



BASKETBALL QUEENSLAND

Hot Weather Policy

1. Area of responsibility

Technical Development

2. Date last updated

30 March 2008

3. Purpose

POLTD14

4. Purpose

Basketball Queensland has a responsibility to take a positive role in educating and increasing the awareness of all its Affiliates and members in the dangers of physical activity in the heat. With this in mind these guidelines have been formulated with specific reference to information provided in Sports Medicine Australia (SMA) Guidelines.

5. Policy

These guidelines shall apply to BQ Associations/Affiliates, members, administrators, officials, coaches and volunteers.

Background

Exercise in the heat creates competitive demands on the cardiovascular system, which is required to increase blood supply to the exercising muscles. At the same time it must regulate the body temperature by increasing skin blood flow in order to produce the sweat that keeps the body cool.

High intensity exercise in a hot environment, with the associated fluid loss and elevation of the body temperature, can lead to dehydration, heat exhaustion and eventually heat stroke.

Facts to Consider

1. Wet-Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT)

The WBGT is one way of evaluating the environment and measures thermal stress. It is a more reliable indicator than ambient temperature as it takes into account humidity. The higher the humidity, the less likely the chance to cool off through the evaporation of sweat. Reference can be made to the Bureau of Meteorology website www.bom.gov.au for up to date temperatures. In absence of the WBGT, all other factors mentioned in this guideline should be assessed and preventative measures taken.

2. Fitness Levels and Athletic Ability of Participant

A number of physical/physiological characteristics of the athlete will influence the capacity to tolerate exercise in the heat, including body size and endurance fitness. In endurance events an accomplished yet non-elite runner, striving to exceed their performance may suffer from heat stress. The potential for heat related illnesses will be exacerbated if they have not acclimatized to the conditions and have failed to hydrate correctly. An overweight and unconditioned athlete will generally also be susceptible to heat stress.

Sports Medicine Australia recommends participants drink 500mls before activity, 200mls every 20 minutes during activity and more than that if they are thirsty during or after activity. (At least 500 mls).

3. Age and Gender of Participant

Female participants may suffer more during exercise in the heat, due to their greater 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.

In practical terms, child athletes must be protected from over-exertion in hot climates, especially when required to exercise for 30 minutes or longer.

Strategies for reducing the risk of heat illness in children should include the following:

- Shade and Drinks – it is recommended that water or sports drinks be provided whenever children are being active. Young athletes should begin regular drinking routines using water or sports drinks during training and competition. Regular and effective drinking practices should become habitual to young athletes before, during and after activity.
- Acclimatisation and overweight children – coaches/managers of overweight children and adolescents should take extra precautions to lessen the potential for heat gain. It is recommended that whenever activity in hot conditions is unavoidable with these children, coaches/managers decrease the volume and duration of physical activity, and increase opportunities for drinking, rest, and shade as a matter of priority. It is also recommended that training times be limited for non-acclimatised children during exposure to hot environments.

Preventative Measures

1. Promotion of Fluid Intake & Hot Weather Guidelines

Basketball Queensland recommends that all affiliates take the opportunity to promote the need for fluid intake and other hot weather management measures during hot conditions by utilising various communication mechanisms including: public address systems, signage, programs/newsletter and through game officials. The Court Controller, all officials and participants should be aware of the Basketball Queensland Hot Weather Guidelines prior to the competition/event, and should use the BQ Hot Weather Guidelines Checklist (Attachment A) to assist with prevention of heat stress.

2. Duration and Intensity of the Event/Competition

The combination of extreme environmental conditions and sustained vigorous exercise is particularly hazardous for the athlete. The greater the intensity of the exercise the greater the risk of heat related symptoms eg. Distance running may pose a higher risk as opposed to basketball (due to its stop start nature). The following options should be considered in assisting to prevent heat related stress in events/competitions:

- Scheduling game times before 9.00am and after 6.00pm to avoid the hottest part of the day;
- Scheduling game times to place those more at risk (under 12 and girls) in cooler timeslots – before 11.00am and after 3.00pm;
- Reduction in playing time and/or extend rest periods thereby providing opportunities for rehydration;
- Encourage a high rotation of players from the bench;
- Identify participants with medical conditions and suggest they not play or reduce their playing time considerably;
- Allowing the clock to run where winning margin is considerable;
- Provision of extra water and ice for wetting face, clothes and hair;
- Increasing court ventilation where possible;
- Availability of bringing in portable fans/air conditioner.

3. Cancellation/Postponement

Prior to the Event

In the lead up to a BQ competition/event where extreme weather conditions are forecast, Basketball Queensland or the Host Venue Court reserves the right to cancel/postpone or alter competition format in the interests of member safety. Basketball Queensland or the Host Venue Court will endeavor to provide as much notice as possible to all relevant parties affected by the decision, and to assist with the rescheduling of affected games where applicable.

Events/competitions can be cancelled or postponed only after all relevant factors and options have been considered by Basketball Queensland or the Host Venue Court Controller in consultation with the Hot Weather Committee (see below) eg. the most logical person(s) able to make an informed judgment/decision about the situation.

Day of the Event/During the Event

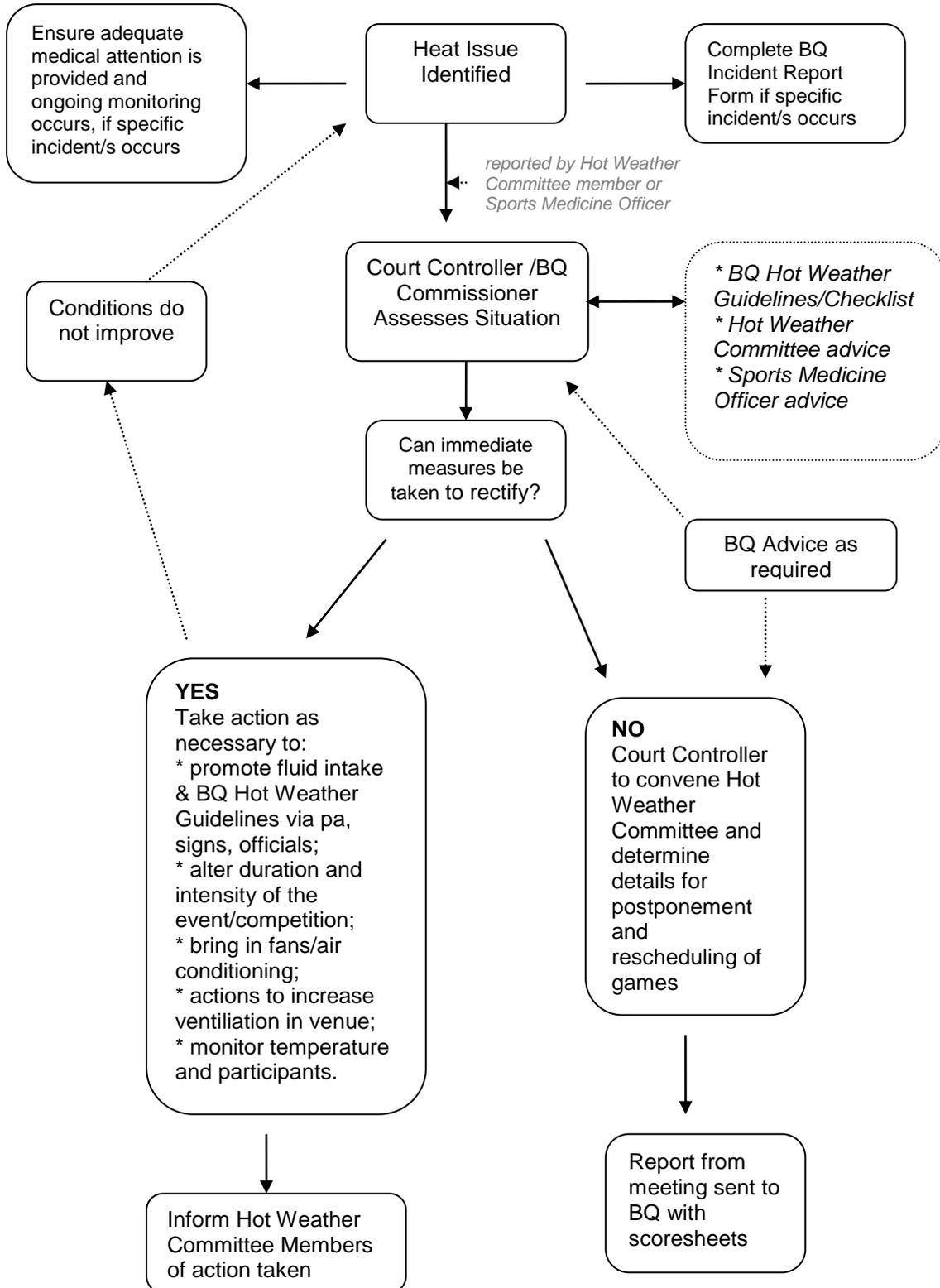
On the day of the event, the Venue Court Controller can cancel/postpone or take all reasonable steps necessary to address heat issues to ensure member safety. This decision can either be made as a result of their own determination or in consultation with identified Hot Weather Committee members. In making this decision, reference should be made to these guidelines, the Checklist at Attachment A and the Sports Medicine Australia Guidelines.

At the beginning of the competition/event a Hot Weather Committee should be identified as the first point of contact for the reporting of all heat related issues in addition to the Sports Medicine Officer on site. The Hot Weather Committee is to comprise of – Venue Court Controller, one member from visiting Association/club, one member from host Association/club, or in the case of a State level competition/event the Hot Weather Committee would comprise of – BQ Commissioner, BQ Referee Commissioner, local representative (endorsed by BQ) on the BQ Technical Committee for the event.

All officials, first aid staff and participants are to be informed that all heat issues are to be brought immediately to the attention of one of the Hot Weather Committee members.

Heat Issue Action Chart

The following process should apply to all heat issues identified during a competition/event.



References

Basketball Queensland Risk Management Plan
Sports Medicine Australia Policy – Preventing Heat Illness in Sport
Sports Medicine Australia Guidelines for Cancelling or Modifying Sporting Events during Hot Weather
Netball Queensland Heat Stress Management Guidelines

Graham Burns
Chief Executive Officer
The Sleeman Sports Complex, Cnr Old Cleveland & Tilley Rd Chandler 4155