	22	23	23	24	25	25	26	26	27	27	28	29	29	30	30	31
7	22	23	23	24	24	25	25	26	27	27	28	28	29	29	30	31
6	22	22	23	23	24	24	25	25	26	26	27	27	28	29	29	30
5	22	22	23	23	24	24	25	25	26	26	27	27	28	28	29	30
4	21	22	22	23	24	24	25	25	26	26	27	27	28	28	29	30
3	21	22	22	23	23	24	24	25	26	26	27	27	28	28	29	30
2	21	21	22	23	23	24	24	25	25	26	27	27	28	28	29	29
1	21	21	22	22	23	24	24	25	25	26	26	27	27	28	29	29
0	21	21	22	22	23	23	24	24	25	26	26	27	27	28	28	29
-1	20	21	21	22	23	23	24	24	25	25	26	27	27	28	28	29
-2	20	21	21	22	22	23	24	24	25	25	26	26	27	28	28	29
-3	20	21	21	22	22	23	23	24	25	25	26	26	27	27	28	29
-4	20	20	21	22	22	23	23	24	24	25	26	26	27	27	28	28
-5	20	20	21	21	22	23	23	24	24	25	25	26	27	27	28	28

