



Soldiers Should Practice Care In Hot Weather

From Army News Service:

Participating in strenuous activities during the summer months isn't for everyone, but for Soldiers, and the NCOs that lead them, it's business as usual. In addition to the physical demands of Soldiering, some service members participate in extracurricular-sports activities, thus increasing their exposure to extremely hot and humid conditions.

According to MayoClinic.com, exercising in hot weather puts extra stress on the body. However, heat-related illnesses/injuries are largely preventable. By taking some basic precautions, exercise routines don't have to be sidelined when the heat is on.

"When Soldiers assess and address the risks associated with hot weather exercise regimens, they're less-likely to suffer a heat illness/injury," said Lt. Col. James Smith, director of U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center in Fort Rucker, Ala. "They can protect themselves while enjoying their sporting activity through preparation and risk mitigation beforehand."

Master Sgt. Mike Morton, a U.S. Army Special

Operations Command liaison officer, is no stranger to exercising and competing in grueling environmental conditions; he's an ultrarunner who's won nearly 30 races over the course of his career.

He is also the reigning champion of "the world's toughest foot race" — the Badwater Ultramarathon, a 135-mile nonstop race that starts in Death Valley and ends in Mount Whitney, Calif., and temperatures during the race routinely climb to 119 degrees during the day.

"The key is to use a progressive train up to deal with the heat," Morton said. "The human body is designed to perform in the heat; we have an amazing cooling capacity. We just need to climatize to the heat."

While Morton's workout regimen is that of an ultrarunner — he averages 140 miles per week — his advice about training in hot weather is applicable to all Soldiers. ■

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