Cigarette company vetoes Quit ads at MCG

BY TREVOR GRANT

Australia's top sporting venue, the Melbourne Cricket Ground, is off-limits to the anti-smoking lobby. Richmond Football Club, which plays its home games at the MCG, has made this decision after a few days ago when it tried to sign the State Government-financed Quit campaign.

Richmond was one of several VFL clubs to approach Quit about the possibility of sponsorship but the clubs were turned down. The MCG secretary, Dr John Lill, said: "We have a contract to administer and that includes the sponsorship." The co-ordinator of the Quit campaign in Victoria, Ms Dorothy Rees, said yesterday that informal talks about sponsorship had been held with several VFL clubs, including Richmond. But she said the basis of any MCG advertising was not the only reason Quit was unlikely to take up VFL sponsorship. "It's hard to say (that) that seem to be out of our league," she said.

The Bensen and Hedges scoreboard

DEAD NUMBER
Dying HUGES NUMBER
ILL TOO MANNY TO MUNICH

Richmond's general manager, Rick Curato, said yesterday that his club had approached Quit after learning of its move into MCG company in Perth. The WA Quit campaign was a main sponsor of the Festival of Sport to celebrate the America's Cup and was the only other Australian swimming championships in Perth. "We made our bid purely on the local grounds, that is, for nothing moral about it," Doggett said.

The Quit campaign, financed by the WA Government, ran into the same problem as its Victorian counterpart when it tried to advertise at the WACA ground in Perth during the Benson and Hedges one-day cricket challenge. "The WACA is an important part of the Festival of Sport," the executive director of the WA Quit campaign, Mr Mike Daube, said yesterday his organisation had spent $500,000 on sponsorship of the festival. "But we weren't able to put up our signs at the MCG because of this agreement between the cricket authorities and Benson and Hedges."