

Weather Conditions Protocol

Purpose

To prevent misunderstandings and unrealistic expectations, it is important to establish clear agreements within the club regarding who decides whether a training session or other activity will take place and how this decision is communicated.

This protocol provides guidelines and criteria for various weather conditions and is intended to align as closely as possible with the policies of the Dutch Athletics Federation.

General Rule

All outdoor activities will be cancelled or stopped immediately in the event of:

Code Orange or **Code Red** weather warnings issued by the **Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute (KNMI)**.

Communication regarding cancellations will be made as early as possible via the GVAC website, newsletter, WhatsApp groups (where applicable), and/or email.

Extreme Heat

As a guideline, training sessions will be modified when temperatures reach **25°C or higher** during training hours (reduced intensity with additional rest and cooling opportunities). Outdoor training will be cancelled when temperatures exceed **30°C** during training hours.

Temperatures of 30°C or Higher

If the forecast indicates a temperature of **30°C or above** during training hours, the training session will be cancelled.

The responsible head coordinator will make this decision as early as possible, but no later than **4:00 p.m.** on the day of the training.

Communication will be via the GVAC website, newsletter, WhatsApp groups (where applicable), and/or email.

Temperatures Between 25°C and 30°C

Training sessions will continue, but coaches are responsible for adapting the training by:

- Reducing training intensity;
- Scheduling additional rest periods;
- Providing opportunities for cooling down.

For road runners and walkers training away from the track, the following additional measures apply:

- Adequate drinking water must be available.
- The coach must carry a mobile phone.
- Arrangements must be in place to collect participants by car if necessary (after contacting the staffed clubhouse, which can arrange transport).

Half Marathon and Marathon Training

For Saturday morning long-distance training sessions:

Forecast Temperature Above 25°C at 7:00 a.m.

No training will take place.

Communication will be handled by the half-marathon/marathon coordinator or the responsible coach.

Forecast Temperature Between 25°C and 30°C at the End of Training

The coach will provide an adapted training session with:

- Lower running speeds;
- Additional rest periods;
- Cooling opportunities.

The coach must carry a mobile phone and participants must be able to be collected by car if required after contacting the staffed clubhouse.

Rising Temperatures During Training

If temperatures between **25°C and 30°C** are expected during the session, the half-marathon/marathon coordinator may decide to start training earlier.

Communication will be through the coordinator or the responsible coach.

Extreme Cold

Road Runners and Walkers

Training will normally continue down to a **wind chill temperature of -10°C**.

The coach may send participants home if they are not dressed warmly enough.

Wind Chill Between -10°C and -15°C

Training will continue in an adapted form:

- Easy endurance run of no more than 45 minutes;
- Short, easy walk.

Wind Chill of -15°C or Lower

Training will be cancelled.

The responsible head coordinator will make this decision as early as possible, but no later than **4:00 p.m.** on the day of training.

Communication will take place via the GVAC website, newsletter, WhatsApp groups (where applicable), and/or email.

Track Athletes

Wind Chill Down to -15°C

Normal track training is generally not possible under freezing conditions.

When temperatures are below freezing:

- The athletics track cannot be used.
- Removing snow with snowploughs damages the track surface.
- Salt and de-icing agents are prohibited.
- Long jump pits cannot be used because the sand freezes.
- High jump and pole vault landing mats become too hard due to freezing temperatures.

The coach will decide whether an alternative training session can be held on the infield or surrounding paths.

The coach may send athletes home if they are insufficiently dressed.

If no suitable alternative is available, the coach will cancel the session and communicate this via WhatsApp, email, or telephone.

Wind Chill of -15°C or Lower

Training will be cancelled.

The responsible head coordinator will make this decision as early as possible, but no later than **4:00 p.m.** on the day of training.

Communication will take place via the GVAC website, newsletter, WhatsApp groups (where applicable), and/or email.

Saturday Youth Groups

(Assuming indoor training takes place during weekdays. If training is outdoors, the same rules apply as for track athletes.)

Wind Chill Down to -10°C

Coaches decide whether safe training is possible.

Training will be cancelled if conditions are considered unsafe.

Athletes who are not dressed warmly enough may be sent home.

Wind Chill Below -10°C

Training will be cancelled.

Thunderstorms

If thunderstorms are present at the start of training, no training will take place. Participants may wait until the storm has passed, using weather services such as Buienradar, Buienalarm, or another weather app.

If thunderstorms develop during training, the session will be stopped immediately.

- Track athletes will return to the clubhouse.
- Road runners and walkers should seek appropriate shelter until the storm has passed or safely return to the track.

Since thunderstorms often develop unexpectedly, the final decision rests with the coach.

Thunderstorm Safety Tips

- Estimate the distance of the storm by counting the seconds between lightning and thunder.
 - Less than 10 seconds means the storm is nearby.
 - Less than 5 seconds means the storm is extremely close.
 - Seek shelter immediately if the storm is nearby.
 - If no suitable shelter is available, stay away from tall trees and lampposts and leave open areas immediately, as lightning usually strikes the tallest objects.
 - If thunderstorms are approaching, remain close to the athletics track or return towards it.
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Strong Winds / Storms

Code yellow

During athletics, running, and walking activities under a code yellow weather warning, the greatest risks are injuries caused by strong winds and falling trees.

Although an athletics track is generally safer than public roads, it offers little protection from severe wind gusts.

Road Runners and Walkers

Avoid forests and parks.

Do not run near trees, as branches may break unexpectedly.

Coaches should plan open urban routes whenever possible.

Track Athletes

The athletics track is generally safer than public roads because there is no traffic that may become hazardous during strong winds.

However, loose equipment such as hurdles and cones can become airborne.

Therefore:

- Remove loose equipment immediately.
- Do not practise high jump.
- Do not practise pole vault.
- Do not practise javelin, ball throw or discus throw.

Strong wind gusts make these events unsafe.

Coaches must adapt training accordingly and always prioritize the safety of all athletes.

Winter Conditions

Road Runners and Walkers

The responsible head coordinator may cancel training sessions when snow or freezing rain creates hazardous conditions and there are no safe routes available.

This decision will be made as early as possible, but no later than **4:00 p.m.** on the training day.

Communication will take place via the GVAC website, newsletter, WhatsApp groups (where applicable), and/or email.

If suitable paths remain available during snowy conditions, coaches should, in consultation with the head coordinator, make maximum use of these routes, avoid icy surfaces, and adapt the training where necessary.

Track Athletes

Middle and Long Distance Group

If snow or icy conditions make the track unusable, the coach may move the training session to the cinder path surrounding the track if possible.

If no suitable alternative exists, training will be cancelled.

Communication will be made as early as possible through the group WhatsApp.

General Track Group

The coach may adapt the training or use the infield where possible.

If this is not feasible, the training session will be cancelled.

Communication will be made as early as possible through the group WhatsApp.

Saturday Youth Groups

(Assuming indoor training takes place during weekdays. If training is outdoors, the same rules apply as for track athletes.)

The coaches will determine whether training can be conducted safely.

If this is not possible, the training session will be cancelled.

Communication will be made as early as possible via the relevant WhatsApp groups.