



## **CASE REPORT**

1. Complaint reference number	278/07
2. Advertiser	Kosciusko Thredbo Pty Ltd (tennis)
3. Product	Leisure & Sport
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Gender - section 2.1 Violence Other – section 2.2
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 11 September 2007
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT**

This television advertisement is set on a tennis court where a man is tied up to the tennis court's cyclone fence with his legs wide apart. Across the court is his girlfriend with a machine that fires tennis balls. She drums her fingers on the top of the machine and asks "So are you going to tell me what went on?" As the man grits his teeth and shakes his head, she unleashes a volley of tennis balls, causing the man to grimace and flinch with the impact of each ball. A male voiceover reminds him "What goes on in Thredbo stays in Thredbo."

## **THE COMPLAINT**

A sample of comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

*I object to this ad because it glorifies violence against men. If it was a woman being chained up having tennis balls shot at her vagina we would NEVER hear the end of it. Violence against ANYONE is unacceptable. I find this ad offensive not only for the hypocrisy it embodies but that it seems to imply that a woman hurting a man is somehow a good thing. What is worse is that we have to put up with the "Violence against women" ads. So it's OK to hurt men but NOT OK to hurt women? Take this disgrace off the air. Men deserve better.*

## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complaint/s regarding this advertisement included the following:

*We contend that in no way does this commercial breach the Code and offer the following explanation:*

*For over the last 25 years Thredbo ads have been airing in Australian and have been widely regarded as having an irreverent, provocative, fun sense of humour, which leaves people with a smile and a feeling that the resort must be heaps of fun. These commercials are directed at young people and people young-at-heart. This commercial was built from an insight that snow sports can offer the adrenaline and thrill that comes from pushing personal boundaries and the fun and pleasure of bonding with their mates.*

*Based on this insight of bonding with their mates and the well-known saying of "what goes on tour, stays on tour", a tongue-in-cheek campaign was developed. This commercial exaggerates the experience of going to Thredbo is so thrilling that you will not want to share it with anyone, so much so that you would endure anything. It is produced in a very humorous, light-hearted tone and in no way "glorifies violence against men" and we had no intention or in no way condone or encourage violence.*

*We firmly believe that this commercial is very tongue-in-cheek and no reasonable consumer would find it offensive or discriminating on any of the grounds set in Section 2.*

## **THE DETERMINATION**

The Advertising Standards Board (“Board”) considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the “Code”).

The Board noted the complainant's concern about the depiction of a woman hurting a man.

The Board noted that this Thredbo advertisement appears in the context of a number of other Thredbo advertisements which focus on the importance of not telling people who haven't been to Thredbo about the fun that was had at Thredbo. The Board noted that the idea of tying your partner up and firing tennis balls at him was not appropriate behaviour, whether conducted by a man or a woman but that in the context of this advertisement it was clearly seen as an over-the top and humorous way of making sure that you don't tell people what happened at Thredbo. The Board considered that this clear exaggeration and humour would make it unlikely that anyone would mimic this behaviour. The Board determined that the advertisement did not depict violence that was not justified in the context of the advertisement.

Finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on any grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.