

ASA Ruling on LC International Ltd t/a Ladbrokes

 Not upheld | Television | 03 June 2020

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Ad description

A TV ad for Ladbrokes, seen 29 February 2020, featured a man filling his car up with petrol while a voiceover stated, "It's all about getting them to line up". The ad showed the price of the petrol which stopped at "£77.77" after which the man said "Yes". The ad then featured a man who was ordering a sandwich. The man twice said, "Hit me" after which a further filling was added to the sandwich, the man then said, "When the time is right, I like to double down. Hit me". The ad then featured a women in a clothes shop who said, "There are few things more exciting than a spinning wheel. I'm going for red, definitely red. OK black" while she span a circular clothing rail which contained alternating red and black clothes.

Issue

Five complainants, who believed the ad showed people who were addicted to gambling taking part in scenarios which mimicked gambling as part of their everyday lives, challenged whether the ad breached the Code by portraying gambling as taking priority in life.

Response

LC International Ltd t/a Ladbrokes said the ad was intended to demonstrate the excitement of gaming in a metaphorical way which exaggerated real life. They said the ad featured people in everyday situations designed to represent player behaviour in a fun parody of everyday life. The characters were shown in situations where humorous analogies were made with gambling but that those analogies did not suggest that gambling took precedence over the characters' work or other daily activities. They said that at no point did the gambling comparisons interrupt their routines or stop them completing their ordinary tasks. There was no reference to gambling or any suggestion that the characters would rather be gambling than undertaking their usual tasks.

Ladbrokes said the ad did not feature characters in a work environment and did not show them gambling, but that they were continuing in normal day to day activities. They did not believe the ad's characters appeared to be addicted to gambling and they said each of the characters showed an expression of excitement and concentration, rather than glazed, distant or day-dreaming. They therefore believed none of the scenarios showed gambling, real or imagined, taking priority over actions.

Ladbrokes said the characters were presented in a petrol station, a sandwich shop and a high street department store, which meant they were not portrayed in a glamorous way. Clearcast said that although the characters saw gambling analogies whilst out and about, these were not shown to get in the way of their lives and took no precedent. Clearcast believed the analogies were nothing more than humorous reminders of the mechanics and routines of gambling and gaming. Gambling did not appear to interrupt the character's routines or errands, and although they may be temporarily reminded of gambling, this did not mean that gambling was either indispensable or that it was taking priority. They believed the clear priorities for the characters were filling their car with fuel, choosing sandwich fillings and browsing dresses.

Clearcast believed all the characters looked alert and were concentrated on what they were doing. They said they were shown particularly engaged in each of their activities and that no one looked addicted to gambling.

Assessment

Not upheld

The BCAP Code stated that advertisements must not portray, condone or encourage gambling behaviour that was socially irresponsible or could lead to financial, social or emotional harm. It also stated advertisements must not portray gambling as indispensable or as taking priority in life; for example, over family, friends or professional or educational commitments.

The ad presented three characters engaging in everyday tasks and real-life scenarios that appeared to remind them of different online casino games: a slot machine; blackjack game; and roulette wheel. The ASA considered that whilst the characters were depicted as momentarily reminded of gambling and engaged in that analogy of the situation, they were not so distracted that they didn't continue with those tasks. We also considered that the brief scenarios depicted did not present gambling as indispensable or imply that it took priority in any aspect of the characters' lives. We therefore concluded that the ad did not portray, condone or encourage gambling behaviour that was socially irresponsible, or portray gambling as indispensable or as taking priority in life.

We investigated the ad under BCAP Code rules [17.3.1](#) and [17.3.4](#)

(Gambling), but did not find it in breach.

Action

No further action necessary.

BCAP Code

[17.3.1](#) [17.3.4](#)

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Gambling

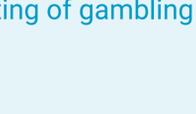
LC International Ltd

Suite 6
Europort Avenue
Gibraltar
GX11 1AA

Number of complaints: **5**

Complaint Ref: **G20-1061345 Ladbrokes Betting Gaming Ltd**

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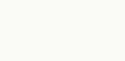
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