



— Photo by Elizabeth H. Watkins

One of the participants rallies to make DOC's Emphysema Slims Tennis Tournament a smashing success.

DOC Takes a Swing at the Tobacco Racket

The first step of DOC's most widely publicized and highly successful counter-advertising event, the Emphysema Slims Pro-Celebrity Tennis Circuit (ESTT), was held in Augusta, Georgia, March 27th. The third annual tournament, which parodies the Virginia Slims Tennis Tournament, featured some fast-action play between local celebrities and pros as well as amateurs of all ages. The audience had the opportunity to participate in a smoking cessation clinic and enter a prize drawing for a video cassette recorder.

The tourney capped off eight months of events, including DOC talks in local schools and a month-long tobacco and alcohol counter-advertising poster contest which received over 300 entries. The events, sponsored by the medical students of the Medical College of Georgia DOC chapter, raised over \$5,600 which will be used to buy billboard and bus bench space to display the winning counter ads.

The ESTT circuit has been expanded in 1987 to include tournaments in Houston, Texas, and Santa Fe, New Mexico. (If your DOC chapter is interested in sponsoring a tournament, please contact DOC for more information and assistance.)

At the same time the ESTT was being held in Georgia, DOC supported members of Virginia G.A.S.P. and others who held a press conference in Fairfax, Virginia outside the Patriot Center at George Mason University where the Virginia Slims Tennis Tour-

namment was being held. The group spoke out on the tobacco-sports connection and presented nine non-necessarily-coveted awards, mostly to state and national legislators and officials in the tobacco industry.

Similar "housecalls" (ESTT's without tennis) are being held by DOC at other Virginia Slims Tennis Tournament sites including Worcester, MA, Washington, DC, Wichita, KS, and Oklahoma City, OK. These demonstrations are often preceded by paid advertisements such as "Tennis is terrific...it's smoking that's the racket" that Wichita DOC co-sponsored along with the Kansas Academy of Family Physicians in a local newspaper, along with letters to the editor objecting to the sponsorship of women's tennis and other sporting events by the purveyors of the number one cancer killer among women.



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Adam Goldstein, MCG DOC coordinator, introduces DOC members and celebrities to a crowd of school children, parents, and local DOC fans.

...from the DOC Archives

Since its founding in 1977, DOC has attempted to call attention to one very successful strategy tobacco companies have used to get around the Public Health Cigarette Smoking Act of 1969 which prohibits advertising of tobacco products on radio and television. DOC legal advisor, Ira Kuzban, Esq., sent the following mailgram to then Attorney General Griffin Bell on November 1, 1977:

As counsel for and at the request of DOC, Inc., a non-profit organization of physicians and other health care professionals concerned with preventive medicine and the ill effects of cigarette smoking and its promotion upon the public, I am sending this urgent message to your office to request that you take immediate action pursuant to the Public Health Cigarette Smoking Act of 1969 15 U S C 1331, ET SEQ to enjoin advertising by the Philip Morris Company on the public airwaves through the device of sponsoring sports events such as "The Cup". On October 1, this thoroughbred horse race was referred to on the air as the "Marlboro Cup" on both National and Local Stations at approximately 5:28 PM EDT and approximately 6:23 EDT.

The televising of this event with mention of a cigarette brand name of Philip Morris, Inc. is clearly in violation of 15 U S C 1331, which places a total ban on the advertising of cigarettes on any medium of electronic communication subject to the jurisdiction of the Communication commission. The televising of this event just like the televising of the Virginia Slims Tennis Tournament, with reference to the tobacco brand or the Philip Morris Company, is an attempt to circumvent the spirit, intent and letter of the Public Health Act. Further, it is far more detrimental than the usual form of advertising because it fails to provide even the minimum standard of the Surgeon General's warning.

As physicians and other professionals who are deeply concerned with the disastrous ill effects of cigarette smoking which they see daily in their patients, the members of DOC, Inc., feel that any step which limits unlawful advertising--particularly advertising which does not contain the proper health alert--is a necessary and appropriate step toward curbing the epidemic of cigarette smoking in the society. As the airing of such programs as the Marlboro Cup and the Virginia Slims Tennis Tournament will only encourage other tobacco companies to engage in the same kind of activity, DOC, Inc., strongly urges that you take immediate steps to enjoin the advertising, whether open or subtle, of cigarettes in the public airwaves, because this problem is one which is continuing in nature, and they further urge you to conduct an investigation into the use of this form of advertising over the public airwaves.

Sadly the situation has remained unchanged. A major focus of DOC for the foreseeable future will continue to be on ending the association between sports and tobacco. DOC members and others are urged to suggest ideas and document examples of such drug-pushing.