

Hot Weather Guidelines

Purpose

To outline the requirements for conducting Junior carnivals (ages U/8 to U/14) and Senior carnivals (U/15 and above) during hot weather.

Scope

All staff, volunteers and competitors involved in conducting Life Saving Victoria carnivals.

Guidelines

These Guidelines have been developed based on the Sports Medicine Australia (SMA) Policy – preventing heat illness in sport and the SMA guidelines for cancelling or modifying sporting events during hot weather.

All Carnivals

The forecasted ambient temperature (AT) and wet bulb globe temperature (WGBT) as determined by the Bureau of Meteorology must be checked by the LSV Carnival Management Team three (3) days before the scheduled carnival date.

The course of action to be undertaken will be based on the WGBT and is summarised in the following tables.

Junior Carnivals

It is important to take precautions whilst undertaking junior lifesaving carnivals. In ambient temperatures greater than or equal to 30 degrees Celsius, children have greater difficulty stabilising their core body temperature than adults.

Forecasted Temperature	Risk of Injury	Action
> 30 AT >20 – 26 WBGT	Low - Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Club Team Managers/LSV Carnival Management Team responsible for heat reduction strategies & well being of competitors
31 – 35 AT 26-29 WBGT	High – Very High	<p>LSV Carnival Management Team should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modified beach events, if sand is too hot. Flag & sprint tracks will be shortened and three (3) participants will be eliminated each round of flags. Shoes may be worn at the determination of the referee. - Beach events may be cancelled if chief referee deems sand temperature to be a high risk for causing thermal injury - Provide water stations at various sections on the beach - Provide tents for marshalling in all areas. - Allow compulsory drinks breaks in all events. - All heat illness will be reported in F/A log. - Include “Heat Stroke Condition” treatment in carnival program, and circulate to clubs as well. <p>Club Management/Team Managers should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sunsmart clothing & precautions while competing - The provision of at least one (1) tent per club - Promote water/fluid intake prior to event i.e. approx two (2) cups (250 mls) 2hrs prior to event then at regular intervals. - Parents/coaches must register any illness i.e. asthmatics etc prior to competing
>36 AT >30 WBGT	Extreme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Change of event time to cooler part of the day eg 8:00 am - 11:00 am, or in extreme cases event may be cancelled. - LSV should endeavour to provide notification of event change before scheduled carnival time.

Senior Carnivals

While adults aren't as susceptible to heat as children, several safeguards can assist in preventing heat induced illness. The following guidelines should be undertaken:

Forecasted Temperature	Risk of Injury	Action
> 30 AT >20 – 26 WBGT	Low - Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Club Team Managers/LSV Carnival Management Team responsible for heat reduction strategies & well being of competitors
31 – 35 AT 26-29 WBGT	High – Very High	<p>LSV Carnival Management Team should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modified beach events, if sand is too hot or cancelled or postponed to a cooler part of the day. Flag & sprint tracks will be shortened and two (2) participants will be eliminated each round of flags. Shoes and towels may be used in the event of extreme heat. - Beach events may be cancelled if chief referee deems sand temperature to be a high risk for causing thermal injury - Provide water stations at various sections on the beach - Provide tent for marshalling. - Allow compulsory drinks breaks in all events. - All heat illness will be reported in F/A log. - Include "Heat Stroke Condition" treatment in carnival program, and circulate to clubs as well. <p>Club Management/Team Managers should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sunsmart clothing & precautions while competing - The provision of at least one (1) tent per club - Promote water/fluid intake prior to event i.e. approx two (2) cups (250 mls) 2hrs prior to event then at regular intervals. - Parents/coaches must register any illness i.e. asthmatics etc prior to competing - All competitors should be rested for at least 10% of the period in which they would normally participate.
>36 AT >30 WBGT	Extreme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Change of event time to cooler part of the day eg 8:00 am - 11:00 am, or in extreme cases event may be cancelled. - LSV should endeavour to provide notification of event change before scheduled carnival time.

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).

To avoid heat exhaustion; if people feel unwell during exercise they should immediately cease activity and rest.

To treat someone with heat exhaustion, it is recommended to move to a shaded area with some passing breeze (from a fan if necessary) and encourage plenty of hydration; spraying with water can also help.

Heat Stroke

- Characteristics are similar to heat exhaustion but with a dry skin, confusion and collapse.
- Heat stroke may arise in athletes who have not been identified as suffering from heat exhaustion and has continued in further activity.

Heat Stroke is a potentially fatal condition and must be treated immediately. For precautionary measures; any collapsed athlete should be treated as being in danger of heat stroke. The best first aid measures are “Strip/Soak/Fan”:

- strip off any excess clothing
- soak with water
- fan
- ice placed in groin and armpits is also helpful

The aim is to reduce body temperature as quickly as possible. The athlete should immediately be referred for treatment by a medical professional.

- ❖ **Important: heat exhaustion/stroke can still occur even in the presence of good hydration.**

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. Inadequate fluid replacement before, during and after exercise will lead to excessive dehydration and may lead to heat exhaustion and heat stroke

To avoid dehydration, Sports Medicine Australia recommends that:

- athletes drink approximately 500 mls (2 glasses) in the 2 hours prior to exercise;
 - during exercise longer than 60 minutes, 2-3 cups (500-700ml) of cool water or sports drink are sufficient for most sports.
 - refer to SMA's free DRINK UP brochure available as a web download at <http://www.smartplay.com.au>
- ❖ Take care not to over-hydrate. Drinking too much fluid can lead to a dangerous condition known as hyponatraemia (low blood sodium). Aim to drink enough to replace lost fluids, but not more than that.

Age and Gender of Participant

- **Female participants** may suffer more during exercise in the heat because of their higher percentage of body fat.
- **Young children** are especially at risk in the heat. Prior to puberty, the sweating mechanism, essential for effective cooling, is poorly developed. The ratio between weight and surface area in the child is also such that the body absorbs heat rapidly in hot conditions.
- Although children can acclimatise to exercise in the heat, they take longer to do so than adults.

NB: Children tend to have a more “common sense” approach to heat illness than adults. They “listen to their bodies” more and will usually slow down or stop playing if they feel distressed in the heat. ***On no account should children be forced to continue sport or exercise if they appear distressed or complain about feeling unwell.***

Predisposed Medical Conditions

- It is important to know if athletes, umpires, officials or volunteers have a medical condition or are taking medication that may predispose them to heat illness.
- Examples of illnesses that will put the participant or official at a high risk of heat illness include asthma, diabetes, pregnancy, heart conditions and epilepsy. Some medications and conditions may need special allowances.
- Participants and officials who present with an illness such as a virus, flu or gastro or who are feeling unwell are at an extreme risk of heat illness if exercising in moderate to hot weather.
- Participants or officials who may be affected by drugs or alcohol may be at an extreme risk of heat illness if exercising in moderate to hot weather.

(Sports Medicine Australia, September 2010, www.sma.org.au, accessed on 21 November, 2011).

For further information on participating during hot weather please refer to the SMA policies and guidelines found at the following website: www.sma.org.au