

*Price of the Ice Stunt*

**RADIO STATION IS FINED £15,000 AFTER CONTEST LEFT THREE WITH SEVERE BURNS  
(DAILY MAIL REPORTER)**

A RADIO station which held a competition that left three contestants with severe burns was fined £15,000 under S3 HASAWA.

Birmingham-based BRMB ran a Coolest Seats in Town competition in which contestants had to sit on blocks of ice for as long as they could to win tickets to a music festival.

The temperature of the ice was minus 78C.

Two women and a man who joined the competition later spent ten weeks in hospital with severe burns. Their treatment included extensive skin grafts. BRMB which is owned by the London-based conglomerate Capital Radio admitted breaching health and safety laws when it appeared before Birmingham magistrates court. It said it had expected contestants to last only ten minutes sitting on the ice but they had endured much longer.

Outside court, one of those hurt, 27-year-old Helen Terry, from Quinton, Birmingham, said the competition had had a devastating impact.

"I don't think I will ever be able to wear shorts or a skirt again and it has had a major effect on the kind of activities I can do with my kids".

Reading from a statement outside court, Capital Radio Group operations director Paul Davies said; "It was never our intention to place anyone in jeopardy and we sincerely apologise to the participants and their families for their injuries and distress."

The court heard that four Birmingham contestants, Eddie Witherington, 31, from Ward End, Lyndsey Dugmore, 20, from Northfield, Emma Adkins, 16, from Bromford and Mrs Terry took part in the competition on August 24, 2001.

The idea was to try to win tickets to attend the Party in The Park music festival three days later and the chance to introduce one of the bands.

All four sat on the blocks of dry ice for 45 minutes before the first gave in. Minutes later the rest of the contestants complained of feeling ill and were taken to the Selly Oak Hospital burns unit.

Miss Adkins was not seriously burned because she had been wearing protective padding. Georgine Speake, prosecuting on behalf of the Health and Safety Executive, said the contestants were told the dry ice was perfectly safe.

In fact, the blocks were so cold that they froze the nerves in their upper thighs and buttocks which meant they could not feel the pain until it was too late, Mrs Speake added.

David Egan, defending said the competition was meant to be a bit of fun. In the aftermath, more than £30,000 had been paid to the victims while civil claims were pursued.

