

POLICY

Hot Weather

2026



This Policy was adopted by the IDNA Board on 25 March 2026

ILLAWARRA DISTRICT NETBALL ASSOCIATION

HOT WEATHER POLICY

1 INTRODUCTION

This policy has been developed through the comparison of various policies relating to Hot Weather to provide a comprehensive policy for the safety of player, officials, and spectators involved with Netball Illawarra Clubs and competitions conducted by Netball Illawarra when considering Hot Weather.

This policy has been written to raise awareness throughout the Netball Community about the issues and potential dangers associated with training and/or competing in hot and humid conditions and presents information so that the Board, clubs, coaches, officials, parents, and the netball community can take common sense steps to minimise the risks that arise when exercising in hot or humid weather.

This policy highlights the potential dangers and takes away the decision-making process from the Board, coaches, and officials when to stop competitions or training because temperatures and humidity levels have reached what is medically considered to be dangerous should games or training continue. It also gives indications as to when increased vigilance should be undertaken for signs of Heat Illness and what to do if they become apparent.

It is the responsibility of Board, coaches, parents/guardians, and other relevant individuals to read and understand this policy and seek further clarification if required.

Unlike most other policies, the safety and wellbeing of spectators, as well as the health and safety of players and officials must be considered as temperature and humidity does not differentiate between the any of these groups.

2 HEAT ILLNESS

The effect of Hot Weather is generally presented as Heat illness, also referred to as Heat Stress.

There is no set ambient temperature, or humidity level that says that this is when Heat Stress will appear, there are, however, based on probabilities, ambient temperatures and humidity levels where the potential for players and spectators to suffer from Heat Stress or Heat Illness are too great to ignore and in the interests of everyone's safety, competition must stop.

Below these temperature and humidity values there is still the potential for a person to suffer Heat Illness, or for any existing medical condition to be exacerbated.

2.1 Signs Of Heat Illness

This is not a medical document, however, some of the common signs of heat illness that may be demonstrated by a player, or even spectators, are listed below:

- Dizziness (light headedness).
- Complaining of being hot and appearing distressed.
- Appearing exhausted or weak (fatigued); needing help to stand.
- Stumbling, unsteady, clumsy, falling.
- Collapse – unable to stand; and usually accompanied by some degree of confusion / drowsiness.
- Collapse - altered consciousness ranging from confusion, drowsiness through to unconsciousness.

2.2 Treatment of A Heat Illness

Any player who shows any signs of a heat illness at training should be stopped and removed from the activity immediately.

If any player who shows any signs of a heat illness during a game injury time should be called immediately and that player replaced.

Once removed from the game or training exercise, the player should:

- Lay the person down to rest in a cool shaded area with some air circulation.
- They should raise their legs and pelvis if possible.
- Remove excess clothing.
- Cool the person by wetting, misting or spraying the skin with water and fanning vigorously.
- Apply ice packs to the neck, armpits and groin.
- Give them cool water if they are conscious.

If the person does not quickly recover and remains seriously ill, confused, vomiting or shows signs of altered consciousness, call an ambulance immediately and seek medical help. Continue cooling the person.

2.3 Risk factors

There are many risk factors for heat illness that are relevant to netball players and also spectators. They include:

- Ambient Temperature/Humidity
- A lack of adequate fluid intake on the day
- Direct sun exposure on the day
- Medical issues such as an illness or specific at-risk diseases (diabetes and cystic fibrosis)
- The fitness levels of the athletes
- The age of athletes
- The playing surface (all-weather surface as compared to a grass surface)

2.4 Management of Hot Weather Conditions at Netball Activities

Heat illness can occur at training and games and at temperature levels well below those considered to be a risk.

2.5 Preparation For Competition and Training

2.5.1 Preparation For Competition and Training

2.5.1.1 The Board

If the forecast temperature for the day is higher than 38 degrees Celsius then the Board will need to decide whether all competition on that day should be cancelled.

This would also include Premier League games as the temperature still impacts the stadium and the health of those inside.

If the forecast temperature is above 30 degrees Celsius then the Board should take steps to measure and record at 15-minute intervals, the ambient temperature and humidity, from the same location.

If any combination of ambient temperature and humidity exceeds the values given in Table 1 then games should be stopped and no games are to start until the values have dropped below the values in Table 1.

2.5.1.2 Parents/Guardians/Adult Players

If hot weather is likely to occur, then it is recommended that players are sufficiently hydrated in the lead up to the activity and proactive measures are taken to cope with the anticipated conditions. These may include:

- Packing sufficient drinks and making them readily available, preferably in insulated drink containers.
- Taking iced or frozen drinks to the activity.
- Taking ice packs that can be held or massaged against the skin for a cooling effect.
- Packing towels and face washers that can be soaked with water during the day and draped around shoulders and necks.
- Taking personal spray bottles and/or battery-operated fans.
- Taking umbrellas and other shade structures

2.6 Drinks

The hydration of players before and during competition or training is very important, especially when outdoors.

Younger children (<11-13yrs) generally do not appreciate what feeling thirsty is. Older children (13-17yrs) usually do appreciate thirst, but this may not result in an appropriate response on the day under the stress of competition.

Body fluids are lost through sweat, so young players should be encouraged to drink plenty of fluids before, during and after exercise. More fluids than normal will need to be consumed by participants in hot weather due to their increased sweating rate.

Parents/guardians must take a major role in the monitoring of fluid intake, ensuring enough fluid intake. Young players should learn to drink BEFORE they get thirsty, rather than when they get thirsty but also need to take care not to over-hydrate. The aim should be to drink enough to replace lost fluids, but not more than that.

2.7 Sunscreen

Sunscreen in Winter is probably not high on anyone's priorities but when we have high temperatures, which are generally associated with higher UV values.

The provision of sunscreen is the responsibility of Parents/Guardians and players, and they should ensure that sufficient amounts of sunscreen have been applied to provide necessary protection.

When sunscreen is used it should be a non-greasy type and preferable not applied by the players themselves.

The provision of sunscreen at the grounds by the Board should also be considered.

2.8 Public Announcements

Where high temperatures are forecast, or recorded, it is recommended that during competition, public announcements be regularly made reminding everyone to keep drinking water, apply sunscreen and remain in the shade wherever possible.

2.9 Other

In hot weather there are groups of people who may become more susceptible to heat illness than others, and coaches in particular, as well as parents/guardians should be aware of these individuals in their team. These groups include:

- Players who are not fit or who are overweight (this is not a reflection on any player, it is a recognition that they could need assistance earlier than other players – it is all about player safety and wellbeing)
- Red Heads or Albinos
- Are not used to hot weather or had sufficient time to acclimatize to such weather
- Have recently been ill. Athletes who have experienced a high temperature, infection, diarrhoea, or vomiting should not participate and should be taken home.
- Have recently undergone medical treatment.
- Have a medical condition that that may predispose them to heat illness such as cystic fibrosis or diabetes.

In hot weather, parents and guardians of athletes at increased risk should carefully consider whether or not it is appropriate for the athlete to be participating in exercise.

3 CANCELLATION OR POSTPONEMENT

Table 1 outlines the temperatures and humidity levels which Netball training and games must be postponed or cancelled. The Board, Coaches, or Officials may stop one or more games at values below the values presented in Table 1.

The Board reminds all parties that they must act responsibly and operate in accordance with the requirements of this policy. It must be remembered that children are especially at risk in the heat and are at a greater risk of suffering from heat illness. A common-sense approach is encouraged with consideration of the comfort and well-being of all individuals including participants, officials, and spectators, and if deemed appropriate, postponement or cancellation of events should occur at temperature levels below the designated cut-offs

3.1 Competition Days and Carnivals

- Venues being used for competition days and carnivals must have equipment that measures both ambient temperatures and humidity levels.
- In warm weather, temperature readings should be taken at 15-minute intervals, at the same location each time. Readings should be taken in the shade.
- Once the temperature reaches or exceeds 26 degrees Celsius and 75% humidity the Heat Stress risk is considered to be moderate, and coaches and parents should be monitoring their players for signs of Heat Stress. At the first sign of potential Heat Stress the player should stop training, or be replaced in the game, and given water and taken to a shaded area or to First Aid.

At the same time, the Duty Room should be making public announcements advising everyone to keep up their fluid levels and for players and officials to find shade if possible.

- Where the temperature exceeds 30 degrees Celsius and 60% % humidity the Heat Stress risk is considered to be High which increased the need for intervention for players and also spectators.
- At temperatures above 34 degrees Celsius and 50% humidity all games should be stopped immediately. No games are to start until it becomes cooler.
- If the ambient temperature reaches the levels in the table below and the relative humidity reaches or exceeds the corresponding level, activities must be cancelled or postponed until temperature/humidity falls below the levels listed. This does not only take athletes into account, but also the officials, volunteers, and spectators.
- The cancellation of events may be appropriate even in circumstances falling outside these levels. The Board recognises that heat illness can be a risk at temperature levels below the designated cut-offs and that unusual “heat wave” conditions or variations from the average temperature for the time of year present a greater danger of heat illness.

4 REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

- Australian Red Cross, First Aid Handbook, February 2009
- Sports Medicine Australia, ‘Beat the Heat – Playing and Exercising Safely in Hot Weather – Fact Sheet’, 2008
- Sports Medicine Australia, Preventing Heat Illness in Sport Policy
- Sports Medicine Australia, ‘Hot Weather Guidelines for sporting clubs and associations and the physically active’
- Sports Medicine Australia – South Australian Branch, ‘Hot Weather Guidelines’
- Sports Medicine Australia – UV Exposure and Heat Illness Guide
- Netball NSW – Adverse Weather Conditions Policy – September 2023
- LAANSW – Hot Weather Policy – September 2023

Note: The values provided in Table 1 at which games are to be stopped have been taken from the Little Athletics NSW Hot Weather Policy for Endurance Events. This has been done as both are using artificial surfaces and endurance events generally take up to 20 minutes to compete. The other reason for using these values is that Little Athletics is the only sport dedicated to children in the same age groups that are covered by Junior, Intermediate and Cadet age groups and over time spans similar to quarters of netball.

TABLE 1
TEMPERATURE AND RELATIVE HUMIDITY LIMITS
TO INITIATE GAME POSTPONEMENT/CANCELLATION

Ambient Temp	Heat Stress Risk is High	Stop all games until cooler temperatures
Celsius	Relative Humidity %	Relative Humidity %
26	74	85
27	72	81
28	70	79
29	68	77
30	66	76
31	60	67
32	53	59
33	46	52
33.2	45	50
33.4	45	50
33.6	43	49
33.8	42	47
34	41	46
34.2	40	45
34.4	39	44
34.6	38	42
34.8	37	41
35	37	41
35.2	36	40
35.4	34	38
35.6	33	37
35.8	32	36
36	31	35
36.2	30	34
36.4	29	33
36.6	28	32
36.8	28	31
37	27	30
37.2	26	29
37.4	25	28
37.6	24	27
37.8	23	26
38	22	25
38.2	21	24
38.4	20	23
38.6	20	23
38.8	20	22
39	19	21