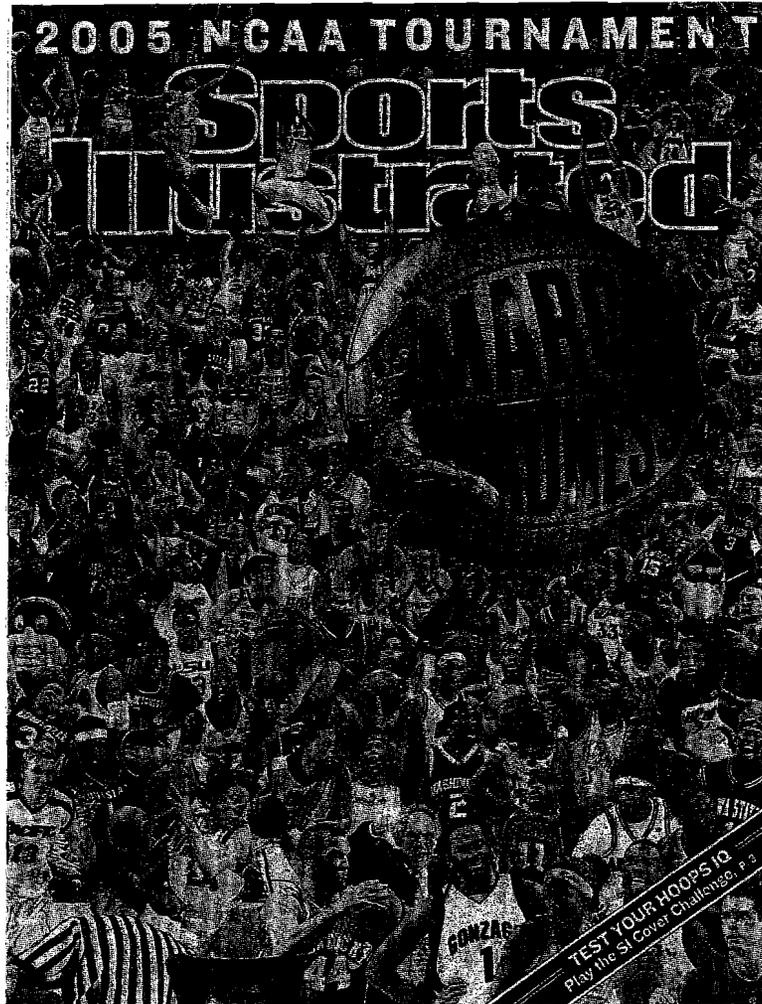




MICAP RECAP

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NCAA under pressure to ban alcohol ads from college games



MARCH MADNESS . . . has seldom been as exciting as it was this year, featuring upsets, overtime and even triple-overtime games on the way to crowning the University of North Carolina as the 2005 national champion.

Although this was Coach Roy Williams' first national title, the Tar Heels have made regular appearances in the national tournament over the years, thanks to their long-time coach, Dean Smith,

who guided North Carolina to 23 consecutive tournament appearances in his 36-year career, which included two national titles. When Smith retired in 1997, he was college basketball's all-time winningest coach, with 879 victories.

Last year, Smith joined former Nebraska football coach and current Nebraska Congressman Tom Osborne to co-chair the Center for Science in the Public Interest's campaign for Alcohol-Free

Sports TV. Backed by a national survey that showed 73 percent said it is wrong for colleges to take money from beer advertisers while at the same time trying to discourage underage and binge drinking among their students, So far 227 colleges and universities across the nation have agreed to the alcohol ad ban.

"College sports should stand for something more than simply making as much money as we can, basically on the backs of these players. And most of these players on the court and on the field are under age."

As part of the CSPI campaign, the NCAA Division 1 Board of Directors have been asked to say no to beer ads on all NCAA broadcasts. A decision will come following the meeting of the 18 university presidents who make up the Division 1 leadership at their April 28 meeting.

Noting that the annual March Madness NCAA tournament has long been a popular spot for alcohol ads, Osborne noted that since 2001 the alcohol industry has placed as many as 900 ads during the championship basketball matches. Osborne cited the following statement from NCAA bylaws: "Advertising policies of the NCAA are designed to exclude those advertisements that do not appear to be in the best interest of higher education." In spite of this provision, Osborne says what has happened is that college athletic teams are being used to promote alcohol use.

Anyone who wonders why there are so many beer ads during March Madness only needs to follow the money. "Unfortunately, in college athletics, the profit motive, the desire to generate more and more income, many times exceeds good judgment," said Osborne. "There is no question that member schools are under pressure to raise more money. There's always an arms race in facilities, building bigger and better weight rooms, stadiums, paying coaches more money. And so I think college sports should stand for something more than simply making as much money as we can, basically on the backs of these players. And most of these players on the court and on the field are under age."

Actually, the NCAA tournament has already acted to restrict alcohol ads by rejecting hard liquor ads and restricting beer ads to one minute per broadcast hour of the championship games, along with screening of alcohol ad content. For instance, Greg Shaheen, Vice President of Division 1 Men's Basketball Championship Strategies, points out the objectifying ads, such as many of the sexually oriented ads seen with the TV coverage of the World Series and Super Bowl, will never appear with coverage of NCAA games.

Questioned about this policy by Michele Norris on National Public Radio's "All Things Considered" broadcast, Shaheen was asked, "The fact that you limit alcohol advertising suggests that you acknowledge that there is a potential problem there, so why not eliminate the problem altogether and ban all alcohol ads?"

The "economic component" is the problem, according to Shaheen. Whatever else is involved, it's still all about the money.

Beer ads have a secondary objective of preparing the younger, pre-drinking-age audience to develop a brand awareness and relationship to the product advertised on the screen.

The alcohol industry insists that their ads do not target young people, so National Public Radio asked Eugene Sacunda to review the alcohol ads aired during this year's NCAA tournament. Sacunda is an adjunct professor of media studies at New York University and former senior vice president and division manager at J. Walter Thompson Advertising Agency.

He says the messages contained in alcohol commercials go beyond what you see on the screen.

Sacunda explained: "One of the fundamental rules of marketing of any consumer product is that you always have to be growing a new market, so that it can replace the ones that are maturing and moving out of your particular market. And there is a definite likelihood that such kind of commercials that I saw would also be aimed as a secondary

objective of preparing the younger, pre-drinking-age audience to develop a brand awareness and then the brand relationship—that is, someone that is positive obviously—toward the products that were being presented on the screen.”

Slipping under the radar to craft appeals to would-be underage drinkers. Here's how it works.

NPR's Norris asked Sacunda, “So if you were trying to read that secondary market, how would you do that within a television commercial?”

Sacunda replied: “You would pick people in these commercials that we would call aspirational—that is, by presenting actors who other younger people admire and want to emulate, which is a natural part of adolescence and early ages.”

When asked for an example of such an aspirational appeal, Sacunda referred to a Bud Light commercial of two guys at a baseball game . . .

The two are taking pictures of each other with a cell phone and sending them back to a friend who's at home. The friend sends a picture back to them and they realize he is enjoying himself. One of the guys at the baseball game looks at the other and says, “Hey, there's your apartment. There's your Bud Light and that's your girlfriend.” The voiceover continues, “Fresh, smooth, real. It's all there.”

Sacunda explained the strategy: “First of all, you're introducing a device, which is omnipresent with very young people today, the picture phone. Second, people who are depicted in that commercial are idealized. They are not too old. They seem to be very hip and very, very funny, entertaining, very loose. And of course every adolescent wants to fulfill that role. So it sort of tries to make a connection between the younger market, which we're talking about, and these role models, and the implication is that if you want to be like them, and this is obviously a subtext, you should be drinking Bud Light also.”

Norris noted that almost any industry would be interested in feeding the pipeline of customers, reaching down the age scale to prime a new base of buyers.

ALL OF A SUDDEN, **EVERY** GAME MATTERS.
DEFENSE WINS GAMES. AND JUMPERS GO DOWN SMOOTH AS A BUD LIGHT.
EACH **ROUND** IS MORE EXCITING THAN THE ONE BEFORE.
WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT THIS TIME OF YEAR? IT'S THE ONE MONTH THAT
REFRESHES THE BASKETBALL SEASON.
It's All Here.
BUD LIGHT BEER
Brewed with the Finest Ingredients for a Smooth Drinking Experience
BUD LIGHT
RESPONSIBILITY MATTERS

Every round refreshes, but please remember to drink responsibly?

“But the alcohol industry says that in no way do they target underage drinkers,” noted Norris.

Noting that Sacunda spent more than 30 years of his professional life working in the advertising industry, an experience that included working on a number of alcohol ad campaigns, Norris asked Sacunda if he took the alcohol industry at their word.

“I absolutely do not agree with that,” replied Sacunda. “I mean it just goes against logic that they would do that. However, I think they would be foolish indeed if they ever committed those comments to a memo or any instructions to an [advertising] agency. They would never do such a thing. They would never agree to it, but clearly the pipeline must be filled.”

For the latest information on CSPI's Alcohol-Free Sports TV campaign to encourage the NCAA to ban alcohol ads on broadcasts of college sports events, contact Amy Gotwals at the Center for Science in the Public Interest, 202-332-9110, agotwals@cspinet.org.

ANHEUSER-BUSCH . . . is in "violent agreement" with Congressman Osborne and others in fighting underage drinking and abusive drinking, according to Francine Katz, vice president for consumer affairs.

"Where we disagree is how to solve these issues," said Katz. "We don't think that censoring advertising is the way to address these issues. We do support the goal, though and have been actively involved in the fight against abusive and underage drinking for over 20 years."

Anheuser-Busch says it has spent over \$100 million in prevention efforts, primarily through its "Know When To Say When" campaign. When questioned about how this may translate into the number of drinks or amount of alcohol that is consumed, Katz replied, "We do not set specific limits for individual consumption. The reason for this is that consumption is a matter of personal responsibility. There are many factors that enter into this



process, such as body weight, food intake, and mood, which make it impossible to set general standards."

At a recent shareholder meeting, a group of stockholders proposed that the company adopt the U.S. Government standards for low-risk drinking, which are no more than 2 standard drinks per day for men and 1 standard drink per day for women, incorporating this with the "Say When"

theme.

Management's response was negative, pointing out that Anheuser-Busch was not a "social services agency that happened to make beer." The company's objective is to sell as much beer as possible and maximize profits for its shareholders.

As part of its continuing efforts to discourage excessive drinking, ads for Budweiser and Bud Light carried during this year's NCAA tournament included the language, "drink responsibly" and "responsibility matters."

