

# Neo Cricket, Ten Sports in ad row

## ■ ASCI tells Ten Sports to withdraw *Impact Magazine* ad

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The battle to acquire the top slot in the sports telecast has taken a new turn with the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) asking Ten Sports to temporarily suspend an advertisement placed in *Impact Magazine* (January 26-February 6 issue) that stated 'Ten Sports is the no. 1 sports channel for the 6th consecutive year'.

Neo Cricket had also released a similar ad in the same magazine (issue dated January 12-18) which said 'Neo Cricket is no. 1 sports channel for the year 2008.' Neo Cricket wrote a letter to ASCI on January 27 and filed a complaint against Ten Sports. Meanwhile, a meeting was held at the Consumer Complaints Council (CCC) on February 24 to address this issue.

Abhishek Verma, head marketing and communications, Neo Sports Broadcast Pvt Ltd, said, "Neo Cricket had first released the ad and later Ten Sports came up with a similar ad that claimed it to be



**"Neo Cricket had first released the ad and later Ten Sports came up with a similar ad that claimed it to be the no. 1 sports channel."**

the no. 1 sports channel. It was then that we wrote a letter to the ASCI to take action on this issue as we were concerned

since it is important for all stakeholders to know the facts. Television Audience Measurement (TAM) has already said that we were the no. 1 sports channel of 2008."

ASCI approached CCC where the latter has upheld the complaint and said that the ad contravened Chapter I.4 of the ASCI code.

After analysing the issue, ASCI issued a letter to Neo Sports Broadcasting on March 24 in which CCC maintained that the ad released by Ten Sports 'was misleading by ambiguity'.

Rukin Kizilbash, GM-India, Taj Television India Pvt Ltd (owner of Ten Sports) said, "Yes we have suspended the ad placed in *Impact Magazine*. We claimed to be the no. 1 sports channel in terms of an individual channel, and that's how we placed the ad. However, Neo Cricket's claim as the no. 1 comes after combining the Target Rating Point (TRP) of its two channels - Neo Sports and Neo Cricket. We are waiting for ASCI's decision which is expected by the end of this week."

The ASCI spokesperson refused to comment.