

Tobacco's Imprimatur Is Less Bold, but Still on Cultural Events

By PETER APPLEBOME

As part of the \$206 billion agreement reached last year between tobacco producers and 46 states, cigarette companies agreed to sharply curtail the sponsorships of entertainment and sports events that they have traditionally used to spread the names and cachet of their brands.

But while most of the sports alliances will be phased out, other well-known sponsorships will continue, and tobacco companies seem to be having no trouble putting their

names on entertainment events like swing dances and blues and jazz festivals by staging them in clubs and bars limited to adults. Because of the restriction to adults, the events are not barred by the agreement.

A recent issue of The Village Voice, for instance, included a full-page advertisement for the Merit Swing Shift dance event at the China Club ("Learn to swing and dance the night away!"), a full-page ad for Marlboro cigarettes with listings for 26 clubs and bars, and a two-page ad with the familiar Camel silhouette and listings for 34 clubs, musical events and bars on what is billed as the "Camel Page — Your Guide to Urban

Night Life."

Unlike the ban on large billboards that went into effect in April, the sponsorship provisions are a compromise that falls well short of the goal of antitobacco groups and the attorneys general who negotiated the agreement.

"What's in the agreement was very hard fought, and it's not the ban on sponsorships we had hoped to achieve," said Christine Gregoire, the Washington state Attorney General and one of the chief negotiators. "It was one of the first issues on the table and one of the last items left on the table. For the

industry, this was a break-the-deal issue, so what we got was not what we wanted."

Some officials are already wondering if the agreement's intent is being circumvented. "The spirit of the agreement was that a lot of these activities would not continue," said Joseph Belluck, special litigation counsel with the New York State Attorney General's office. "Some of these activities are clearly on the line, and what side of the line they fall on will probably have to be determined by enforcement agencies in every state."

Tobacco companies say the agreement

was meant to prevent marketing to minors, not intended to ban tobacco advertising and promotion altogether.

"Philip Morris is committed to the letter and spirit of the agreement," said Brendan McCormick, a spokesman for the company. "And the agreement recognized that tobacco companies could continue to market their products responsibly and effectively to adults who choose to smoke."

The agreement's biggest effect on sponsorships may be to halt the growth of tobacco sponsorships of smaller arts-related

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From Echoes Emerge Original Voices

By NICHOLAS DELBANCO

Recently I've been preparing a course for the fall semester, "Strategies in Prose." My writing students, a cohort of fiction writers in the M.F.A. program at the University of Michigan, will read modern masterworks like "The Good Soldier," "To the Lighthouse," "As I Lay Dying," "A Farewell to Arms" and "Ulysses." As readers we will focus on aspects of technique, and the strategy for written assignments is that of emulation, the close copy and pastiche.

I've taught a version of this class before, both to undergraduate and graduate students, and the results have been remarkable. To engage in imitation is to begin to understand what originality means.

I'm hoping for additional language in the mode of Joyce or Faulkner, for paragraphs that Ford or Woolf might well have drafted

WRITERS ON WRITING
Acts of imitation inform apprenticeships in style.

Participants

Bryan White

No-Shows

Shania Twain

Where Country Stars
Go to Press the Flesh

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events. Mark Smith, a spokesman for the Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corporation, said Kool cigarettes, for example, has sponsored smaller events, like concerts by emerging bands, and the company had considered several other events.

"We had quite a few in the planning stages," he said. "They ranged from art contests to some music-oriented events. Those will not go forward." He declined to give more information on specific events.

Under the agreement, tobacco companies are barred from sponsoring all concerts; events in which the intended audience is composed of a significant percentage of youths under 18; events in which any paid participants or contestants are youths, and football, basketball, baseball, soccer or hockey games or leagues.

But tobacco companies may retain one sponsorship not barred by

the agreement, which can be a series of events rather than a single one. And they may continue any existing sponsorships throughout current contractual relationships of up to three years.

The exceptions will allow RJR Nabisco Holdings, for instance, to continue sponsoring the popular Winston Cup auto races for as much as three years, depending on the stipulations in its contract, and beyond that if it decides to do so. The company also sponsors the National Hot Rod Association Winston Drag Race series and the Vantage Championship Golf Tournament. It may continue only one of the three after its contracts expire, and officials declined to say when that would be.

The company has said it has not decided which sponsorships it would continue. Its blues performance sponsorship under the title of the Winston Blues Revival will continue in all-adult environments.

Brown & Williamson sponsors a Team Kool Green auto racing team,

Cigarettes are gaining a higher profile in clubs.

and its GPC brand is a sponsor of the George Strait Music festival. Both contracts last two more years, and one will be eliminated after that.

The company said one of its best-known sponsorships, the Kool Jazz Festival, had ended several years ago, but the agreement with the states specifically allows the company the option of using that festival as its annual brand-name event.

The Philip Morris Companies plan to continue auto racing sponsorships, which include the Marlboro Grand Prix, the Marlboro 500 and the Marlboro Team Penske racing team. The company will discontinue Virginia Slims tennis, Merit bowling and a series of concerts on military bases.

And while those sponsorships will end, the company is heavily advertising its Marlboro Ranch Party, a promotion in its second year, which sends winners to a five-day ranch vacation in what is called Marlboro Country.

Ms. Gregoire said states are carefully monitoring compliance with the agreement, and some issues have already arisen.

But while a relatively small number of large-scale sponsorships will be affected, tobacco sponsorship of music and other events at bars in major cities has become an increasingly entrenched feature of American night life since such sponsorship began on a small basis about a decade ago. Tobacco brands like Marlboro, Camel and Kool are aggressively competing to sign up clubs or bars, where they sponsor concerts or parties, sell cigarettes and put their names and logos on napkins, ashtrays and other items.

Bar owners say it helps them put on events they might not otherwise be able to afford and helps the companies market to hip young city dwellers.

"Camel's market is a bit more hip and edgier; it's not the Marlboro man," said Sammy Jo, manager of Mother, a club on West 14th Street in Manhattan. "Their image tends to be more cutting edge, so it makes sense for them to be in these clubs."

The Camel Page in The Village

Voice is designed as a with-it night life and entertainment guide for young urbanites. Offerings include tapas bars, Cajun food and what is billed as "the best VIP room in NYC, if not the world." Listed are rock, jazz, hip-hop and country music, billed with come-ons like "DJ Philter spins jungle, (sl)ambient and minimal intelligent eclectica" or "Roy Ayers is revered as the icon of the acid jazz movement, combining rhythms of funk, salsa, jazz, rock, soul and rap."

Ads in free weeklies also tout Kool Nites and Marlboro sponsorship of performances by musicians like Willy DeVille and Clarence (Gatemouth) Brown, with artwork featuring the Marlboro name and colors and a stylized guitar. Cigarette companies sponsor similar events in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago and other major cities.

Critics say that even if the ads are supposed to be aimed at adults, they appear in publications that attract teen-agers, who are certain to see as many ads for cigarette brand-name events now as in the past. And they say that allowing sponsorships in adult-only venues can give tobacco the hidden-fruit allure of something attractive but unattainable.

But even Ms. Gregoire said the events in adults-only settings are consistent with the agreement's intention of banning tobacco marketing to those under 18. And tobacco officials say that children cannot be shielded from all cigarette references any more than to all references to lotteries or guns.

"Let's face reality," said Mr. Smith, of Brown & Williamson. "There are people who will have a problem for political reasons with this industry no matter what we do. This is an adult environment with no children involved whatsoever. It's a very efficient environment for reaching people who are already smokers to get them to try our brand."

But some tobacco critics fear that tobacco companies have won logistical and public relations battles in the wake of the agreement.

"We forget that the tobacco lawsuits were not only about the tobacco industry misleading youths, but adults as well," said Eric Lindblom, manager for policy research at the Coalition of Tobacco-Free Kids. "The industry has been successful in focusing just on the youth issue, and saying anything we do with adults should be off the table."



Rahav Segev

Stephen Malkmus, the lead singer of Pavement.

POP REVIEW

The Virtue of the Sidelines, With Time to Toy Around

By JON PARELES

Ten years after it got started, Pavement still makes its songs sound shaky. It could by now crank up its guitars in big resounding chords; it could notch up its tempos to push people around. Sometimes, briefly, it does, only to let the sound and momentum subside within moments. Its guitars slip out of unison, picking instead of chording and hollowing out the music. Stephen Malkmus, Pavement's main singer and songwriter, keeps his voice conversational, though he sometimes works up to an exasperated yelp. Pavement has held its place as a paragon of indie rock by refusing to project rock's illusion of authority.

Pavement is comfortable now that indie rock has moved back to the commercial sidelines. Its following is large enough to sell out three shows at Irving Plaza; it's not being pressed to come up with a hit single. On Pavement's early albums, Mr. Malkmus ruminated about the meaning of success and how it could corrupt him. Now he has calmed down, stringing together non sequiturs and toying with song structures. He writes choruses that are tuneful and direct — "Ann, don't you cry" — between verses full of fractured observations. Mr. Malkmus knows

Pavement's fans will ponder the songs and tease out meanings; it's a collegiate crowd, one that burst into applause on Wednesday night when he sang, "Architecture students are like virgins with an itch they cannot scratch."

Mr. Malkmus grows a little too relaxed on the band's new album, "Terror Twilight" (Matador). The songs are more evasive than usual, perhaps because more than one alludes to a painful breakup: "Time is a one-way track/I am not coming back." Mr. Malkmus sang in "You Are a Light."

Yet onstage, the songs seemed less opaque. Their meaning was in the way the music would rise, lurch in a new direction, settle for a moment into a chorus or a big riff and then crumble, as if sabotaging itself before outside forces could do any damage. "Platform Blues" drifted through folksy finger-picking, a harmonica-driven shuffle, chugging rock with extroverted lead guitars, a slow deflation and a final burst of harmonica: not a dramatic arc but a wayward ramble.

Older songs like "Summer Babe" and "Stereo" chipped away at their verses before allowing their choruses to break through. Teetering between fragility and determination, Pavement still has the courage of its halfheartedness.

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