

There is no specific rule about heat in USTA League rules per se, just as there is no specific rule about other weather phenomena.

USTA NorCal cannot force a home team to change a scheduled match date. Home teams are required to post their schedules weeks (sometimes months) in advance. If the elements, which are beyond anyone's prediction or control, become an issue it is up to the captains to work out a mutually agreeable resolution. NorCal grants the captains wide discretion in their options to handle these issues.

In the end, the decision to not play due to heat is made either by the captains on behalf of their teams, or for any individual player to make for himself. When making such decisions, safety should be the first priority of all. Common sense should prevail in all decisions.

Neither team should castigate the other. No one is to blame for the weather, and often there are other issues that hinder rescheduling. Occasionally in fact, a rescheduled date proves to be even hotter.

Ideas for captains to consider if no agreement to reschedule is reached-

- Try to play in the cooler part of the day or night
- Find out which players enjoy the heat or are very tolerant of the heat, and put them in the lineup
- You only need to field enough players to play a majority of the individual matches.
- Agree to a shortened format, such as a pro set or use no-ad scoring
- If the end of a season is approaching, both teams may agree to not play and both take a loss
- Encourage your players to retire the match if they do not feel well. No match is worth endangering your health. Note that you can start one point and retire and the match is considered valid.
- Encourage your players to prepare- hydrate well, use cooling towels, ice, shade, etc. on court. See also the section below about precautions for playing in warm weather.

If a team defaults a match, NorCal will file a grievance. The grievance committee reviews the facts as presented by the parties involved, and decides whether there was good cause to not play the match. If the committee finds no good cause, then the defaulting team will be declared "null and void" (pulled out of standings), and the captain and players may be suspended. If the committee finds good cause, they often rule that the match should be rescheduled and played.

Thankfully, these situations are pretty rare, and 99% of the time our captains find a way to do the right thing for their players.

PRECAUTIONS: PLAYING IN WARM WEATHER

These are suggestions to help you prevent problems when you are playing in hot conditions.

Proper hydration is crucial. You will lose fluid from your body through perspiration. Along with water you lose sodium, potassium and other electrolytes. It is necessary to replenish your body with BOTH water and these electrolytes.

You should start hydrating the day before the match, continue and then continue throughout the day. All athletes should drink plenty of fluids (water, sport drinks, juice, etc.). Fluids with alcohol or caffeine may actually dehydrate you so avoid drinking them. A general rule of thumb is to drink 1 cup of fluid per hour the day before, and on the day of, the match. Then drink 16 to 20 additional ounces 60-90 minutes before you play. Finally, drink one more cup just prior to playing.

If you wait until you are thirsty, or until you are on court, you have waited too long. Bring a large thermos with you on court and drink frequently (i.e., at every changeover).

After your match, continue to hydrate with plenty of fluids. Water by itself does not replace necessary electrolyte, so be sure to consume at least some sports drink, lemonade, juice, etc. Also, don't forget to eat! Fresh fruit and fruit juices are excellent source of some electrolytes and carbohydrates, but you may have to make a special effort to replace some salt as well.

Wearing white clothes that reflect sunlight can reduce your heat load. Use cotton/polyester blends rather than 100% cotton or tightly woven nylon. Have an extra dry shirt available for change. A perspiration soaked shirt can block ventilation, which will increase your heat load.

Use sunscreen. Use waterproof/sweatproof sunscreen that blocks both UVA and UVB rays. Have an SPF of at least 15, but an SPF 30 or above is preferred. Wear a wide-brimmed hat that is well ventilated and shades the neck as well.

Remember, you are allowed 20 seconds between points and 90 seconds at the changeover. Use this time to recover. Take advantage of shade during changeover as much as possible. Change the shirt frequently (and shorts if necessary), and use a cool towel on the face and upper back.

Signs and Symptoms of Heat Disorder

1. Heat cramps: muscle spasms, usually due to extensive and repeated sweat losses, fatigue, normal body temperature.
2. Heat exhaustion: extreme weakness, exhaustion, headache, dizziness, nausea, profuse sweating, chills and cool skin, normal body temperature, rapid pulse, sometimes unconscious.
3. Heat stroke: hot, dry skin, headache, nausea, confusion, staggering gait, extremely high body temperature, collapse, unconsciousness, sometimes death

If either heat exhaustion or heat stroke appear to be occurring:

- Call a doctor or emergency vehicle. (Keep applying ice water continuously and generously until medical assistance arrives).
- Loosen the player's clothing at once.
- Place player in a prone position in the shade.
- Apply ice to head and body (or whatever means are available) to providing cooling.

HYDRATION TIPS FOR TENNIS PLAYERS		
Drink cool water or sport drinks during play. Sports drinks are especially helpful during long matches, in hot weather and for recovery after play. Use a similar hydration routine before, during and after play.		
BEFORE PLAY	DURING PLAY	AFTER PLAY
Drink fluids often throughout the day. Drink 12-20 ounces about 60-90 minutes before play begins.	Drink 4 to 8 ounces (4 to 8 normal swallows) after the warm-up and during every changeover.	Weigh yourself before and after play and drink about 20-24 ounces of fluid for every pound of post-play body weight deficit
Prepare at least 2 quarts (64 ounces) to drink during play.	Many players like to drink a sport drink and water, with an emphasis (e.g., 2:1) on the sport drink.	Immediately begin to replace fluid, electrolytes and carbohydrates with water, other fluids (e.g., juice, sport drinks, etc.) and food. Sport drinks are very effective if you are going to play again soon.
Sports drinks are preferable for long matches or during play in hot weather.	For some players, fluid requirements may even be higher in very hot or humid environments.	Consider adding salt to your food and/or drinks if sweat losses were extensive.

Warning Signs:

Heat Exhaustion vs. **HEAT STROKE**

<p>Heat-related illness is Preventable!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay somewhere cool Drink plenty of water Avoid sugar, alcohol & caffeine Wear light clothing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Painness Tiredness Weakness Dizziness Headache Fainting Muscle cramps Heavy sweating Nausea or vomiting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extremely high body temperature (103°F+) Red, hot, dry skin (with no sweating) Rapid, strong pulse Throbbing headache Dizziness Nausea Confusion Unconsciousness
---	---	---

Watch out!
If left untreated, heat exhaustion can progress to

STOP
If you recognize symptoms of heat stroke, it is **LIFE THREATENING**. Get the person somewhere cool and seek medical attention **IMMEDIATELY**.

Michelle L. Holshue, 2012
Data on heat-related illness via CDC:
<http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/>