



One Club – One Family
STRATHALBYN FOOTBALL CLUB

Inclement Weather Conditions Policy

Strathalbyn Colts

OVERVIEW:

This Policy aims to provide the Strathalbyn Football Club with a set of strategies to provide a safe environment regarding weather events. As a responsible organisation, the Strathalbyn Football Club recognises that on occasion it will be necessary to modify training and /or playing conditions to reduce the likelihood of illness or injuries occurring as a result of inclement weather. This Policy covers weather events such as heat, sunshine, cold, rain, lightning or other unusual or unpredictable weather conditions. The postponement, cancellation or continuation of any trainings / games will be at the discretion of authorised Strathalbyn Football Club personnel. This decision must include authorised personnel which can be convened on any such day, and as a minimum include: Head Coach of each team and the Junior Development Coordinator. These personnel will be referred to as the SFC Weather Advisory Group hereafter for the purpose of this document.

PURPOSE:

In extreme weather conditions the Strathalbyn Football Club may decide to modify the schedule of relevant training sessions or trial matches to protect players, officials and other participants from exposure to the elements or physical stress. The SFC Weather Advisory Group has the authority to direct the postponement or cancellation of training and trial match events, if conditions pose an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of participants, officials or spectators.

POLICY AIMS:

This policy aims to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of all who participate in the activities and events at SFC. The SFC ensure that the SFC venue is a safe place to compete, spectate and officiate as far as is reasonably practicable; and to provide guidance to the SFC Weather Advisory Group regarding the effective management of extreme weather conditions policy. The SFC Weather Advisory Group will closely monitor weather forecasts and seek to comply with the following guidelines when conducting or managing activities during extreme weather at the SFC.

The following recommendations have been adapted from the Sports Medicine Australia Guidelines for Hot Weather, SANFL Heat Policies, and the ALAC Extreme Weather Policy.

Junior Colts and below (ages 5-15.5 years):

Coaches and participating parties shall check the forecast temperature on the day prior to training session. Information should be obtained from the Australian Bureau of Meteorology (www.bom.gov.au). In the instance of conflicting information, information obtained directly from www.bom.gov.au will be considered the most accurate.

Based on the forecast temperatures, the following action is recommended;

Weather Conditions	Risk	Strategy
26° - 30°C	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modify early pre-season training. Reduce intensity and duration of session.• Increase frequency and length of breaks.• Ensure adequate water supplies are available
31° - 35°C	High – Very High	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limit intensity.• Maximum duration of 60min.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase frequency and length of breaks
38°C and above	Extreme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postpone until conditions cool. • Cancel if necessary.
High Winds	Moderate - High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High winds have the potential to create dangerous conditions for players, spectators and officials. • Where these winds create unreasonable risks within the training area activities may need to be suspended by the Head Coach. • Hazards may include furniture or fixtures disturbed, items being blown onto the field or track, or athletes health threatened by the force of the wind.
Wet Weather	Moderate - High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The postponement, cancellation or continuation of training or trial matches due to rain will be at the discretion of the SFC Weather Advisory Group. • Participant safety will remain paramount when deciding to postpone/continue these events in the rain, and environmental factors such as the oval surface, pooling of water, visibility etc. will be taken into consideration. • If it is raining heavily, and there are safety concerns, activities may be discontinued for a period of time and conditions reassessed to determine whether activities should continue. • If a hailstorm is forecast, the SFC Weather Advisory Group will assess the situation and may potentially cancel planned events. • If a hailstorm occurs during an activity, all activities should be suspended (by the Head Coach) and participants should seek suitable protective cover. • If it is raining heavily, and there are safety concerns, activities may be discontinued for a period of time (by the Head Coach) and conditions reassessed to determine whether activities should continue.
Lightening	Extreme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When thunderstorms threaten, the SFC Weather Advisory Group will assess the situation ensuring the safety of players, officials and spectators. • Training may be cancelled if lightening and storms are forecast. • During training sessions / trial matches Head Coaches and any committee members will ensure all players, officials and spectators where possible are inside a safe shelter during a thunderstorm.

On the day of a training session / trial match, the coach or organiser may obtain more recent information from www.bom.gov.au and modify the session accordingly.

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Example: A Coach checks the forecast 24hrs prior to a 4:30pm training session and sees a predicted temperature of 38°C, with a cool change expected in the afternoon/evening.

On the day of training, the Coach checks www.bom.gov.au at 3:30pm and temperature has dropped to 32°C.

The training session may take place, modified in accordance with table above.

If no information is available to indicate that the temperature has decreased from the forecast 38°C, the training session should be postponed until further information is obtained or cancelled by the SFC Weather Advisory Group.

If a training session or trial match is cancelled, the Head Coach and Team Manager of each team are responsible for communicating this to all parents and/or players of their specific team. SFC will also endeavour to publicise this information via social media and email at the earliest possible convenience.

Official Game Day Matches:

The individual league/association heat / weather policy will apply to the conduct of matches.

Additional Notes:

Young children are especially at risk in the heat.

Although children can acclimatise to exercise in the heat, they take longer to do so than adults. Coaches should be aware of this and limit training for non-acclimatised children during exposure to hot environments. 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 or unwell. On no account should children be forced to continue if they appear distressed or unwell.

Senior Colts (ages 15.5 – 18 years):

A common sense approach should be taken when conducting training in the heat. Training intensity and activities should be appropriately modified to ensure the safety and well-being of participants. For elite youth training sessions, the information detailed in Community Club - Junior Colts and below should be considered.

In moderate risk heat conditions players should be rested for at least 10 minutes per hour. In high-risk conditions players should be rested for at least 15 minutes in an hour.

The benefits of rest breaks should be maximised by:

- Reducing clothing and resting in shade provided by trees, buildings or portable structures.
- Assisting evaporative cooling with fans; wetting the skin, applying ice packs to groin and armpits Drinking cool water or sports drinks Withdrawing players who feel unusually fatigued or who appear distressed from the activity.
- Where practical training could be moved to the beach or local pool.
- In extreme heat, postponement or cancellation should also be considered.

Safe structures during extreme weather (wind, wet weather, lightening) conditions:

The primary choice for a safe structure is a large, fully enclosed building. If a building is not available, a fully enclosed vehicle with a metal roof and the windows completely closed is a reasonable alternative.

Unsafe locations and situations are; open fields within close vicinity to the tallest structure in the area (e.g. Tree/s, light poles).