

FEATURE

# What's so special about

# SUMMER TENNIS?

Fun, fitness, friends, the sun and the social. Club tennis is a thriving part of the sporting calendar and summer is still at the heart of much Australian tennis. But why should you start and what should you know? **Richard Llewelyn Evans** looks at some of the pitfalls and pluses of playing as the mercury hots up.

But if summer's your thing, you need to plan every time says Brisbane naturopath and nutritionist Tess Godfrey.

"It all starts with water," says Tess. "As soon as you go on court you'll start to lose fluids. Thirty milliliters per body kilo is the normal water intake but start your pre-hydration 24 to 48 hours before you play.

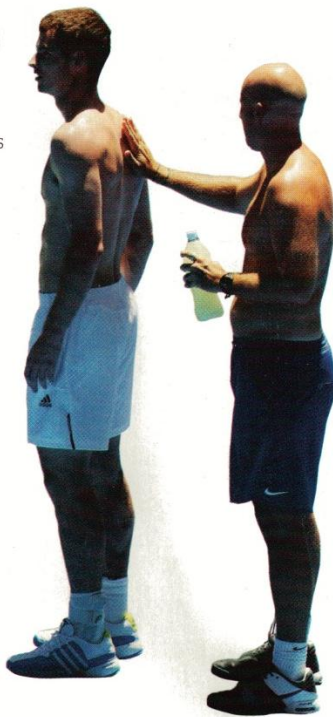
"Increase your intake of watery food if possible, salads, cucumber or watermelon. You want to go onto court with water in your system but not too much immediately before. It cuts out the toilet trips too."

Food and drink is just as important post-play as pre-shed advises.

"Eat afterwards" says Tess. "You have to replace the lost carbohydrates. Maybe have beans on whole grain toast, or bananas and honey will give you something more than just an energy bar."

And drink, of course. "Put in some electrolytes rather than plain water to replace the sodium and potassium your body sweats out."

A general energy drink or mix will do the trick though for the more adventurous, there's always coconut water... American pro John Isner is a fan and reportedly used it to refuel overnight in his epic Wimbledon three dayer against Nicolas Mahut three years ago.



"It replaces the electrolytes and can prevent cramping," says Tess. It's important to know, lack of attention to dehydration can lead to follow on effects with cramping, the best of a bad bunch indeed. Blood pressure and body temperature regulation can be

affected, mental capacity and endurance as well. Don't go there - drink, drink, drink.

"Club players aren't aware of good nutrition in general," says Tess. It's imperative, easily done, and if it's a match that matters, can put you ahead of your opponent from the off. Every advantage counts."

Water aside, the desire to get out on court and enjoy yourself needs to be the number one summer consideration. To want to play, to improve, to meet new people. It's meant to be, and very much, is a fun pastime, remember.

Sixty years ago and more Harry Hopman gave his country a regime and psyche that would lead to an Australia dominance of world tennis, Sedgman, Hoad, Laver, Rosewall, Emerson, Court and Goolagong merely some of the more senior members, the baton passing to Newcombe and later Cash and Hewitt.

Harry's input was pivotal but he didn't supply the many public courts amid the capital city

**ABOVE:** Andy Murray has every aspect of his heat plan covered. **BELOW:** Hydration is a top priority for every player.