



Summer Survival

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Summer lacrosse is hard work. The days are long and hot, and we often have to work several games in a row. Here are my top six summer survival strategies for lacrosse officials to stay safe and have fun during these tournaments.

1. Know Yourself

What is your fitness level? Are you able to officiate four straight high school A-division games in one day? Or can you work six games over the entire day with a break in the middle? Knowing how far you can physically push yourself before you lose focus and start doing a disservice to the game and the players is a big thing to know before telling your assigner to "load you up." You need to be able to cover every game without compromising the integrity of any one game due to fatigue.

If you want to work a lot of games tell your assigner that you need breaks built into your schedule. That way you can cool down, rest your legs, and still be willing to get up and down the field.

2. Hydration

This is a no-brainer. You need to drink water well ahead of your first game and throughout the tournament. I never work summer games without a large cooler of ice water, and several packets of Pedialyte. Pedialyte is a terrific addition to your drink that aids in keeping you hydrated. I've used it for years and I feel much better working games in the heat than I had before. Sip water every chance you get because you're going to sweat just standing outside and you need to replace that water before your focus is impaired.

3. Cooling Techniques

I bring a mini cooler with ice water and a towel or a [Frogg Togg](#). Every halftime and between games I dunk a towel in cold water and put it around my neck. A floppy hat goes on my head if I don't have a tent for shade to get some relief from the sun. Another quick option to cool your body is to run cold water from a faucet over your wrists, or dunk your wrists in cold water for about twenty to thirty seconds. You'll be surprised how cool you feel after doing that.



4. Folding Chair and Beach Umbrella

Buy a good folding chair so you can take a load off your feet between games, and bring a beach umbrella with you if there isn't a ref tent available. Most tournaments do not have extra chairs and it's not fun to sit down on a team bench or an overturned ball bucket at halftime while waiting for the next game. Solve these problems by having your own chair and get out of the sun for as long as you can between games.

5. Doubled Socks, Vaseline, and Extra Socks

Summer tournaments are marathons, not sprints and when training for long distances you need to take care of your feet. Before your first game lather Vaseline over both of your feet and in between your toes. That will help reduce blistering. Then put on one pair of socks normally. Take a second pair of socks and turn them inside out and put them on so the smooth sides of each sock contact one another. I picked up this technique from a sports trainer and it makes a huge difference in comfort for me. If I'm working all day I switch my socks for two new pairs after lunch.

6. Print out and know the tournament rules

Do not assume that the tournament follows the same rules you played under in the regular season. There should be a tournament website with a rules page, or your assigner should make that available to the officials via email. Print it out and put it in your bag, or download a copy to your phone. I haven't worked one summer where there wasn't a rule variation for a particular age group from one event to the next. I don't like it because it makes our lives as officials more difficult, but you make your own life even more difficult if you don't familiarize yourself with the tournament rules ahead of time.