

# AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SPORTS MEDICINE

## Summary of Youth Football Roundtable Guidelines

The following recommendations and guidelines for youth football are a combination of research and expert opinion, and are designed to allow athletes to safely and sufficiently acclimate to the heat early in the football season. The full Roundtable Consensus Statement can be found in *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*®, the official journal of the American College of Sports Medicine.

### Days 1-2

- Single practice session with helmets only.
- No live contact.
- Session not to exceed 3 hours (warm-up/conditioning/instruction/breaks/cool-down).
- Emphasis on initiating acclimatization.

### Days 3-5

- Single practice session with helmets and shoulder pads only.
- No live contact.
- Session not to exceed 3 hours (warm-up/conditioning/instruction/breaks/cool-down).
- Emphasis on progressive acclimatization.
- Limited contact may be initiated with blocking sleds and tackling dummies on Days 4 and 5.

### Day 6

- Single practice session with full pads allowed.
- Session not to exceed 3 hours (warm-up/conditioning/instruction/breaks/cool-down).
- No live contact drills permitted (sleds and tackling dummies only).
- Emphasis on acclimatization to the full uniform.

### Day 7

- Off

### Days 8-13

- Multiple practice sessions allowed on a two-a-day/one-a-day alternating rotation.
- Full pads optional based on practice modification parameters (see full guidelines).
- Sessions not to exceed 3 hours (warm-up/conditioning/instruction/breaks/cool-down).
- Limit of 5 combined hours practice duration (including all within-session breaks).
- At least 3 continuous hours of recovering time between same-day sessions.

*NOTE: Intrasquad scrimmages should not be scheduled before Day 12.*

### Day 14

- Off

Important reminders:

- Multiple on-field conditioning and training sessions (e.g., two-a-day) should not be conducted on consecutive days.
- Length of each practice session should not exceed 3 hours and should be modified appropriately, in accordance with the environmental conditions (heat, humidity, and solar radiation).
- There should be no more than six consecutive days of practice.

Bergeron, M.F. et al. "Youth Football: Heat Stress and Injury Risk." *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*. 37(8): 1421-1430, 2005.