

**TASSIE SHIELD STARS DO IT AGAIN: BACK PAGE**



An anti-smoking protester attempts to upstage the fashion models at the Hobart Cup promotion yesterday.

**Blazing passions amid cool fashions**

By RAE WALSH and SUE BAILEY  
**ANTI-SMOKING** protesters disrupted a Hobart Cup fashion parade in Elizabeth Mall yesterday, arousing the wrath of Liberal MHA Michael Hodgman for the second time in as many days.

While Tasmanian Green MHA Gerry Bates was on their side, Mr Hodgman said last night: "The neo-fascist anti-smoking lobby is now behaving like a bunch of loonies and fruitcakes."

"Australia is still a free country and it is an affront to freedom of speech that these nutters are endeavouring to prevent the promotion of the Hobart Cup which Benson and Hedges has been sponsoring for over 20 years."

Only a day earlier, Mr Hodgman attacked the anti-smoking lobby, branding their tactics akin to Hitler's treatment of the Jews.

Yesterday's small group of protesters carried a banner which read "smokers are dying to bring you the races".

They held it in front of



A skeleton out of place: police cut the protest short.

protesters they were acting illegally.

"You cannot protest in the mall without a permit from the Hobart City Council," he said "and if you don't leave, you will be breaking the council by-law."

"You can go to Franklin Square, walk past the hospital and the police station but you simply can't protest here without a permit."

The protesters said they had taken action because Benson and Hedges was sponsoring the Hobart Cup.

Dr Bates called on the Hobart City Council to immediately remove the gold street banners it had allowed to be flown around the Cup to promote the Cup.

"By allowing Benson and Hedges advertising space around the city, the council is effectively allowing this tobacco company to escape the legal restrictions which have seen tobacco ads outlawed from the TV, magazines and newspapers," Dr Bates said.

"It is not acceptable for a municipal council

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One of the contentious street banners.

a mobile stage set up in the mall for the fashion parade.

Another protester, dressed in a skeleton suit, banged a drum and held up anti-smoking placards.

But their protest, which prompted some members of the public to offer them cigarettes, was stopped by police after Tasmanian Racing Club secretary Colin Belchambers made an official complaint.

Senior Sergeant Bevan Howell told the

**Smokers take protest to Hobart Cup fashion**

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representing the people of Hobart to actively assist a tobacco company promote an erroneous message that links sport to tobacco smoking."

However, Mr Hodgman said: "Dr Bates, who is a reformed pipe smoker, in particular is lecturing us as if we were a bunch of schoolchildren."

"Benson and Hedges produce a product which is legal and the Federal and State Governments get billions of dollars in taxes each year from cigarettes."

Dr Bates said the

council allowed tobacco advertising in bus shelters and had refused to do anything about smoking in the City Hall.

"Compared to other councils, Hobart has been generally backward in recognising the need for public authorities of all kinds not to lend credence to the message being promoted by the tobacco industry."

"The council should accept it was wrong to allow these street signs."

Hobart Lord Mayor Doone Kennedy said the council had not acted to ban the advertising of tobacco

products within the municipality.

"Council has discussed the possibility of placing a ban on the advertising of tobacco products, the last time being in March, 1992," Alderman Kennedy said.

"On each occasion a ban has been rejected because the council is believed to lack the legal power to impose it."

"The council had indicated on several occasions that it would support the introduction of federal or state legislation to prohibit the advertising of tobacco products."