

Get the facts from ttac!

Tobacco Industry Sponsorship and Sports

Two of the most prominent sporting events targeted by the tobacco companies are motor racing and rodeos. According to Tess Boley Cruz, Assistant Professor of Research, University of Southern California, Keck School of Medicine, tobacco manufacturers' involvement in sponsoring both motor racing and rodeo events started in the 1970s. Tobacco sponsorships of rodeo events increased rapidly in the 1980s, with the US Tobacco Company (UST) entering into agreements with the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) and Professional Bull Riders, Inc. (PBR). However, due to the restrictions laid out in the Master Settlement Agreement (MSA), today there are many smaller sponsorships being undertaken by tobacco corporations like Altria and USST, and just a few large sponsorships by brands like Winston, Skoal, and Marlboro.

What does the tobacco industry gain from sponsoring such events?

Put simply, they gain a certain respectability (given their association with a "mom and apple pie" event), access to a large and diverse target population, and broad exposure via television broadcast.

Does it really matter?

Yes! Tobacco companies sponsor sporting events to be associated with "innocence" and are "buying" respectability with their sponsorship dollars!

Take a closer look:

- The Federal Trade Commission Report- 2001 shows that advertising and promotional expenditures for tobacco products have risen from \$1.62 billion (17 percent) to \$11.22 billion between 2000 and 2001. The report can be accessed at <http://www.ftc.gov/os/2003/06/2001cigreport.pdf>
- A study done by Michael Siegel, MD, MPH at the Social and Behavioral Sciences Department, Boston University School of Public Health, shows that despite the MSA restrictions on tobacco advertisements on television, the estimated advertising dollar amount for television exposure to tobacco advertisements via motor racing sponsorships is estimated to be in the \$150 Million/year range. The study is available at <http://www.ftc.gov/os/comments/tobaccocomments2/motorsports.pdf>

Score one for tobacco control

Beginning in 2004, RJ Reynolds (RJR) will no longer be sponsoring the Winston Cup. NASCAR became disinterested with RJR as a sponsor because of the advertising restrictions the tobacco company needs to adhere to, which would hamper television coverage of the event. NASCAR went with a Nextel instead—a sponsor with no restrictions.

Key Resources

Bucking Tobacco Sponsorship at Rodeos: *Strategies for Media Advocacy and Public Engagement*

http://www.bucktobacco.org/resources/docs/rodeo_report.pdf

Project SMART Money

Project SMART Money helps organizations by providing technical assistance and distributing materials developed to help counter industry sponsorship. For more information, call 916-449-5500 and ask to speak with PS\$ staff.

Tobacco Company Sponsorship in the United States, 1995-1999

<http://dcc2.bumc.bu.edu/tobacco/>

Tobacco Industry and Corporate Responsibility... An Inherent Contradiction.

<http://www.who.int/tobacco/media/en/tob-industry.pdf>