

# Tribunal attacks cigarette adverts on TV

**THE Australian Broadcasting Tribunal has criticised four television commercials and the televised 1982 rugby league grand final for containing cigarette advertising.**

Under the Broadcasting and Television Act, cigarette advertising is banned on radio and television.

One of the advertisements — for Redhead matches — came under fire for presenting the act of lighting of a cigarette as a "central feature of a cosy romantic atmosphere".

The commercials were Redhead Matches' "Strike Up a Friendship", the Benson and Hedges cricket "Field of Battle", The Australian Ballet, sponsored by Benson and Hedges, and the film Aussie Assault.

## Threatened

The tribunal has no power to ban the commercials, but it threatened yesterday to take any breaches of the law into consideration when reviewing the commercial stations' licences.

The tribunal found the televised grand final by Channel 7 contained cigarette advertising in the form of a large number of A-frames bearing the Winfield slogan, placed "to ensure maximum television exposure".

Yesterday the chairman of Benson and Hedges, Mr Barry Smith, warned that the tribunal's ruling could jeopardise future sporting and cultural events sponsored by big companies.

He said the advertisements were not for cigarettes or smoking but for sponsored events.

The Tobacco Institute's

chief executive, Mr John Dollisson, said the Broadcasting and Television Act allowed for recognition of sponsors of sporting events.

A spokesman for the Australian Ballet said their commercial was no longer being screened because it was out of date.

A spokesman for Bryant & May, maker of Redhead matches, said their commercial had not been screened since last year and there were no plans to revive it.

The general manager of Channel 10, which will televise this year's rugby league grand final, Mr George Brown, said the station would abide by the tribunal's ruling.

The deputy director of the Federation of Australian Commercial Television Stations, Mr David Morgan, said stations had been told to accept the commercials no longer.

This was despite legal advice that the commercials were within the bounds of the Act.