



04 December 2024

To All Club Secretaries and Presidents

RE: Circular 2025 - 20: Heat management during play.

Guide to Playing in the Heat

Risk: Currently, we have been experiencing higher than normal temperatures. This has a large impact on playing lawn bowls.

Although we are all at risk of fatigue, dehydration, heat exhaustion and heat stroke, it is important to note that the risk is higher among those who are elderly, have chronic health problems or have recently experienced illness.

Guidelines: Bowls South Africa (BSA) has created the following guideline for playing bowls safely. The chart below shows the impact of temperature and humidity.

There is a direct correlation between temperature and humidity. As they increase, discomfort increases as does the likelihood of illness and collapse.

BSA has a recommended guideline, that play should be suspended when the combination of these factors reaches **36 degrees Celsius and 39 percent humidity**. This is the upper bound zone of extreme caution. Play needs to be suspended for at least **10 minutes** to allow players to rest in a cooler location and hydrate themselves. Once comfortable, play may resume.

These factors need to be measured in the same logical position where play takes place. There is no point in measuring these factors indoors or under the shade. Always ensure that the device being used has charged batteries and been cooled down to a very low temperature before taking it outside for measuring. The location where the device was stored will affect the temperature. Consult all the weather services on your mobile device (2m off the green) to compare their readings. We do understand that the **Heat Index** (what it feels like) may always be worse than the actual reality.





When a player reaches a point where they feel they cannot continue, they need to take a 10-minute break for cooling and hydration before returning to play. All players in the team are also required to take the break.

A hosting club must at all times have a first aid kit available and have all emergency numbers on display.

Prevention: There is little we can do prevent the temperature or humidity. We can however prevent illness, collapse and heat stroke. The basic guidelines are to increase the levels of hydration in the body and to wear protective clothing and hats. Typically, during a 3-hour game of bowls in summer, 2.5 litres of water need to be taken in. This is easily achieved by drinking 200 ml after every second end played. Please note that alcohol is a dehydrator and thus makes the situation worse. Dehydration sets in with the loss of 1% of the body weight and collapse can happen at 3% loss. Drink, drink and drink more water. Remain in the shade whenever not actually on the mat or in the head.

Logistics: Should a player feel that they cannot continue after a break, then the registered team reserve will continue to play in their place. Should there be no reserve, then a player from the bank can be selected to play as a substitute. This requires names to be entered into a "hat" to be drawn according to rules of bowls. Should no substitute be available, play will continue with one less player and the team will be penalized by subtracting 25% of their total shots.

Should a team refuse to play, they are in default and their points will be expunged, which negatively affects all other teams participating. This may potentially result in action against the team.

No player can be forced to play by any other team or player and ultimately sportsmanship and decency should be applied.

As we know, not all situations are the same and not all players are the same. It takes effort on the part of the Tournament Official on duty to manage the players and their situations. They will need to be vigilant, regularly check the players conditions and monitor temperature and humidity. Should a situation arise, then swift action needs to be taken.





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Metrication of Template:HeatTable

		temperature (°C)																
		27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43
Relative Humidity (%)	40	27	28	29	30	31	32	34	35	37	39	41	43	46	48	51	54	57
	45	27	28	29	30	32	33	35	37	39	41	43	46	49	51	54	57	
	50	27	28	30	31	33	34	36	38	41	43	46	49	52	55	58		
	55	28	29	30	32	34	36	38	40	43	46	48	52	55	59			
	60	28	29	31	33	35	37	40	42	45	48	51	55	59				
	65	28	30	32	34	36	39	41	44	48	51	55	59					
	70	29	31	33	35	38	40	43	47	50	54	58						
	75	29	31	34	36	39	42	46	49	53	58							
	80	30	32	35	38	41	44	48	52	57								
	85	30	33	36	39	43	47	51	55									
	90	31	34	37	41	45	49	54										
	95	31	35	38	42	47	51	57										
100	32	36	40	44	49	54												

- Caution
- Extreme Caution
- Danger
- Extreme Danger

Together we can play bowls safely.

Mike Hunt

DSCFO convenor

