

19 February, 2007

Association Secretaries

Heat Policy

At its November State Conference, Basketball Victoria amended its Participants Protection By-laws to introduce a requirement for monitoring temperature on court when the weather is hot. This amendment requires that all stadiums must be fitted with a thermometer and the inside temperature must be taken every hour whilst the stadium is in use and a note kept of the temperature in a permanent written record at the stadium.

If the inside temperature reaches 30°C the competition manager must consider implementing modified timing rules and if the temperature reaches 35°C **must** implement those timing rules. The timing rules are set out in the amended By-laws which are reproduced in full below.

It is essential that these By-laws are followed. If an illness is sustained caused by excessive heat or dehydration and the By-laws have not been complied with, legal liability will almost certainly fall on the association.

In addition to the new requirements, the By-laws also require proper provision of first aid and hydration and cooling facilities and a knowledge by relevant people of the symptoms of heat exhaustion and dehydration.

Basketball Victoria

By-laws (Participants' Protection)

1 *Introduction*

- 1.1 These By-laws are made under Article 10.2.2 of the Constitution of The Victorian Basketball Association Incorporated ("Basketball Victoria"), are known as "the Participants' Protection By-laws" and commence on 1 January 2001.
- 1.2. All by-laws previously made concerning participants' protection are rescinded.
- 1.3 These by-laws recognise that a duty of care is owed at law to all participants in basketball and seek to address some of the issues where that duty may be breached.

2. First Aid

- 2.1 **Given that basketball is considered a low injury risk sport, it is not necessary that medical or other persons qualified in first aid be present at all games conducted by Basketball Victoria or any of its affiliated associations.**
- 2.2 Basketball Victoria and all affiliated associations must encourage and assist basketball coaches, managers and referees to seek to become first aid qualified and to maintain that qualification.
- 2.3 All affiliated associations shall ensure that sufficient first aid equipment adequate to allow the rendering of basic first aid to a person suffering an illness or injury during any game conducted by the association is readily available.
- 2.3 First aid equipment available at games must be:
- Easily located ;
 - Within its recommended date of use;
 - Properly maintained and stocked; and
 - Stocked with such equipment and in such quantity as is recommended by a local first aid trainer having regard to the number of people using the basketball facility.
- 2.4 In most circumstances first aid should only be rendered by persons with proper first aid training. Where it appears that a person injured or suffering an illness requires medical attention, the person should be referred to a medical practitioner or urgent assistance by way of ambulance or medical practitioner should be called for without delay.
- 2.5 Associations should take reasonable measures to ensure that:
- By way of signage or otherwise, persons attending or playing in games are aware of first aid facilities provided and their location, availability and location of telephones for emergency use, the identity of any first aid qualified person available at the venue and the telephone numbers and addresses of ambulance, nearest hospitals and medical practitioners; and
 - At all times emergency access is available at games venues for ambulances, stretchers and other emergency equipment

3. Climate Policy

- 3.1 All persons involved in the organisation of games must be aware of the effect that extremes of weather can have on person playing or attending basketball and put in place adequate contingencies for the minimising of risk to persons, particularly when high temperatures are expected. Where high temperatures are expected organisers of games must know the extremes or temperature which can occur in the particular venue.
- 3.2 Where high temperatures are expected game organisers must ensure:

- Full knowledge of availability of first aid equipment and first aid and medical personnel is accessible by all persons attending;
- Referees and other officials are aware of the symptoms of heat stress and are instructed to be on the alert to notice any such symptoms;
- Referees are instructed to initiate regular extra time-outs during the game and to shorten the game if necessary;
- Players are made aware of the need to hydrate regularly before and after the game and that facilities are available for them to do so;
- Facilities are available for players and other persons to externally cool themselves with water, fans or other facilities;
- Adequate supplies of ice and ice packs are available for use where appropriate; and
- Proper advice is available to coaches and players on the effects of heat, symptoms of heat stress, the need for proper hydration and the facilities that are available to prevent or treat heat stress.

3.3 All stadiums must be fitted with a thermometer. On hot days, court temperature must be taken hourly whilst the stadium is in use and must be recorded in a permanent record kept at the stadium.

3.4 When the court temperature reaches 30°C competition organisers must consider implementing and where the court temperature reaches 35°C, must implement the following timing rules:

Based on a 60 minute schedule played in halves, the game time must be reduced to 2 halves of 18 minutes each with 2 timeouts per half. The clock must stop for each timeout and the referee must call a compulsory timeout close to the 9 minute mark in each half. The clock must stop for every whistle in the last minute of the first half and the last 3 minutes of the second half (this may be modified for local conditions in domestic basketball).

4. Pregnancy

4.1 Basketball Victoria and its affiliated associations must not prevent a woman known to be pregnant from participating in basketball only because of the pregnancy unless it is clear that the woman or her unborn child are at risk to their health.

4.2 Basketball Victoria and its affiliated associations must make widely known to all women the following policy of Basketball Victoria:

For the health and safety of pregnant players and the developing embryo and in the best interests of sportsmanship given the physical nature of the game of basketball, Basketball Victoria has developed the following policy with regard to pregnancy.

- Basketball is a physical, contact sport and one which requires a high level of exertion in competition and training;
- Each player accepts that there are certain risks inherent in playing the sport of basketball especially at the level and intensity of Basketball Victoria competitive matches and training;
- Basketball Victoria would prefer that a pregnant player did not compete in matches and if such player trained, then trained in a manner appropriate to her pregnancy;
- Basketball Victoria's preference is based on what it perceives to be the development of the embryo and possible risks during pregnancy;
- Basketball Victoria would request a player who is pregnant to seek medical opinion and advice as to her level of involvement in playing and training.
- Any player who is pregnant must make and rely on her own decision whether to play and train and in making that decision, is to take into account Basketball Victoria's preference that she does not play and any medical advice she has received.

5. Infectious Diseases

- 5.1 Basketball Victoria, its affiliated associations, officials and administrators must not exclude or seek to deter a person from participating in basketball only on the basis that the person is known to be infected with an infectious disease unless, acting on medical advice, the person is regarded as being a real risk to other persons participating.
- 5.2 A person who is infected with a serious disease that is known to be infectious through normal sporting contact must exclude himself or herself from participating in basketball while there is any danger of that person passing on the infection to another participant.
- 5.3 Although diseases such as HIV/Aids and Hepatitis B are not regarded by medical opinion as posing any real risk of infection through normal sporting contact they are passed on by the mixing of body fluids. Accordingly, all persons participating in basketball must take certain precautions to ensure any risk is minimised including:
 - Strictly adhere to all playing rules and these by-laws relating to bleeding during the course of a game;
 - In rendering first aid to any injured player take adequate precautions against infection such as the wearing of protective gloves and other protective equipment available and proper cleansing of equipment and persons;
 - All blood or other body fluids must be properly and promptly cleaned from people, equipment, clothing and areas of venues;
 - All participants should have their own equipment such as towels and water bottles and not share such equipment with other participants;

- Participants should refrain from spitting on floors, in towels or in other places where contact could be made by other participants;
- Participants should take precautions such as having vaccinations where available and follow any medical advice they receive;
- Basketball Victoria and affiliated associations must educate their participants about the risks of infection while participating in basketball and about precautions they should take to minimise those risks including vaccination, safe sex and hygiene issues;
- Organisers of games should ensure that adequate hygiene facilities are always available at games for the use by participants; and
- Any blood, saliva or other body product on or around the court should only be cleaned using proper hygiene methods and equipment by adults.

5.4 If a player suffers a bleeding wound during a game, the wound shall immediately be cleaned and if it continues to bleed the player shall be substituted immediately.

5.5 A bleeding player who has been substituted shall not re-enter the game until the wound has been treated by covering, suturing or other suitable treatment so that no further bleeding occurs.

5.6 If there is significant blood on the player's uniform, the player shall change uniform before re-entering the game and no penalty will apply if the substitute does not match the normal team uniform.

5.7 Where there is blood on the ball, the ball shall be changed and properly cleaned before use in any other game.

6. General Safety

6.1 Basketball Victoria, its affiliated associations, officials and administrators shall take all reasonable measures necessary to ensure the safety of participants including but not limited to:

- Carry out regular inspection of premises to ensure that the premises are safe for all foreseeable incidents including adequate run off space at the end of courts, crash mats are installed where necessary, rings are spring loaded, dangerous items such as door handles are away from danger or adequately padded and all other aspects of the playing environment are as safe as possible;
- Ensure equipment storage is adequate to enable excess equipment to be stored in a safe place so that participants are not in danger of tripping over it;
- Ensure that all fire exits are clearly marked and always accessible and that all fire fighting equipment is clearly marked, easily accessed and in proper working order;
- Ensure that evacuation procedures from stadiums is adequate and well known by persons supervising the premises;

- Regularly sweep and mop courts during competition to ensure that they do not become too slippery; and
- Ensure there is adequate and responsible adult supervision of children at all times.

“adequate” may mean:

- a set ratio of children to adults such as can reasonably be expected to exercise a measure of control over the children;
- a second adult being present for one on one coaching;
- if the game is a school based game the minimum number of adult supervisors required by the Department of Education; and
- encouragement of parental presence and involvement at all training and competition.

Yours faithfully

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Solicitor