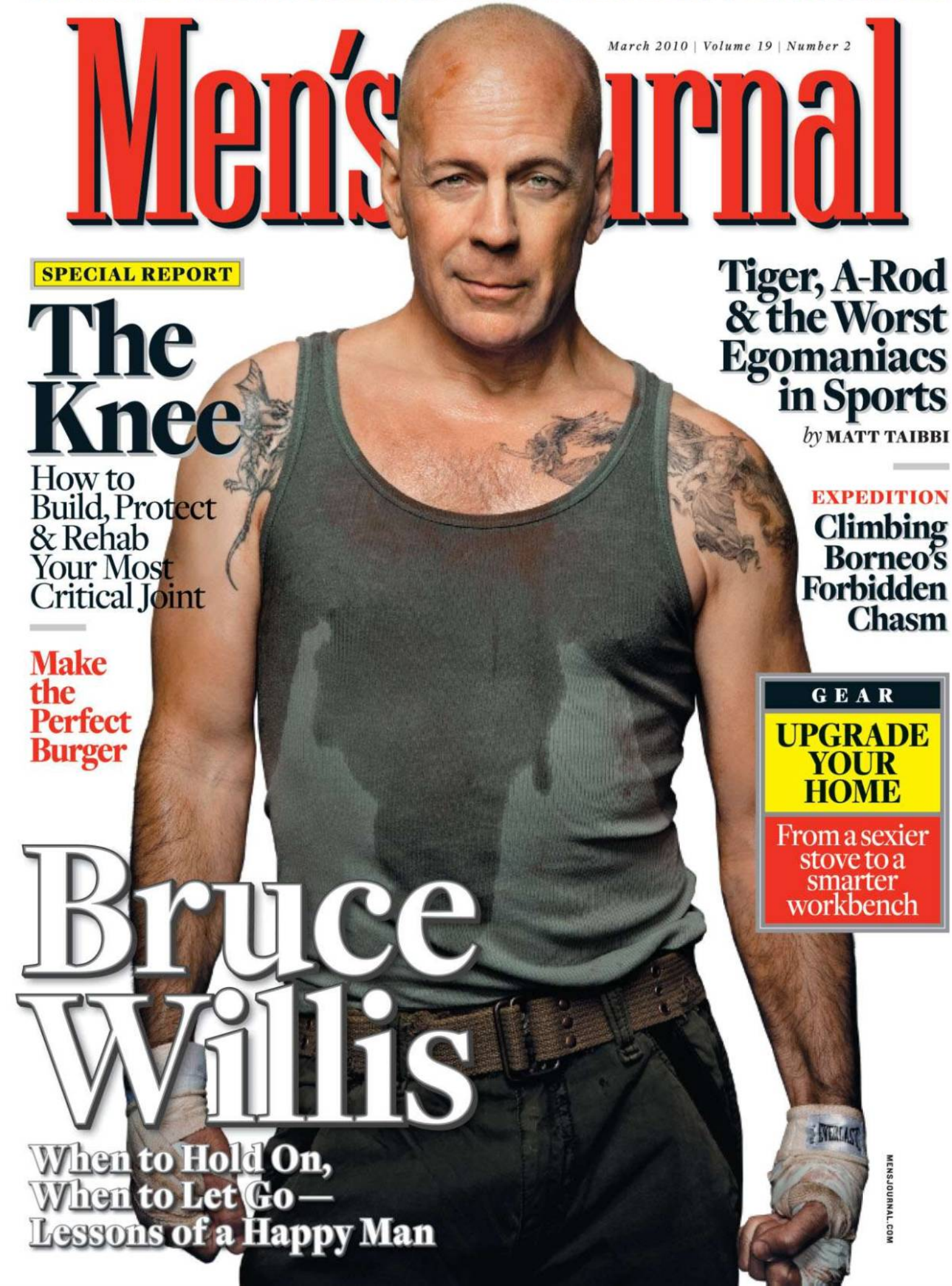
NO MORE WHEAT: THE SURPRISING NEW DIET FOR ATHLETES

Men's Journal

March 2010 | Volume 19 | Number 2



SPECIAL REPORT

The Knee

How to Build, Protect & Rehab Your Most Critical Joint

Tiger, A-Rod & the Worst Egomaniacs in Sports

by MATT TAIBBI

EXPEDITION

Climbing Borneo's Forbidden Chasm

Make the Perfect Burger

GEAR

UPGRADE YOUR HOME

From a sexier stove to a smarter workbench

Bruce Willis

When to Hold On, When to Let Go—Lessons of a Happy Man

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What Would Bruce Do? | 64

Slouching toward wisdom with the man who's still learning what it's like to be a father, a husband — and a trademark.

by **BILL ZEHME**

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Borneo's Forbidden Chasm | 70

A young, seemingly invincible free-soloist reminds four veteran climbers why they risk so much.

by **MARK SYNNOTT**

The World's Fourth Strongest Man | 76

What motivates human highlight reel Derek Poundstone to hoist cars, lift 420-pound rocks, and drag 48-ton jet planes on a chain? Hint: It's not his ego.

by **PAUL SOLOTAROFF**

STYLE

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Seven PGA rookies — Tour cards still warm from the laminator — test out spring's coolest golf-inspired threads.

by **JOSH SENS**

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Your Complete Guide to the Knee | 53

Everything you need to know about your most critical joint, from how to strengthen it to when a nagging pain is serious — and the one surgery to avoid at all costs.

ON THE COVER

Bruce Willis, photographed exclusively for *Men's Journal* by JIM WRIGHT on December 3, 2009, in Santa Monica, California. Styling by LORI STILSON-ARMSTRONG. Grooming by HELEN ROBERTSON for Smashbox Beauty/Celestineagency.com. Prop styling by MUNGAI NGUKU. Willis wears a tank by JAMES PERSE and pants by JET LAG.

photograph by **Jimmy Chin**

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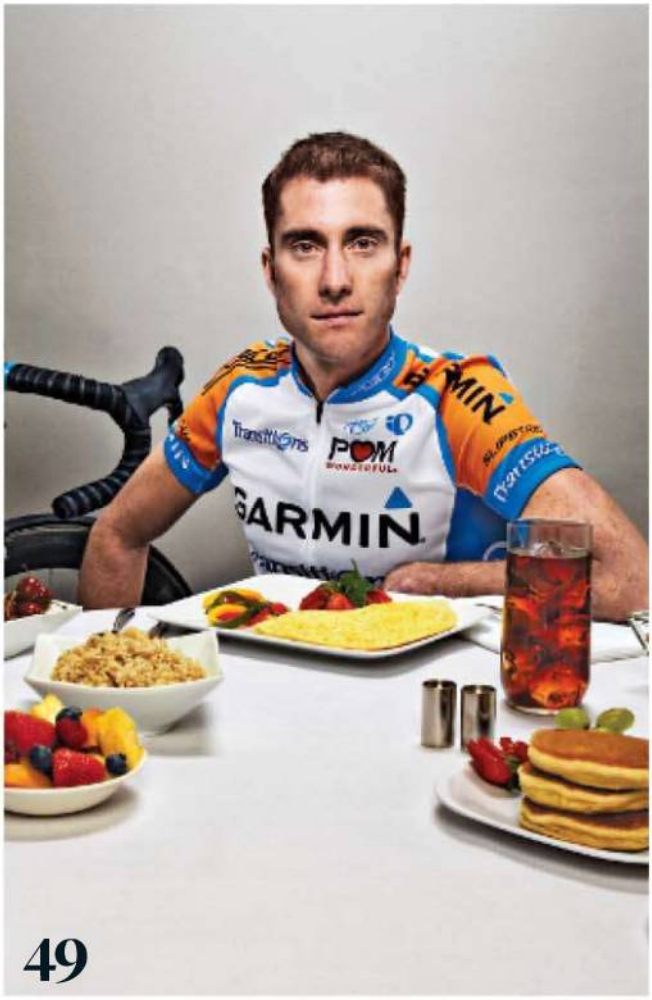

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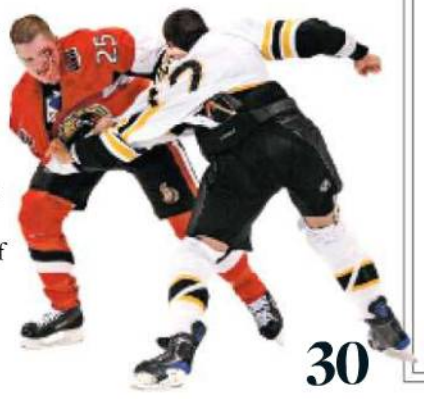

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Upgrade Your HOME

Performance gear for everyday use has never looked so good. We give you the tools to live your life better.

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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: TAYLOR CASTLE; TRAVIS RATHBONE; FRED CHARTRAND; HANNAH WHITAKER/NEW YORK MAGAZINE

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THE POWER OF COOL

LETTERS

photograph by **Jake Chessum**

Alec Baldwin, trying to stay afloat on Long Island, New York

THANKS FOR THE PENETRATING PORTRAIT OF ALEC Baldwin ["The Spectacular Failure of Alec Baldwin," by Erik Hedegaard, Dec. 2009/Jan. 2010]. Baldwin, though a supremely gifted actor, doesn't seem to regard his work as an honorable profession. But it's his deep humanity and that flawed sense of self that make him a believable and likable character. And now, with *30 Rock*, he's at the top of his game. *—Tom Henneberry, San Francisco*

BALDWIN IS ONE OF THE best actors of his generation. I hope he pulls his head out of his ass and starts believing how good he is. I'd love to see him in more movies.

—JONATHAN
via e-mail

THROUGH THE YEARS YOU have had incredible articles on men: Russians who died on the ocean floor in their nuclear sub, war vets overcoming physical and mental challenges. Yet you continue to put those tenants of Tinseltown on your front cover. Come on.

—GEORGE SWEITZER
Sarasota, FL

A FATHER'S LESSONS

PAT JORDAN'S ARTICLE about his father was a great read ["What I Learned from My Father, the Grifter," Dec. 2009/Jan. 2010], especially as I sit in a cubicle and contemplate how to get out of this predictable life and into one with soul. Pat, thank you for sharing your story; your dad sounds great. Wish I could've had the honor of losing some money to him at pool.

—BRENT E.
Portland, OR

SOLVED MYSTERY

I WAS STRUCK BY "A MYSterious Death at the South Pole" [by Will Cockrell, Dec. 2009/Jan. 2010]. A friend of mine died last year in Bali of alcohol poisoning from liquor laced with methanol. It would seem the author has most likely solved the mystery of Rodney Marks's death.

—MICHAEL HICKS
Bisbee, AZ

SWEET ON STEVE

I LOVED STEVE NASH'S fresh and honest article outlining his recent decision to kick refined sugars from his diet ["Living Sugar-Free," Dec. 2009/Jan. 2010]. My fiancée and I were so inspired that we have vowed to follow a low-sugar diet in 2010.

—GARTH MCGINLEY
Bethesda, MD

SECRET STASH

IN YOUR 2010 POWDER Guide ["Accessible Backcountry for Everyone," by Marc Peruzzi, Dec. 2009/Jan. 2010], you highlighted Kirkwood as the only resort in California to offer snowcat-assisted tours. However, Bear Valley Mountain is now in its second season of snowcat-assisted tours of the backcountry. Locals and regulars like to think that Bear Valley is the best-kept secret in the Sierras, and it appears that its snowcat tours are even better kept. My apologies to all in Bear Valley for giving it away.

—STEVE TROYER
Saratoga, CA

THE LOSERS RESPOND

MATT TAIBBI JUST WROTE sports scripture in the Dec. 2009/Jan. 2010 issue ["Why

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FOCUS on driving

Sports Are for Losers"]. I commit to proselytizing "the word" among my '84 Cubs disciple buddies who watched Steve Garvey and Tony Gwynn transgress unspeakable acts against my brothers in faith. Now the healing can finally begin.

—CHRIS STAKE
Gaithersburg, MD

I'M GENERALLY PRETTY stoked for Taibbi's column, but the latest had me a bit nonplussed. Matt, if you're indeed a Boston sports fan, I have to ask: What exactly are you whining about? If anyone should be downing a Prozac shake, it's Cleveland sports fans! We own heartbreak *and* misery: the Drive, the Fumble, the Shot. We've never been to a Super Bowl, and our baseball team hasn't had a parade since 1948. Grab a Sam Adams, throw on the highlight DVD of the sweep over the Rockies, and shut up!

— MATTHEW A. SEDMOCK
Akron, OH

BIKE AND FORK

YOUR PICK OF THE SANTA Cruz Blur XC Carbon as part of your "Gear of the Year" was spot on [Dec. 2009/Jan. 2010]. But you did a disservice by photographing it with the fork installed backward! Riding it that way would end in a nasty crash.

— JEFF VRECHEK
Honolulu, HI

THE MJ MAKEOVER

BEFORE RENEWING, I wanted to say that my diet, cooking skills, exercises, and sleep habits have all improved by reading MJ. (Thanks, Dr. Bob.) When the next issue arrives, I predict I'll be satisfied that my money is well spent.

—TIM CATER
Fairbanks, AK

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CONTRIBUTORS

Hugh Kretschmer

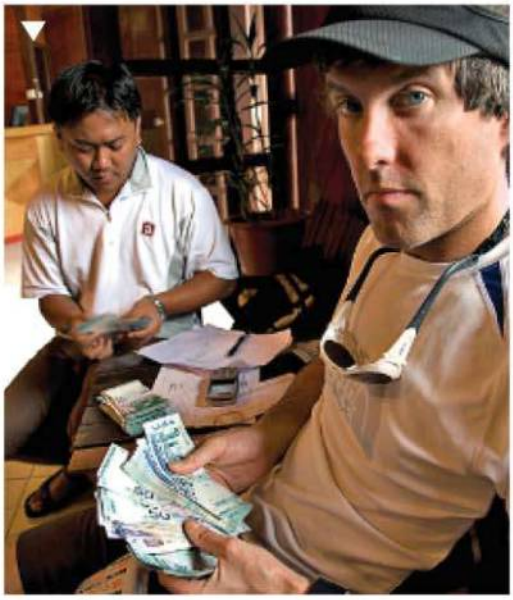
"The World's Fourth Strongest Man," **PAGE 76**

Kretschmer developed his love of photography through his dad, a photo-instrumentation engineer during the Apollo missions. "We had a darkroom in a bomb shelter next to our house," says Kretschmer, 49. "He showed me how to make my first print, and the rest is history." Kretschmer specializes in conceptual shots of the outré: a woman flying a man-kite, a boxer with a raw steak for a face, severed feet laced up like boots. For his MJ shoot of strongman Derek Poundstone, he built a circus banner and dumbbell. "I like to produce more than a nicely executed picture. Hopefully it makes the viewer think."

Mark Synnott

"Borneo's Forbidden Chasm," **PAGE 70**

When Synnott was young, he started the Crazy Kids of America Club. "We'd do things like pole-vault across ice-choked rivers," he says. "If my kids did anything like that, I'd ground them for a year." Synnott, 40, has since channeled that hyperlust for adventure: He's climbed in Pakistan, done first ascents in the Amazon, and, for this month's issue, rappelled 2,500 feet into the world's deepest slot canyon. "This was right up there with my all-time adventures," he says.



Bill Zehme

"What Would Bruce Do?" **PAGE 64**

Zehme has profiled pop culture's biggest guns — guys such as Nicholson and Carson. "My writing life has been dedicated to reinventing and elevating the celebrity profile," he says. "It tends to be a lonely job." He gets beyond the fluff by asking about the kinds of problems the rest of us grapple with — the approach he took with this month's cover subject, Bruce Willis. "I first sprung this exercise on Frank Sinatra," says Zehme, 51. "I've applied many of their lessons to my own life. Starting with Sinatra's advice on what a man should never do in front of a woman: Yawn."

Corey Seymour

"Olympics for the Everyman," **PAGE 22**

Growing up in North Dakota, "there wasn't a lot to do, so we did everything we could," says Seymour, 42. That partly explains his interest in learning to ski jump. "It seemed like a death wish. An hour in, I was at the top of the jump scared shitless. It was amazing." Seymour got his start at *Rolling Stone* before his first stint at *Men's Journal* in the mid-'90s. He's since written and edited for other publications and co-authored *Gonzo: The Life of Hunter S. Thompson* with MJ editor in chief Jann Wenner. Now Seymour is back as articles editor, and he's still trying new sports. Recently: Krav Maga. Next: speedskating. "I have a short attention span."

FROM TOP: COURTESY HUGH KRETSCHMER; WAYNE MCCLAMMY; JIMMY CHIN; BIBA MILIOTO

CAMEL SNUS

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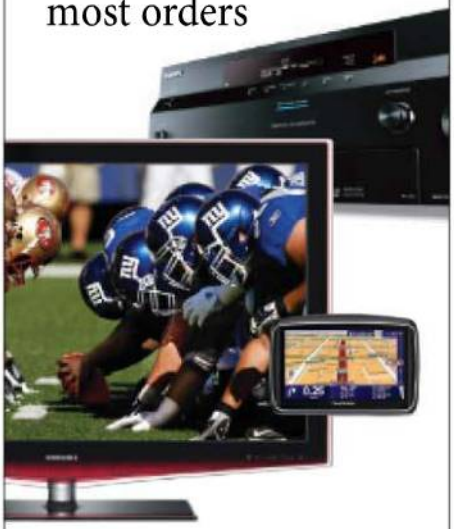

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photograph by **Peter McBride**

NOTEBOOK

MARCH 2010

wish you were here

Roulston Lake, Plaster Rock, New Brunswick

"IT'S A SYMPHONY OF SKATES," SAYS PETER MCBRIDE OF THE WORLD Pond Hockey Championship, a sort of Super Bowl of shinny held in the tiny Canadian town of Plaster Rock every February. The goal of the 120 four-man teams from countries as far-flung as Egypt and Australia is to compete for the carved-wood Goodwill Cup. The real draw, though, is the chance to play hockey like a kid — on an open pond, with bale-anchored goals — but with a few upgrades: There's a beer tent, and Lord Stanley's Cup, on loan from the NHL, makes an appearance. Last year the "Golden Jet," Bobby Hull, took time between swigs to pronounce the championship the "eighth wonder of the world." Read McBride's account of his wooden-cup run with the Aspen Leafs at mensjournal.com/pondhockey. —DACUS THOMPSON

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WHAT'S NEW

MARCH 2010

Car Talk

Showtime's weekly series *Inside NASCAR* breaks down each week's race in incomparable detail. Call it the thinking man's stock car racing show — though we're also hoping for some coverage of Danica Patrick's debut season of making left turn after beautiful left turn. Tune in Wednesdays at 10 PM (*sports.sho.com*).

Endless Winter

At Utah's the Canyons Ski Resort — the fifth-largest ski area in the U.S. — SDI Properties is offering transferable 30-year ski passes with its condos. Value: $33K (*escalalodges.com*).

A Royal Spirit

This three-year-old single malt is the first English-made whiskey since Queen Victoria's reign (*$56; englishwhisky.co.uk*).

Long-Distance Honey

Bee Raw's Varietal Honey Flight serves up nine one-ounce vials of regional honeys from across the country, all surprisingly distinct in flavor (*$78; bee-raw.com*).

ECO TOUR

BikeHike Adventures leads amazing muscle-powered trips around the world. Its newest offering: kayaking, rafting, ziplining, biking — and leatherback-turtle rescuing — across Costa Rica (*$2,199; bikehike.com*).

Sharp Shirt

Cycling to work just became more viable with Outlier's new Pivot Sleeve Shirt, an all-cotton garment equally fit for a Bianchi or a boardroom (*$144; outlier.cc*).

Time Travel

Equipped with the largest single mirror ever built for a space telescope, the Herschel Space Observatory recently started sending home images of galaxies forming 12 billion years ago (*sci.esa.int*).

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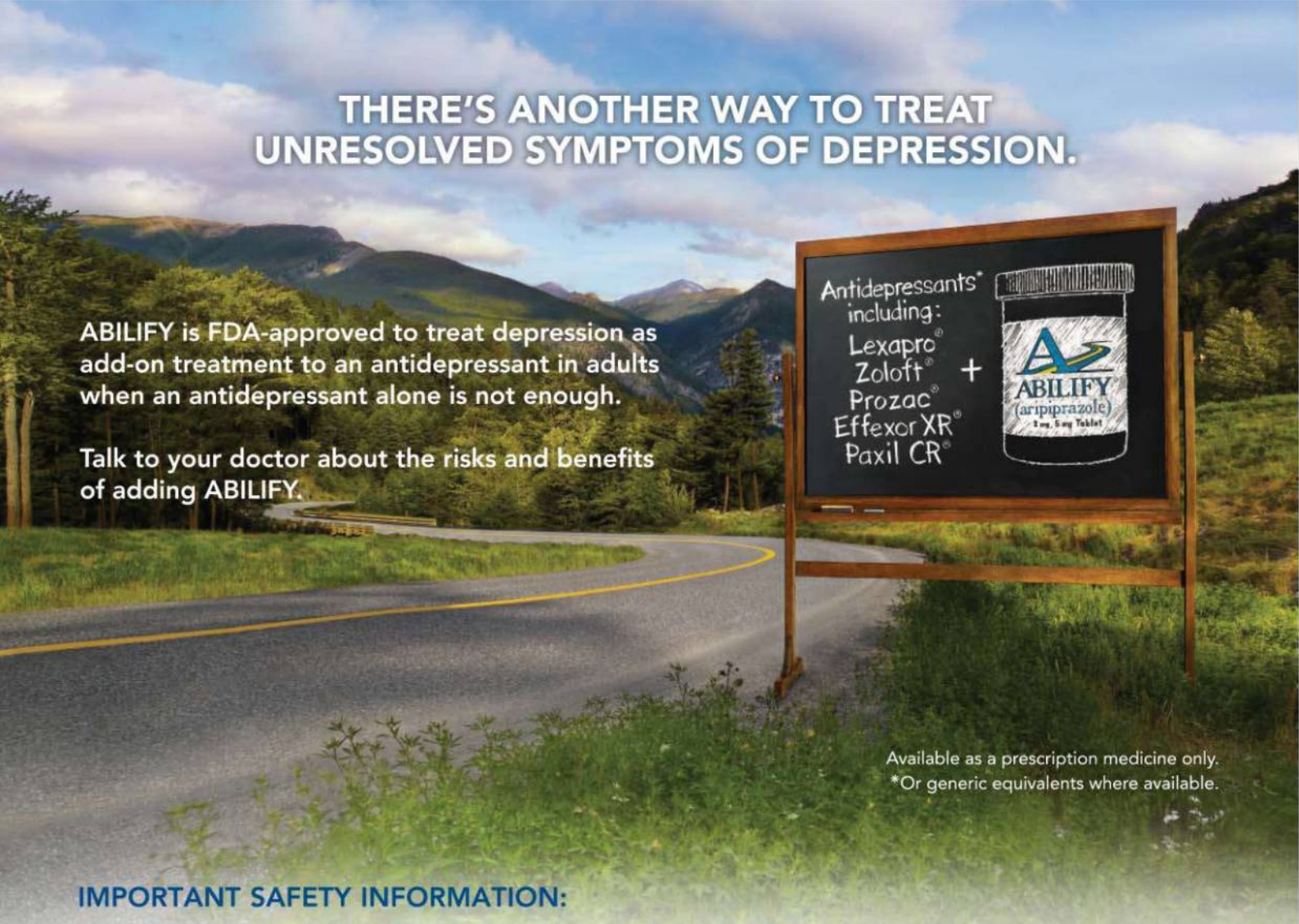
THERE'S ANOTHER WAY TO TREAT UNRESOLVED SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION.



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- Call your doctor if you develop very high fever, rigid muscles, shaking, confusion, sweating, or increased heart rate and blood pressure, as these may be signs of a rare but potentially fatal condition called **neuroleptic malignant syndrome (NMS)**
- If you develop abnormal or uncontrollable facial movements, tell your doctor, as these may be signs of **tardive dyskinesia (TD)**, which could become permanent
- If you have **diabetes** or have risk factors or symptoms of diabetes, your blood sugar should be monitored. High blood sugar has been reported with ABILIFY and medicines like it. In some cases, extreme high blood sugar can lead to coma or death
- **Other risks** may include lightheadedness upon standing, decreases in white blood cells (which can be serious), seizures, trouble swallowing, or impairment in judgment or motor skills. Until you know how ABILIFY affects you, you should not drive or operate machinery

The **common side effects** in adults in clinical trials (≥10%) include nausea, vomiting, constipation, headache, dizziness, an inner sense of restlessness or need to move (akathisia), anxiety, and insomnia. Tell your doctor about all the medicines you're taking, since there are some risks for drug interactions. You should avoid alcohol while taking ABILIFY.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please read the additional Important Information about ABILIFY on the adjacent page.

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2, 5, 10, 15, 20, 30 mg Tablets

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT ABILIFY

This summary of the Package Insert contains risk and safety information for patients about ABILIFY. This summary does not include all information about ABILIFY and is not meant to take the place of discussions with your healthcare professional about your treatment. Please read this important information carefully before you start taking ABILIFY and discuss any questions about ABILIFY with your healthcare professional.

Name

ABILIFY® (a-BIL-i-fi) (aripiprazole) (air-i-PIP-ra-zall)

What is ABILIFY (aripiprazole)?

ABILIFY is a prescription medicine used as an add-on treatment to an antidepressant for adults with Major Depressive Disorder who had an inadequate response to antidepressant therapy.

What is depression?

Depression is a common but serious medical condition. Symptoms may include sadness, loss of interest in activities you once enjoyed, loss of energy, difficulty concentrating or making decisions, feelings of worthlessness or excessive guilt, insomnia or excessive sleep, a change in appetite causing weight loss or gain, or thoughts of death or suicide. These could be depression symptoms if they interfere with daily life at home, at work, or with friends and last most of the day, nearly every day for at least 2 weeks.

What is the most important information that I should know about antidepressant medicines, depression, and other serious mental illnesses?

- Antidepressant medicines may increase suicidal thoughts or actions in some children, teenagers, and young adults
- Depression and serious mental illnesses are the most important causes of suicidal thoughts and actions

For more information, see the Prescribing Information and the Medication Guide called *Antidepressant Medicines, Depression and Other Serious Mental Illnesses, and Suicidal Thoughts or Actions.*

Who should NOT take ABILIFY?

People who are allergic to ABILIFY or to any substance that is in it. Allergic reactions have ranged from rash, hives and itching to difficulty breathing and swelling of the face, lips, or tongue. Please talk with your healthcare professional.

What is the most important information that I should know about ABILIFY?

Elderly patients, diagnosed with psychosis as a result of dementia (for example, an inability to perform daily activities as a result of increased memory loss), and who are treated with antipsychotic medicines including ABILIFY, are at an increased risk of death when compared to patients who are treated with a placebo (sugar pill). ABILIFY is not approved for the treatment of patients with dementia-related psychosis.

Antidepressants may increase suicidal thoughts or behaviors in some children, teenagers, and young adults, especially within the first few months of treatment or when the dose is changed. Depression and other serious mental illnesses are themselves associated with an increase in the risk of suicide. Patients on antidepressants and their families or caregivers should watch for new or worsening depression symptoms, unusual changes in behavior, or thoughts of suicide. Such symptoms should be reported to the patient's healthcare professional right away, especially if they are severe or occur suddenly. ABILIFY is not approved for use in pediatric patients with depression.

Serious side effects can occur with any antipsychotic medicine, including ABILIFY. Tell your healthcare professional right away if you have any conditions or side effects, including the following:

Stroke or ministroke in elderly patients with dementia: An increased risk of stroke and ministroke has been reported in clinical studies of elderly patients with dementia (for example, increased memory loss and inability to perform daily activities). ABILIFY (aripiprazole) is not approved for treating patients with dementia.

Neuroleptic malignant syndrome (NMS): Very high fever, rigid muscles, shaking, confusion, sweating, or increased heart rate and blood pressure **may be signs of NMS, a rare but serious side effect that could be fatal.**

Tardive dyskinesia (TD): Abnormal or uncontrollable movements of face, tongue, or other parts of body may be signs of a serious condition known as TD, which may be permanent.

High blood sugar and diabetes: Patients with diabetes and those having risk factors for diabetes (for example, obesity, family history of diabetes), as well as those with symptoms such as unexpected increases in thirst, urination, or hunger should have their blood sugar levels checked before and during treatment. Increases in blood sugar levels (hyperglycemia), in some cases serious and associated with coma or death, have been reported in patients taking ABILIFY, and medicines like it.

Orthostatic hypotension: Lightheadedness or faintness caused by a sudden change in heart rate and blood pressure when rising too quickly from a sitting or lying position (orthostatic hypotension) has been reported with ABILIFY.

Leukopenia, Neutropenia, and Agranulocytosis: Decreases in white blood cells (infection fighting cells) have been reported in some patients taking antipsychotic agents, including ABILIFY. Patients with a history of a significant decrease in white blood cell (WBC) count or who have experienced a low WBC due to drug therapy should have their blood tested and monitored during the first few months of therapy.

Suicidal thoughts: If you have suicidal thoughts, you should tell your healthcare professional right away.

Dysphagia: Medicines like ABILIFY have been associated with swallowing problems (dysphagia). If you had or have swallowing problems, you should tell your healthcare professional.

What should I talk to my healthcare provider about?

Patients and their families or caregivers should watch for new or worsening depression symptoms, unusual changes in behavior and thoughts of suicide, as well as for anxiety, agitation, panic attacks, difficulty sleeping, irritability, hostility, aggressiveness, impulsivity, restlessness, or extreme hyperactivity. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have thoughts of suicide or if any of these symptoms are severe or occur suddenly. Be especially observant within the first few months of antidepressant treatment or whenever there is a change in dose.

Tell your healthcare provider about any medical conditions you may have and all medicines that you are taking or plan to take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, or herbal products.

Be sure to tell your healthcare provider:

- If you have suicidal thoughts
- If you have or have had a low white blood cell count (WBC)
- If you or anyone in your family have or had seizures
- If you or anyone in your family have or had high blood sugar or diabetes
- If you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding

What should I avoid when taking ABILIFY?

- Avoid overheating and dehydration
- Avoid driving or operating hazardous machinery until you know how ABILIFY affects you
- Avoid drinking alcohol
- Avoid breast-feeding an infant

What are the possible side effects of ABILIFY (aripiprazole)?

Common side effects in adults include: nausea, vomiting, constipation, headache, dizziness, an inner sense of restlessness or need to move (akathisia), anxiety and insomnia.

It is important to contact your healthcare professional if you experience prolonged, abnormal muscle spasm or contraction which may be signs of a condition called dystonia.

This is not a complete list of side effects. For full patient information, visit www.abilify.com. Talk to your healthcare professional if you have questions or develop any side effects.

What percentage of people stopped taking ABILIFY due to side effects?

In clinical trials, the percentage of adults who discontinued taking ABILIFY due to side effects was 6% and 2% for patients treated with sugar pill.

Can I safely take ABILIFY while I'm taking other medications?

ABILIFY can be taken with most drugs; however, taking ABILIFY with some medicines may require your healthcare professional to adjust the dosage of ABILIFY.

Some medicines* include:

- ketoconazole (NIZORAL®)
- quinidine (QUINIDEX®)
- fluoxetine (PROZAC®)
- paroxetine (PAXIL®)
- carbamazepine (TEGRETOL®)

It is important to tell your healthcare professional about all the medicines you're taking, just to be sure.

How should I take ABILIFY?

- Take ABILIFY exactly as directed by your healthcare professional
- ABILIFY is usually taken once a day and can be taken with or without food
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember. However, if it is time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and take only your regularly scheduled dose
- Talk to your healthcare professional before stopping ABILIFY or changing your dose

General advice about ABILIFY:

- ABILIFY should be kept out of the reach of children and pets
- Store ABILIFY Tablets and the Oral Solution at room temperature
- For patients who must limit their sugar intake, be aware that **ABILIFY Oral Solution contains sugar**
- For patients who cannot metabolize phenylalanine (those with phenylketonuria or PKU), **ABILIFY DISCMELT® contains phenylalanine**
- If you have additional questions, talk to your healthcare professional

Find out more about ABILIFY:

Additional information can be found at **www.abilify.com**

* NIZORAL is a registered trademark of Janssen Pharmaceutica; QUINIDEX is a registered trademark of Wyeth Pharmaceuticals; PROZAC is a registered trademark of Eli Lilly and Company; PAXIL is a registered trademark of GlaxoSmithKline; TEGRETOL is a registered trademark of Novartis Pharmaceuticals.

Based on Full Prescribing Information as of 11/09 1239550A7.

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Record Book

WHO SURFED BIGGER, CLIMBED FASTER, AND BREWED IT STRONGER

Greg Long's Hawaii Five-O at the Eddie

The Other Green Monster

All along Oahu's Waimea Bay, weather advisories warned that the coming waves would be the biggest and most destructive in 40 years. But a public-safety concern for most was a siren call for others. On December 8, the world's elite surfers were paddling out in hopes of catching the monster that would win them the **Quiksilver in Memory of Eddie Aikau invitational**.

The Eddie, as it's known, honors the legacy of its daredevil namesake, a native big-wave legend who was lost at sea in 1978 on an ill-fated canoe expedition from Hawaii to Tahiti. Since its start in 1985, the contest has been held only nine times because of one simple stipulation: Waves must reach a minimum height of 40 feet. "Drowning is the number one concern," says big-wave surfer **Greg Long**, 26 (left). "You don't want to get caught inside." He didn't. In the final heat of the day, Long took off on a 50-footer as steep as a rock face. "The horizon was completely black," he remembers. "It was a wall filling up the entire bay." With his epic drop, Long walked away with one of only three perfect scores in Eddie history – and managed to edge out Kelly Slater for first place overall. —DARREN REIDY

37 Peaks, Eight Days

When mountaineer (and nine-time Everest summiter) **Willie Benegas** set out to climb all 37 of Guatemala's volcanoes in 10 days, he expected certain hardships – altitude-induced headaches, fire ants, sleeplessness. Such is the norm when ascending 81,591.5 vertical feet, climbing as high as 13,845 feet on Tajumulco, Central America's highest peak. But gun-toting cartel loyalists? Not the norm, though Benegas, 41, and his partner, Guatemalan ultramarathoner **Juan Carlos Sagastume**, 38, were able to ditch them. The two bagged all 37 volcanoes in eight days and 11 hours, besting the previous record of an entire year. "We would get back at 11 PM, have dinner, rest an hour, and just head to the next volcano," says Benegas. —SCOTT GORNALL

= 7 GREY GOOSE VODKA SHOTS OR 11 HEINEKEN LIGHTS

Battle for the World's Strongest Brew

Scottish alemaker BrewDog was sure it had a record with Tactical Nuclear Penguin, a 32 percent ABV imperial stout, in November. But Bavarian brewer Georg Tscheuschner was just biding his time. In December, his Schorschbräu brewery unveiled a 40 percent ABV edition of its **Schorsch Bock**, a caramel-y ice beer that, for now, claims the ABV crown. Is Tscheuschner anticipating retaliation? "I hope so," he says. "Let's start the battle! I'm looking for new limits." Speaking of limits: The 11-ounce bottle has a stopper for a reason (*$145 per bottle; schorschbraeu.de*).

PEAKS: COURTESY PATAGONIAN BROTHERS; HEINEKEN: COURTESY HEINEKEN; SHOT GLASSES: ROBERT BUCKLEY; STRONGEST BEER: COURTESY SCHORSCHBRAEU; LONG PORTRAIT: TIM MCCAIG; LONG ACTION: MICHAEL CLARK

Olympics for the Everyman

EVER WONDER IF YOU HAD THE RIGHT STUFF FOR A PODIUM FINISH? WE SENT FOUR WRITERS TO THREE OLYMPIC VENUES TO SKATE, SLED, SKI, SHOOT, AND JUMP. NOW IT'S YOUR TURN.

Speed-skating

VENUE: Richmond Olympic Oval, Richmond, British Columbia, reopens its speedskating facilities to the public at the end of this summer. *richmondoval.ca*
COACH: Anything from first-time to world-class instruction is available.
THE REGIMEN: The first couple of laps around the 11-meter oval will feel like an eternity as you learn proper form: a low, aerodynamic crouch that allows you to tap into all the power in your legs. After a few laps, your back will stop cramping and you'll build speed.
DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY: It's just ice skating — but with a much longer blade.
FEAR FACTOR: While you're ripping crossover corners at 15 to 20 mph, falling and crashing into the boards becomes a concern — as does slicing yourself with 15 inches of razor-sharp metal.
—DIANE SELKIRK

Bobsled

VENUE: Mount Van Hoevenberg Olympic Sports Complex, Lake Placid, New York. *$75; orda.org*
COACH: There's more "commitment" than "instruction" here, but your sled's driver is one of a few former U.S. Olympic bobsledders who work the run.
THE REGIMEN: You won't be shoving the sleigh out of the gate and hopping in like the pros do, but you're still running an Olympic-level track at up to 65 mph while making turns that climb the track's walls. That said, you're basically just along for the ride: Looking confident in front of your friends is half the battle.
DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY: If you can watch bobsledding on TV, you can do this.
FEAR FACTOR: Like riding a rickety roller coaster — on ice — with the added jolt of putting your fate in the hands of a human driver. —CHARLES COXE

Biathlon

VENUE: Mount Van Hoevenberg Olympic Sports Complex, Lake Placid, New York. *$33; orda.org*
COACH: Rick Costanza, former member of the U.S. summer biathlon team
THE REGIMEN: After cross-country skiing as hard as you can for four kilometers, you'll learn to drop your exhausted body to the ground and lower your heart rate enough to shoot five coin-size circles, then ski another 4-K and shoot again.
DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY: When your lungs are *en fuego*, hitting targets with a .22 rifle is almost impossible.
FEAR FACTOR: The potential for falling while skiing with a rifle on your back? Unnerving.
—BRENDAN KOERNER

Ski Jumping

VENUE: Utah Olympic Park, Park City, Utah. *$45; pcnordicskiclub.org*
COACH: Alan Alborn, former U.S. team ski jumper
THE REGIMEN: You'll start out with a series of small jumps, progressing to larger ones until the jumps become almost boring. Still, letting go of the bar at the top of the 64-meter ramp for the first time requires balls. Just know that the hill you're jumping over and onto isn't really that far below you. It only looks that way on TV.
DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY: Most decent skiers can stick a landing off the 64-meter jump — in regular alpine skis and boots — in a few sessions. The Flying V takes some time.
FEAR FACTOR: As you stare down the launch track, it's hard to get the *Wide World of Sports*'s "agony of defeat" theme out of your head.
—COREY SEYMOUR

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: JESSE CHEHAK (2); COURTESY ORDA; JESSE CHEHAK

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Multisport Mecca: the Lost Coast

EXPLORING THE CALIFORNIA THAT DEVELOPERS FORGOT

JUST 200 MILES NORTH OF SAN FRANCISCO LIE 55,000 ACRES OF LEgally protected wilderness thick with deep canyons and high ridgelines, a remnant herd of Roosevelt elk, forests of Douglas fir, tide pools, remote black-sand beaches, and rivers teeming with wild salmon. The Lost Coast earned its name in the 1920s when highway engineers working to connect San Francisco with the Redwood Empire to the north opted to bypass the region entirely. It's accessible only by a few back roads and trails, and to adventure seekers, it's paradise: Imagine Big Sur without Highway 1, without the galleries and gift shops and rental RVs — without the people. Now imagine yourself and a couple of buddies out in the middle of it. Here's our guide to making it happen. —DAVID PAGE

ABALONE DIVING

If you don't mind cold water or riptides (and have strong lungs — no scuba gear allowed), the **Sub-Surface Progression Dive Shop** (*subsurfaceprogression.com*) in **Fort Bragg** offers a dive package, including a wetsuit and an abalone bar for prying the things off the rocks, for $35 per day. Try **Bear Harbor** in the Sinkyone area.

SURFING

With 60 miles of rugged, undeveloped coastline, the Lost Coast is the stuff of legend among surfers. The point to the south of **Shelter Cove**'s airstrip is a good place to start, or hike to **Big Flat**.

CAMPING/LODGING

Free campsites in the **King Range Conservation Area** and **Sinkyone Wilderness State Park** are open year-round. Better: the unfurnished barn near the **Needle Rock Ranch House** (*$30; 707-247-3318*), on the beach in the heart of Sinkyone.

HIKING

The Lost Coast has more than 100 miles of backcountry trails. The **King Crest Trail** with the climb to King Peak is a perfect day hike; for the more ambitious, the 52-mile **Lost Coast Trail**, from the mouth of the Mattole to Usal Beach in Sinkyone, offers sea lion rookeries, shipwrecks, and logging-port ruins along the way (*lostcoasttrail.com*).

FRESH TRACKS

MOUNTAIN BIKING

Paradise Royale

Locals have been poaching the back trails of the **King Range** since the advent of the knobby tire. But in 2008, after three years and 4,000 volunteer-hours of work, the **Paradise Royale Mountain Bike Trail** — a new, 14-mile, environmentally responsible single-track loop — opened up in the Bear Creek drainage, immediately adjacent to a newly created wilderness area. It's one of only a few public land trails in Northern California engineered specifically for mountain biking.

From the trailhead at the **Tolkan Campground**, off the road from Garberville to Shelter Cove, the trail is best run clockwise, descending first through a grove of coastal madrone trees to a crossing of **Bear Creek** before making the steep climb up to **Paradise Ridge**. The payoff for the switchbacks comes in the form of big ocean views and a glorious, swooping downhill dubbed **Mad Queen's Tango**, replete with optional jumps and berms crafted by International Mountain Bicycling Association trailmaster Joey Klein.

Riding season runs roughly from March to November, and the loop takes about two hours to complete. Ride it twice, or spend the rest of your day surfing, hiking, diving, or eating fish-and-chips in Shelter Cove. Rent some wheels at Revolution Bicycle Repair in Arcata (*revolutionbicycle.com*).

PHOTOGRAPHS, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: CATHERINE KARNOW; DAVE & LES JACOBS/BLEND IMAGES/CORBIS; CODY BADGER. MAPS: JOYCE PENDOLA

Cape Town's Long Street is already celebrating. Below: Climbing on Table Mountain

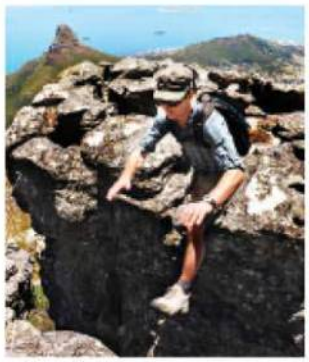
BOOK IT NOW

The World Cup

PLAN AHEAD TO FULLY ENJOY SOCCER'S SUPER BOWL IN SOUTH AFRICA

THE GOOD NEWS if you're thinking about heading to South Africa for the **World Cup** in June and July: Tickets are still available for many great matchups. The bad news: 500,000 other people have the same idea, and the best hotels, particularly in and around Johannesburg, where the U.S. team will play its first games, have long been sold out.

Our advice? Forget about the big city — and the hotels — and stay near the Cup's other main hub, **Cape Town**, at a chalet or luxury tent (see **Africa Ubuntu**, below). They sleep up to eight and have available spots at a number of locations, including right on **Melkbos Beach**, just outside the city. (Another option, if you're hell-bent on seeing the U.S. team: a nature reserve outside of Jo'burg.) The camps will also arrange guided safari or wine-country tours if you'd like to step away from the city. Cape Town is not only



much safer than Johannesburg, but much more pleasant to visit, almost San Francisco-like in its laid-back vibe.

The city's new flying-saucer-esque 68,000-seat stadium hosts some stellar early-round matchups (France-Uruguay on June 11 and England-Algeria on June 18 among them), as well as knock-out rounds leading to the July 6 semifinal. Postmatch, the **Long Street** district will be the epicenter of thousands of beery victory toasts; for something more civilized, though, head to the vibrant Kloof Street area for the city's best mojito at **Planet Bar** in the **Mount Nelson Hotel.**

Between matches, there's world-class kite surfing at **Blouberg Beach**, or the **Atlantis Dunes** north of the city for sandboarding on monstrous dunes. There's also **Table Mountain** (inset), which looms over any vantage of the city — but avoid the tourist-choked tram in favor of the **Skeleton Gorge** and **Nursery Ravine** trails that wind their way up the mountain through the **Kirstenbosch Botanical Garden.** It's a hike, as they say, but it'd be a pity to come this far and see green only in stadiums.

—MATT HENDRICKSON

AFRICA UBUNTU (*africaubuntu.co.za*) offers various lodging options from $65 per person per day, or try **Sa-venues.com** to book other accommodations. For sandboarding — and a host of other adventure activities — try **Downhilladventures.com.**

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: PAUL GILGOWEY; COURTESY SCOTT SPIKER/BIG SKY RESORT; KIM LUDBROOK/EPA/CORBIS; MARCUS HARALDSSON/HARALDSSONFOTO.SE

Late-Season Ski Deals

Book your mountain resort vacation for after the holiday peak time and you'll always save money — everyone's fighting to get as many people as possible on their slopes until the last snowflake falls. But some bargains, of course, are better than others. Here are the best deals at the best North American mountains:

BRECKENRIDGE, COLORADO
Buy three nights in April and get a fourth for a buck. Try the ski-in condo at the newly renovated Sundowner I complex; a quick walk takes you to the Snowflake Chair with fast access to Peak 8. *$435 per person, breckenridge.com*

SNOWBIRD, UTAH
Four-night/four-lift-ticket packages ranging from $698 per person (for the Inn at Snowbird) to $898 (for the slopeside Cliff Lodge). Airport transfers from Salt Lake City are free (so are kids 12 and under). *snowbird.com*

▲ **BIG SKY, MONTANA**
One free lift ticket for each night's lodging, with a two-night minimum. Rates start at $203 per person for the slopeside Summit Studios. *bigskyresort.com*

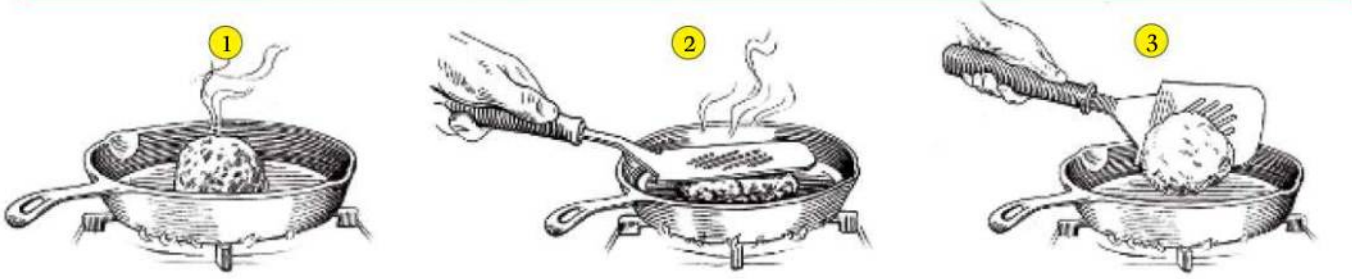
REVELSTOKE, BC
For $187 per person and up, burrow in at the new Nelsen Lodge at the mountain's base, then tackle North America's biggest lift-service vertical: 5,620 feet. For the thrill of a lifetime, pony up $1,473 for the Triple Threat — three nights' lodging and one day each of lift-, snowcat-, and heli-skiing with guides from Selkirk Tangiers. *revelstokemountainresort.com, selkirktangiers.com* —M.H.

A Griddle Burger to Die For

TOO COLD TO GRILL? HERE'S HOW TO MAKE AN EVEN BETTER BURGER, RIGHT ON YOUR STOVE TOP.

GET READY FOR SOME TOUGH LOVE: YOU CAN MAKE A much better burger in a frying pan than on the grill. Those delicious juices that drop onto the coals and kick up a geyser of flames? They're not supposed to leave the patty — which is why you should move the party indoors and make a cast-iron skillet your hardware of choice. "Back when burgers were done right, the classic places always used a griddle," says Randy Garutti of Manhattan's award-winning Shake Shack, which cooks the 1,000 burgers it serves each day on a griddle. When the juices collect and caramelize, they produce a crust unmatched by anything flame-cooked. And you're ready to eat in three minutes, if everything else — toppings, sauce, and fries — is already prepped. —BLAKE ROYER

THE TECHNIQUE



THE BALL

Mold 1/4 pound of freshly ground beef into a ball and preheat a solid cast-iron skillet for at least 5 minutes on high heat. When the skillet is ready, spread a tablespoon of canola oil on the surface, set a timer for 3 minutes, drop the meat in the pan, and salt the uncooked top.

THE SMASH

After 1 minute, use a spatula to flip the ball over. Then press down forcefully on the meat with the spatula until it's 1/2-inch thick. The edges may look a little ragged, but the cracks just mean more opportunity for caramelization. Salt and pepper, then leave it alone for 60 seconds.

THE FINAL FLIP

Loosen the patty carefully from the griddle and flip one last time, seasoning again. (If you're a cheese man, now's the time to add it.) After exactly 3 minutes total, you'll have a perfect rare burger. A fourth minute gets you to medium rare. Add another 45 seconds for medium.

HOW TO DRESS A BURGER

Toppings should be minimal and simple (put away that fried egg). Lettuce and tomatoes, says Garutti, "contribute to the burger's balance and architecture."

GREEN-LEAF LETTUCE

The wrong type can be watery. Garutti prefers green leaf — "it's not as rigid as iceberg, but it's still firm."

PLUM TOMATOES

Tomato adds a "little snap of cold to the burger," says Garutti, adding that plums have "a higher percentage of firmness compared to beefsteaks."

POTATO BUN

It's what Shake Shack uses: sturdy enough to absorb stray juices without falling apart. Garutti likes them because of their "nice sponginess."

AMERICAN CHEESE

A square slice is the classic flavoring — not too strong, not too weak, and not too gourmet.

SECRET SAUCE

Most secret-sauce recipes, including Shake Shack's, are held close to the vest. But after lots of trial and error (Thai sweet chili sauce — bad idea), we cracked the code: Take 1/2 cup of mayo and stir in a tablespoon each of ketchup and Dijon mustard. Add 4 finely chopped kosher dill pickles, half a clove of chopped garlic, and 1/2 teaspoon of adobo sauce from canned chipotle chiles. Blend, serve — then burn this recipe.

Fried Gold

"Four things make great fries," says **LAURENT TOURONDEL**, executive chef at BLT Burger, makers of the best fries in New York City. "The potato, oil, size, and time." Here's his secret.

PREP: Cut 6 peeled Idaho potatoes into 1/4-inch-thick sticks. Soak the sticks in cold water for several hours. Drain and pat dry.
BLANCH: Pour peanut oil into a large, heavy pot or deep fryer to a depth of 3 inches. Heat to 300° (use a deep-fryer thermometer if you're doing this on a stove). Add the sticks to the oil — don't overcrowd — and cook for 3 to 4 minutes until they are soft and have a light color. Remove potatoes and let them air-dry completely on paper towels (this may take a few hours).
FINISH: Once the sticks are dry, reheat the oil to 375°. Fry the potatoes in batches until golden brown, about 1 to 2 minutes. Remove to paper towels to drain and sprinkle with sea salt. *Serves 6.*

PHOTOGRAPHS FROM LEFT: HANNAH WHITAKER/NEW YORK MAGAZINE; MICHAEL PIRROCCO; ILLUSTRATIONS: JOE MCKENDRY

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Pairing Beer with Food

A GOURMAND'S GUIDE TO PICKING THE RIGHT BREW FOR THE OCCASION

GOOD BEER — SKIP THE MASS-MARKET PILSNERS — DOESN'T just go well with food; it can turn a good meal into something transcendent. Nothing against wine, but it simply doesn't fit with certain foods — the highly spiced, for example. More to the point, sometimes you just want a beer. We asked Sang Yoon of Father's Office, the beer-centric L.A. gastropub, along with Garrett Oliver, author of *The Brewmaster's Table*, and Tom Peters of Philly's legendary Monk's Cafe, for their favorite pairings. —DAVID RAMSEY

TAILGATING
Pilsners, with their clean, palate-cleansing bitterness, are the "ultimate chameleon," says Oliver. Peters suggests Stoudt's Pils for "hot dogs, burgers — you can sit down and have 10 of them."

DESSERTS
With dark and often heavy notes of coffee and chocolate, strong dark stouts "are the clear winner for pairing with desserts," says Oliver. Try Deschutes Obsidian over vanilla ice cream and you'll know what he's talking about.

INTENSE FLAVORS
Highly alcoholic tripels have an intense complexity of fruit, herb, and spice notes. Yoon recommends Karmeliet with fiery Thai beef salad: "It's bold enough not to get overwhelmed by the food."

GRILLING
Porters get their darker color from roasting the malts longer, which creates a succulent complement. "Anchor Porter is the barbecue beer," says Yoon. "You get the long-roast flavor and kiss of smoke; anything straight off the grill is perfect."

SUSHI
At once ethereal and flavorful, a white beer can enliven breakfast (think of it as a decadent mimosa), salads, and delicate seafood. "Hitachino White is perfect with sushi," says Yoon. "It doesn't overpower, but it also has so many complementing flavors."

STEAKS
Brown ales' hints of fruit and nut create a nuanced and hearty companion to almost any great piece of meat. "If you have a nice rib eye with a dark sear, Brooklyn's roasted-malt tastes will grab right on," says Oliver.

SPICY FOODS
The kick of stronger hops, bold carbonation, and sharp, bitter flavors make IPAs the best put-out-the-fire beer when you're going for the hot stuff. Try Samuel Smith's with chicken vindaloo or most any other four-alarm option.

WILD GAME — AND CHOCOLATE
Fruit lambics can have explosively tart flavors — surprisingly good with game and fantastic with chocolate. Try the raspberry crispness of Lindemans Framboise with chocolate cheesecake.

The Portable Party Jim Meehan — voted America's best bartender by his peers — helped design the Meehan Utility Bag to haul a full load of bottles and mixology tools wherever the spirits took him. It's also great for chefs (*$660; mooreandgilesinc.com*).

BEERS: JEFF HARRIS; BOTTLE CAP: ROBERT BUCKLEY; ICE CREAM: FOODCOLLECTION RF/GETTY IMAGES; HOT DOG: BRANDON HARMAN/GETTY IMAGES; THAI SALAD: FOOD AND DRINK/SUPERSTOCK; SUSHI: FLOSS/STOCKFOOD MUNICH; VINDALOO: GARETH MORGANS/STOCKFOOD; CHEESECAKE: IAN GARLICK/STOCKFOOD MUNICH; BAG: COURTESY MOORE & GILES INC.; STEAK: BURKE/TRIOLO PRODUCTIONS/GETTY IMAGES; RIBS: KELLER & KELLER PHOTOGRAPHY/STOCKFOOD

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The Art of the Hockey Fight

MILAN LUCIC IS EQUALLY ADEPT AT SCORING GOALS AND DROPPING THE GLOVES. WELCOME TO THE SWEET SCIENCE ON ICE.

MILAN LUCIC, THE BOSTON BRUINS' 21-YEAR-OLD LEFT WING who is one of the NHL's most feared players, doesn't shy away from a fight. Just ask Ottawa enforcer Chris Neil, whose face was left a pulpy mess after less than 10 seconds at the business end of Lucic's right fist (below). "I kind of feel bad that he got a little bloodied up," says Lucic. "But it created a lot of energy for our team, and the game is still played right after a fight." It's this style of play — where guys drop the gloves and crush each other's faces in — that fans refer to as old-time hockey. And unlike in any other sport, it's an integral element of the game. "Fighting's just part of what I need to do to help the team be successful," says Lucic. Below, the Bruins bruiser explains the way of the goon. —CHARLES COXE

RULE 1

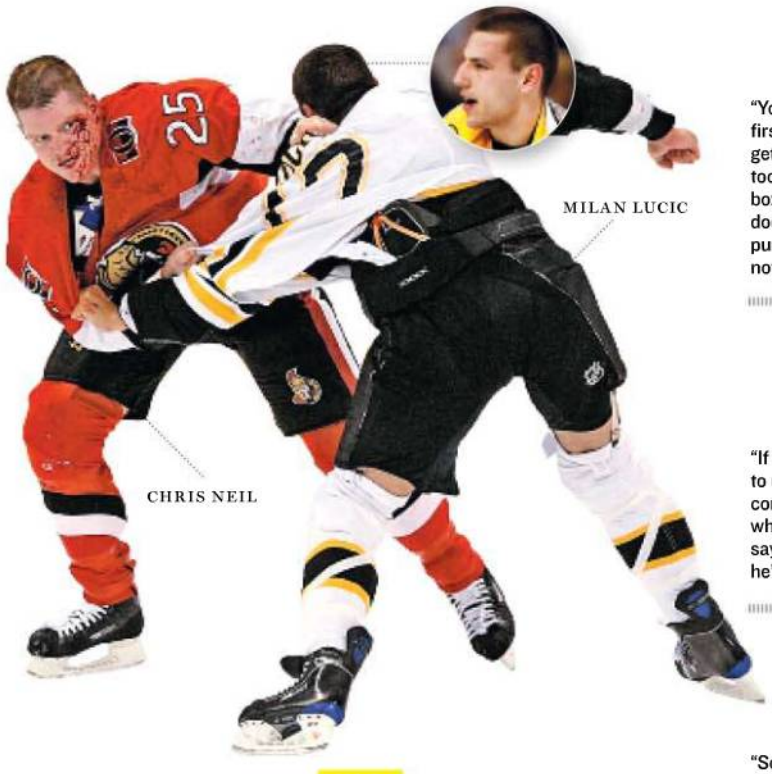
Study Hard

Even in a hockey fight, there's no excuse for not doing your homework, and Lucic is a big proponent of advance scouting on the opposing team's brawler. "You look at what weight class they've fought against, how many penalty minutes they have," he explains. "A lot of guys go on Hockeyfights.com to check how other guys are doing — is he a righty or lefty, or does he throw both? Does he throw a lot of punches or does he just like to hold on? Can he take punches that are a lot harder? All that type of stuff sticks in the back of your mind."

RULE 2

Don't Back Down

"Fighting is about establishing a physical presence, an intimidation factor," Lucic says. "It can change the momentum of the game and bring it back to your side when you need it." The worst thing you can do to your team is chicken out. "For me, it's tough to ever say no to a fight — there's just too much pride riding on it. Whether you win or lose, you still get respect just because you were willing to show up."



RULE 3

Get a Handle

With about 10 seconds to throw punches before the refs step in, many fighters launch haymakers off the opening bell. But Lucic's typical first move is one of restraint. "The first thing I think about is getting a good grip on the guy's jersey, on the shoulder by the arm," Lucic explains. "Where you grab it determines how well you can control his movement and power."

RULE 4

Strike First

"You tend to win when you hit first," Lucic says. "When you get stung, you think defense too much, and it's over." Lucic boxed as a teenager, but he doesn't overthink it: "Throw quick punches, just straight through, not jerking it up."

RULE 5

Stay Balanced

"If you have balance, you're able to use your leg power to help you control the guy and move him to where you want to move," Lucic says. Once that's accomplished, he's your punching bag.

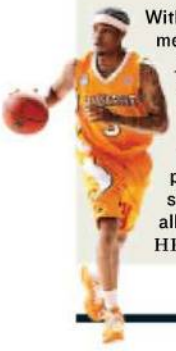
RULE 6

Use Your Head

"Sometimes you have to take a punch to give a punch, especially if you're facing a lefty," Lucic says. "The hardest part of your head is the forehead area, so if you're gonna take it somewhere, take it there. Then I try to fight back as quickly as I can before he gets in another good lick."

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: FRED CHARTRAND; WINSLOW TOWNSON/AP PHOTO; JAMIE SQUIRE/GETTY IMAGES; JOE ROBBINS/GETTY IMAGES (2)

INSIDE THE MADNESS



With the NCAA Tournament's **SELECTION SUNDAY** just a few weeks away, we tapped a couple of tourney-seasoned coaches to tell us what they say to their players — and themselves — heading into all the hoopla. —MATT HENDRICKSON

TUBBY SMITH, *University of Minnesota*
(15 tourneys, nine Sweet 16s, one championship)

- At a practice before my first tournament ever at Tulsa, I'm yelling at guys, hitting guys, and one of our alums, Paul Pressey — the "Rubber Band Man" — pulls me aside and says, "Don't tighten up — lighten up." I use that with every team.
- Practices are cut way down, and I bring in guests who've been to the mountaintop — last year I had former Colts coach Tony Dungy.
- There are always cameras around, so we have a media-training course before the tournament.
- Execute. You can't teach at tournament time.

BRUCE PEARL, *University of Tennessee*
(six tourneys, three Sweet 16s)

- Get them to peak. They need to be fresh *and* furious.
- They like per diems, and they like to eat steak. And as long as they keep winning, the per diems keep coming, and the steak gets better. The Cowboy Ribeye at Ruth's Chris — that's the one.
- Be consistent. I'm as intense against a Division II opponent as I am in the tourney.
- You have to be just as excited about the last as the first. I've been to the Sweet 16 three out of four years, but climbing the mountain never gets old.

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Did you start a business?
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THE WISH LIST

WHAT WE'RE COVETING THIS MONTH

▲ **THE KEITH MOON KIT**
Plug an iPod into the **Alesis DM6 Electronic Drum Set** and pound along to your favorite songs. Or at least try to. [*$699; alesis.com*]

▲ **A SKINLESS HOG**
The **CR&S Duu Concept Motorcycle**, each one custom-made in Italy, lets its sleek guts show. [*$29,000; crs-motorcycles.com*]

◀ **PARTY ON THE SEA**
Reel in a trout and then cook it up for nine of your pals on the built-in grill of the **IREV** floating bar. [*$21,995; motothority.com*]

▼ **CLEAN AND GREEN**
The **Andrea Air Purifier** pulls toxins from the air by filtering them through the leaves and roots of any household plant. [*$200; andreaair.com*]

▶ **RETRO-FI**
VU meters and vacuum tubes meet modern tech in the **McIntosh MXA60 Integrated Audio System**, a purist's desktop stereo. [*$7,500; mcintoshlabs.com*]

◀ **SMOOTH SOUNDS**
Leather ear cups mated to a sleek polished-steel headband make the **AIAIAI Tracks Headphones** minimalist modern art. [*$73; aiaiai.dk*]

▲ **COVERT OPS**
Your iPhone not only controls the carbon-fiber **Parrot AR.Drone** — part toy, part Predator drone — but also gives you the quadricopter's view. [*N/A; ardrone.parrot.com*]

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photograph by **Chris McPherson**

Jason Reitman

THE DIRECTOR OF *UP IN THE AIR* COLLECTS BOTH FREQUENT-FLIER MILES AND, LATELY, AWARDS.

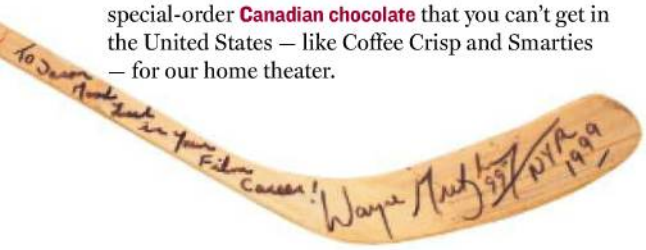
by **KYLE BRAZZEL**

PET

▲ I have a **French bulldog** named Abby. They're very human and can't help but make you laugh.

IMPORT

► My wife and I are both Canadian, and we special-order **Canadian chocolate** that you can't get in the United States — like Coffee Crisp and Smarties — for our home theater.



WORKOUT

I like to go running among the trees near my house in Franklin Canyon Park, near Beverly Hills.

AUTOGRAPH

▼ I'm a Canucks fan, but I have a hockey stick that **Wayne Gretzky** signed for me when I was a teenager. It says: "To Jason, Good luck in your film career!" I don't play with it or anything.

SUNDAY RETREAT

◄ I built a **theater in my house**. My friend Ed Helms calls it the Cinema-Reitman Dome. On Sundays I have friends over to watch movies. One of the rules is it has to be a movie I've never seen before. Recent first-timers were *Cool Hand Luke* and *The Wild Bunch*. If we want to get crazy, guys come early to play *Modern Warfare* on the big screen.

TOOL

I daresay I can fix anything with my MacBook Air.

IN-FLIGHT SECRET

▼ My trick is **Carhartt knit caps**. I get the kind that fold up, so when it's time to sleep, I fold the cap over my eyes.

PLACE TO WRITE

Random airport hotels were particularly inspiring for *Up in the Air* — I was surrounded by the characters in the film. That and Palm Springs — there's nothing else to do there but write.

GIFT

▲ My wife bought me an eight-foot **Dynamo air-hockey table** from an arcade that was going out of business in Kansas City. I'm a pretty formidable air-hockey player — and Dynamo is like the Tiffany of air-hockey tables.

AWARD

▲ When I was 13, I wanted to spend the summer with my buddy, so I went to this tennis camp. I had never played before, so I wound up in the group for seven- and eight-year-olds. I beat all of them and they gave me **this trophy** for it.

IVAN REITMAN FLICKS

▼ I would say *Dave* is my father's best-directed movie, ***Ghostbusters*** is his most iconic movie, and *Stripes* is his funniest.

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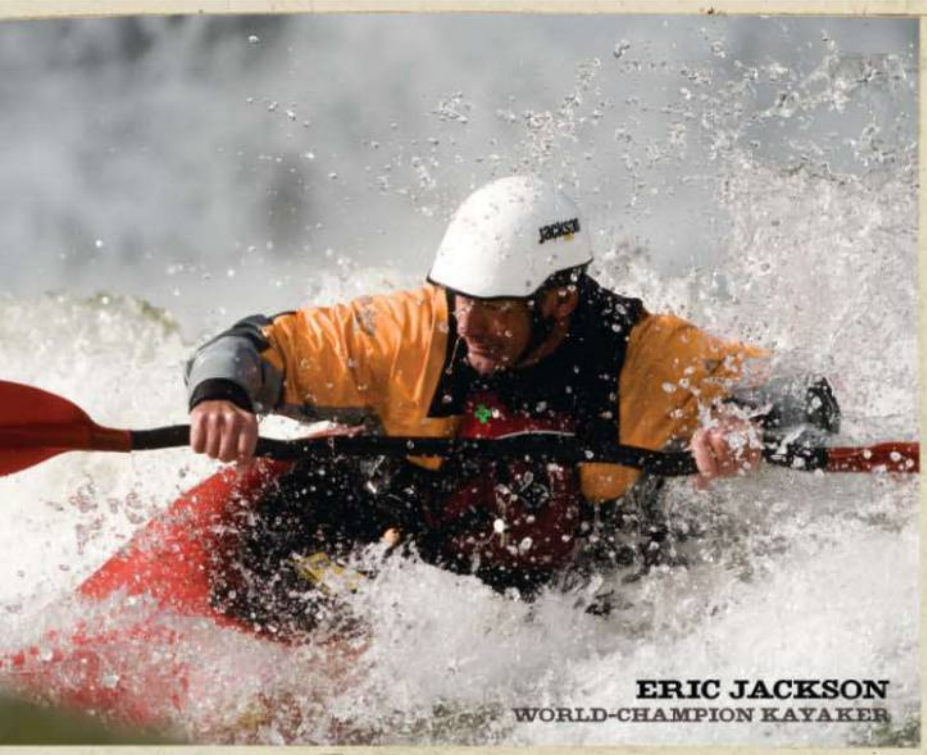

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STOWAGE STRATEGY

▼ I can pack in less than 15 minutes; I think that any good traveler should. I use a **TravelPro Rollaboard**, because it's the lightest-weight rollaway in the business. It was designed by an airline pilot. Save room in the overhead by having the wheels face out.

CLOTHING

I love American Apparel's 50/25/25 T-shirts. I live in them.

RECENT READ

► ***Losing Mum and Pup***, by Christopher Buckley. His prose reads like poetry. It's the first book I've read that captures how we let our parents down and, in a strange way, how they let us down as well.

THEATER

▲ The **Mann Village** in L.A. is my favorite theater in the world. It's a gorgeous place built in 1930 right at the end of the silent era. For some inexplicable reason there's what looks like a giant Star of David on the ceiling. When I have a movie showing there, for me it's like playing Yankee Stadium.

HONOR

▲ In December, my father and I got to run with the **Olympic torch** through the streets of Toronto. So now I have an Olympic torch on my bookshelf. Once you have it, they dismantle it so it can never be lit again.

PLANE SEAT

Second-row aisle. It's the closest non-bulkhead seat to the front. There's a seat in front to stow luggage under, and it's on the aisle, so I control my destiny.

INDULGENCE

▲ The best **dumplings** in America are from Din Tai Fung. They're normally in places like Taipei and Tokyo, but their one U.S. location is in Arcadia, California. It's for special occasions.

FILM FEST

The Aspen Shortsfest is the greatest curated festival of short films. They create a community of filmmakers, and I've stayed in touch with many of them.

EATING GUIDE

Whenever I land in a town, the first thing I do is ask on Twitter where to eat. You end up getting 20 or 30 people suggesting the same place. In Boston recently I wanted a lobster roll, and everyone kept pointing me to Neptune Oyster. It was life-changing.

GALLERY

There's a wall in our house that my wife designed. She put up sheet metal and then wallpapered over it. We put our family photos there, in frames with magnets, then move them around like Tom Cruise in *Minority Report*.

REITMAN: SPLASH NEWS; DUMPLINGS: ARON DANBURG; BOOK: MICHAEL PIROCCO; THEATER: COURTESY MANN THEATERS; LUGGAGE: CHRIS MCPHERSON

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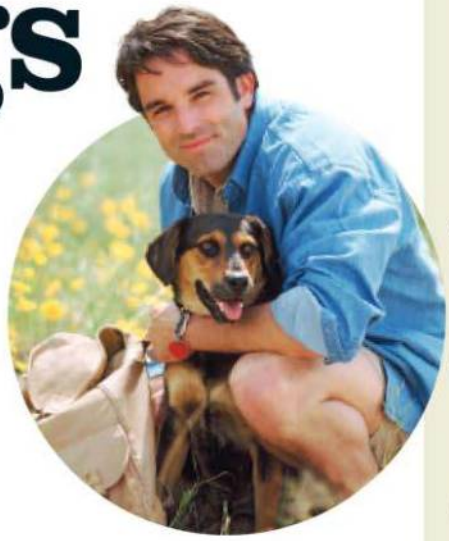
Adventures for Dogs



Many animal lovers will choose pets based on their lifestyle. Dogs can be an excellent fit for people who live an active, adventurous life. Below are a few examples of great activities and destinations that you and your canine companion can experience together. So, the next time you plan a trip to the great outdoors, always remember that adventure can be an amazing part of your dog's life too.

Brought to you by Eukanuba NATURALLY WILD

Camel's Hump, VT

Located in the Green Mountain range of Vermont, Camel's Hump is one of the state's highest peaks, featuring spectacular views of Mount Mansfield, Lake Champlain and the White Mountains. Your dog is welcome, so long as he can handle the 6.8-mile roundtrip trek. Take the Monroe Trailhead for a hike of moderate difficulty.

Jackson Hole, WY

Nestled in a valley near Grand Teton National Park, Jackson Hole is dog heaven. If they don't allow your companion inside, most of the town's shops will place water bowls for him by the door. There are endless hiking, camping and swimming options for the both of you in the summer, as well as snowshoeing in the winter.

Coronado, CA

A fabulous getaway location for West Coast natives, this ocean-side town has plenty of surfing options at any level, and your pup doesn't have to stay home. Some of the local surfing academies actually provide lessons for dogs, complete with doggie surf attire, custom boards and professional training.

SAFETY FIRST

Safety matters when you and your pet are living on the edge. Here are a few tips to stay accident-free during your next big outing.

TIP 1: STAY HYDRATED

Just like you, your dog needs consistent water breaks during strenuous activity. Bring extra water and a portable bowl so the two of you can replenish quickly and often.

TIP 2: KEEP HIM CLOSE

Off-leash excursions are a great opportunity to give your dog some well-deserved freedom, but be cautious. As well as we know our dogs they can still be unpredictable, and wild animals can encourage aggression.

TIP 3: CHECK THE PAWS

It's easy to forget about your canine's feet during a hike. Just remember – you've got boots but he only has domestic pads.

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The Breeds

Ready to add a new friend to your adventurous life? Here are some breeds that might share your interests.

The Swimmer

The Standard Poodle may look frilly, but he loves to work in the water. Highly intelligent and easy to train, he's an excellent choice for families.

Standard Poodle

The Hiker

If you have nearby trails, the Weimaraner is your dog of choice. His fur even repels burs and thistles.

Weimaraner

The Runner

Think the legs of a Beagle are too short for long distance running? Think again. Often dubbed the "tireless dog," he'll wear you out before you know it.

Beagle

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photographs by **Colin Clark**

A dogsled ferries the author deep into the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness in Minnesota.

Winter Camping Goes Retro

SWEARING OFF HIGH-TECH SYNTHETICS FOR COTTON, CANVAS, AND A FAT STOVE, A GROWING CULT OF "SNOW WALKERS" HARKS BACK TO AN ERA OF COLD-WEATHER FUN — AND KEEPS PLENTY WARM.

by **GUSTAVE AXELSON**

OUR CREW OF THREE SCURried to stash three growlers of India pale ale into two dogsleds already bulging with gear. My sled bucked forward as I wedged one of them between duffel bags — the dogs were about to depart whether we were ready or not. As soon as the lead musher stepped aboard, the dogs dashed us away from the chaos of our staging area in the outfitter's parking lot and the only sound was the *shush*-ing of sled runners on fresh snow. Soon we had crossed the nonmotorized threshold into the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, where the trail emptied out into a wide-open 17,000-acre ice-covered lake. The wind froze my eyelashes as I nuzzled deeper into the hood of my anorak.

We were embarking on a four-day winter camping trip into the boreal heart of the Boundary Waters. But instead of the finest high-tech Gore-Tex parkas and windproof mountaineering tents, we were outfitted with technology from a century gone. I was here to try out a new style of winter camping, which is really an old style of winter camping called snow walking.

MAP: JOYCE PENDOLA

The newer tradition can be traced back to post-World War II, when army surplus gear was abundant and camping became a popular form of recreation in the U.S. In 1968, Minnesota outdoorsman Calvin Rutstrum even published a book called *Paradise Below Zero*, admonishing Americans who stayed indoors in winter. His book included instruction on camping with a wood stove and canvas tent, as snow walkers eschew anything synthetic in favor of tents and clothing made entirely of natural fibers such as wool and cotton. They also resist ultralight fanaticism while embracing old-school comfort.

As the name implies, snow walking typically involves man-powered travel via snowshoes or skis, but because we had only a few days, we opted for a dogsled ferry to get us 15 miles deep into the wilderness (and prime lake-trout waters) more quickly.

Finally, our dogsled train crossed the lake and funneled through an overland portage on Minnesota's international boundary line. This would be the end of the road for me, my fishing guide Mike Prom — the only experienced snow walker among us — and photographer Colin Clark. Within minutes of disembarking and unloading our gear, we saw the sleds fading in the distance. It was 4 PM, about 90 minutes until sunset, and the temperature was dropping. The windchill was -15 and that was probably the high temperature for the day. That night, when I crawled into my sleeping bag, temps dropped to 40 below. I scrounged for a wool sweater to add layers, the musher's last words ringing in my ears: "See ya in three days!"

"IT'S ABOUT ENJOYING WINTER, NOT ENduring it," explained Michael Olker, a snow-walking veteran who rented us our toboggans. "Winter is the most magical time to be in the North Woods. No people, no bugs — just deep solitude and deep snow." Having lived in Minnesota myself for 10 years, I had heard of snow walking but initially judged it to be the realm of fur-trader reenactors, the *Dungeons & Dragons* geeks of the outdoors. But I'd also been on a handful of "high tech" winter camping trips, and all I could really remember about them was lying awake all night in the bitter cold and all my gear freezing solid. The maximalist approach of snow walking made it sound downright inviting.

"It's still kind of a cultish thing, but we're getting bigger," says Kevin Kinney, owner of Empire Canvas Works, a clothing manufacturer that specializes in canvas and wool apparel for snow walkers. "It's not about being retro; it's about comfort. These natural fibers that were used 150 years ago keep you warmer than today's high-tech stuff."

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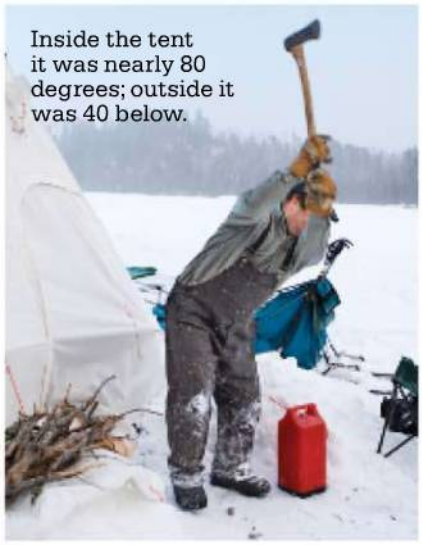
Options shown. ©2009 Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc.

We were losing light fast, so we raced to get our tent up. I admired Prom's pick of a campsite: Expansive views to the eastern outlet of the bay and across the southern sky provided maximum exposure to the sun. When we finished, Prom climbed inside and dug a pit down to the lake ice near the entrance. This is where the stove would sit, atop the two-foot-thick floor of ice that separated us from the frigid lake water below. Although there was no chance of the ice breaking or melting through, Prom did occasionally have to slide small wooden shims under the stove's legs as the ice melted unevenly beneath them. The cold air inside the tent would sink, get warmed up by the stove, rise, and circulate back to our elevated cots.

Duane Lottig is the one-man operation behind Snowtrekker Tents, headquartered in a garage behind his cabin in the northern Wisconsin woods. Lottig started winter camping more than 15 years ago with his family but found that his three young sons couldn't summon the stoic endurance necessary for normal winter camping. He introduced a small wood-burning stove to the mix, but his synthetic tent and the stove didn't get along. In the end Lottig decided to make the perfect snow-walking tent himself and bought a commercial sewing machine. His designs remain the most popular models for enthusiasts.



Inside the tent it was nearly 80 degrees; outside it was 40 below.

Our 10x12-foot shelter took just 10 minutes to assemble, but it would take another exhausting hour to gather, saw, and split enough firewood for the evening. That night we would go to bed very warm indeed, but it wouldn't last.

BY MORNING THE FIRE HAD LONG since burned out, and cold air bit my cheeks and nose, the only flesh exposed from my sleeping bag. All three of us were awake, but nobody moved, nobody talked. Finally Prom roused to go outside and returned with an armful of firewood — he who had to piss worst got up first — and soon there were sharp snaps and crackles of igniting tinder. Within minutes the tent was toasty again.

"Drink plenty of water today," Prom instructed, handing me a Nalgene bottle. "Winter dehydration can sneak up on you because you don't feel thirsty." Eating wasn't quite so simple.

A man who usually requires 2,000 calories a day needs to consume up to 6,000 calories in deep-cold conditions. We had decided those would come from big fat lake trout. Prom explained that they were actually easier to fish in winter: "The trick is to jig vertically. It's hard to do in summer when your canoe is constantly getting pushed by waves." Prom demonstrated his jigging technique by flicking the tip of his rod. Wearing a broad, chubby smile and wool overalls, he reminded me of a good ol' boy at a chili feed, clearly a man in his element. Then his pole bent and the smile disappeared. He landed the fish in seconds and groaned, "Shit, it's a guppy."

That evening we gutted and cooked our catch, while enjoying more ice-cold IPA. We

talked until midnight, then packed the stove with as much new wood as it would take and snuffed out the overhead lantern. In the darkness the stove door projected dancing flames as flickering orange lights on the white front wall of the tent. I stared at them until I drifted to sleep. Sometime later in the night I bolted awake at a gunshot crack from the settling lake ice.

ON OUR FINAL FULL DAY IN THE BACKcountry, I decided to snowshoe north to the upper basin of Ottertrack Lake to marvel at the palisades, a 120-foot-high rock wall of pillowed greenstone painted with a giant mural of lemon yellow, brilliant orange, and lime green rock-shield lichens. Lichens radiate in winter because they continue to photosynthesize during the sun-deprived season, when every other plant in the area slumbers.

On my return to camp I bushwhacked through dense forest to avoid snowshoeing across the narrows, where the lake's upper basin empties into the lower one. Narrows, as well as the areas around the entrances to beaver lodges, are chronic spots for bad ice; the moving water inhibits proper freezing.

When I arrived in camp, it was time to prepare our final night's feast. We taxed the last IPA and ate the last of our trout, this time served fried as cashew-encrusted fillets and grilled with a garlic-and-brown-sugar glaze. I was feeling a little down at the thought of leaving our tent in the snowy wilderness. Outside, a fresh arctic front arrived and the temperature plummeted past zero, 5 below, 10 below. Bitter cold descended on the North Woods. No matter. We were full, and a fire roared in our stove. Tonight we would go to bed warm.

Go Snow Walking This Winter

Plan a DIY adventure anywhere there's snow, or for a trip like this in the Boundary Waters, look up these guys:

THE GUIDE: Mike Prom's Voyageur Canoe Outfitters (*canoeit.com*) and **Mark Black's Black Magic Kennels** (*blackmagickennels.com*) offer a combo three-night trip in the Boundary Waters for $1,500 per person, which includes dogsled drop-off, a fishing guide, and equipment.

THE GEAR: Snowtrekker Tents (*snowtrekker tents.com*) sells winterized canvas tents (*from $825*) and portable wood stoves (*from $179*). Or rent both from The Canoeist (*from $120 for two nights; thecanoeist.com*).

THE BEER: Glass and cans are forbidden inside the BWCAW, so **Fitger's Brewhouse** (*brewhouse.net*) sells 64-ounce Nalgene growlers of beer for $17 (*refills are $11*). We recommend the El Niño IPA. —G.A.

FROM LEFT: COURTESY SNOWTREKKER TENTS; COURTESY FITGER'S BREWHOUSE

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The DIY Dune Jumper

Upstart car company Local Motors hasn't done much besides develop an entirely new paradigm for building and selling impractically cool cars. Want one? Grab a pair of coveralls.

JAY ROGERS HAD NO CLUE WHAT TYPE OF CAR he would build when he founded Local Motors in 2007. The former marine and Harvard MBA knew only that he wanted to create the kind of automotive toys that any guy could afford — something no behemoth manufacturer would have the balls to make, and no boutique builder could afford to sell at a reasonable price. His plan? Cut costs by making others do large parts of the heavy lifting — including you, the buyer.

To source concepts, Local Motors, based in Wareham, Massachusetts, holds online competitions tapping the vast pool of unemployed designers. So far the Thunderdome approach has yielded more than 40,000 entries. The car that garnered the most online votes (anyone can cast one) was the Rally Fighter, a $50,000 off-roader scheduled to go into production this month.

Created by design student Sangho Kim (who won $10,000 for his efforts), the Rally Fighter looks like a World War II P-51 Mustang fighter plane crossed with a Baja trophy truck. Peer closely at the finished product and you'll see a few other vehicular "influences." Rather than waste money designing and testing parts that need to meet stringent government regulations, Local Motors buys parts that already pass muster. Hence the Rally Fighter comes with taillights from a Honda Civic coupe, Mazda Miata door handles, and a 265-hp BMW twin-turbo six-cylinder diesel.

Another money pit for carmakers: crash testing. So Local Motors doesn't. While he's giving me a tour of the Wareham headquarters, Rogers picks up a hefty book whose cover reads TITLE 49 CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS. A real page-turner. "There's nothing in here that says you have to do crash testing," he says. So why do car companies bother? I ask. Just to protect themselves from lawsuits? "Exactly," he replies. "And all that ass-covering is the reason we don't have more affordable cool cars."

Rogers's alternative ass-covering method: Sell only to customers who won't sue. "When most people buy a Ford Explorer, they basically say, 'I expect to drive it at 100 mph on underinflated tires, across nails. And when it has a blowout and flips over, I will sue you,'" he explains. "That's not the type of customer we're looking for."

To ensure it attracts the right buyers — and it needs only 500 to make a profit — Local Motors requires customers to spend both weekends of the two-week build process assembling their own car. "You won't build a wiring harness, but you will plug in a wiring harness and understand what it's doing," says Rogers. (Later this year the company will move from Wareham to Phoenix; it plans to eventually build 30 to 50 "microfactories" across the country.) In the end you get a sense of accomplishment, a badass off-roader, and a share of the legal liability, too.

Rogers won't let me drive the lone prototype, partially because it still needs work. But he does take me on a quick spin down the street in Wareham. The people we pass stare as if they're seeing Michael Jackson riding a unicycle. We don't encounter any major bumps — or maybe we do, but with 18 inches of suspension travel, the Fighter could roll over a refrigerator and I might not notice. It's loud inside, which isn't surprising given the prototype's lack of a dashboard or firewall. It's also quick. Rogers won't make any claims, but my assometer estimates a sub-six-second 0-60 time.

Automotive history is littered with upstart car companies that never sold a vehicle, yet I can't help but root for a guy who's dropping a cluster bomb of open-source creativity on the auto industry. Especially when his business model involves bringing to life the Hot Wheels toys you wanted as a kid. No one needs a diesel desert racer that looks like a shark's head, but having seen one in person, I feel certain that's exactly what I want. I just have to find two free weekends. ■

Buyers won't be doing any welding but will get their hands greasy.

BASE PRICE
$50,000

THIN SKIN
The Rally Fighter wears carbon-fiber and thermoplastic body panels.

0-60
Sub six seconds

ENGINE
BMW 265-hp twin-turbo six-cylinder diesel

FROM TOP: MICHAEL WARREN; COURTESY LOCAL MOTORS (2)

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A Field Guide to Sports Egos

When you have agents and hangers-on handing you money and naked women and Escalades from the age of 14 on, it's bound to swell your head. Some athletes just get a worse case of it than others.

ACCORDING TO A NEW REPORT BY THE UNITED Nations, global narcissism rose 4.9 percent in 2009, the highest one-year leap since the Great Self-Importance Wave of 1991, which featured career years from the likes of Saddam Hussein, Michael Jackson, and Oliver Stone. And while the secondary research isn't in yet, we can guess that pro-sports figures played a big role in the statistical surge, as athletes like Tiger Woods, A-Rod, and Kobe Bryant have continued to take the lead in teaching children that true love doesn't always have to involve other people.

Pro sports and narcissism have always been a natural match, and it's no wonder. For all sorts of reasons — mainly, distracting the masses from their dreary lives of cubicle labor and haggard late-night internet masturbation — the world needs its infallible, triumphant, oversexed heroes, and sports does a great job of creating them.

That's why what we call sports journalism is most of the time a kind of mechanized admiration society, where panels full of breathless ex-jocks team up with human thesauruses to furiously burnish the legends of genetic lottery winners.

EX-JOCK ANALYST NO. 1: Look at the way he darts through the hole! Look at the *power*! Look at the *acceleration*! Those arm tackles just aren't gonna work on Adrian Peterson!

EXCITABLE HOST: *Whoop!* He...could...go...all...the...way!

EX-JOCK ANALYST NO. 1: I mean it, Boom. If Peterson were here right now, I'd suck his cock!

EX-JOCK ANALYST NO. 2: Oh, me too, Jaws. I mean, I bet he's got a schlong like a parking meter.

[*The whole panel laughs.*]

This is all fine, one of the less toxic varieties of media horseshit, but it has one drawback: The players in question often actually believe this stuff, which is why some of them go completely over the self-regarding edge, never to return to our planet. It doesn't happen all at once but in steps, and in hindsight, we usually should have seen it coming.

Stage One: Dustin Pedroia

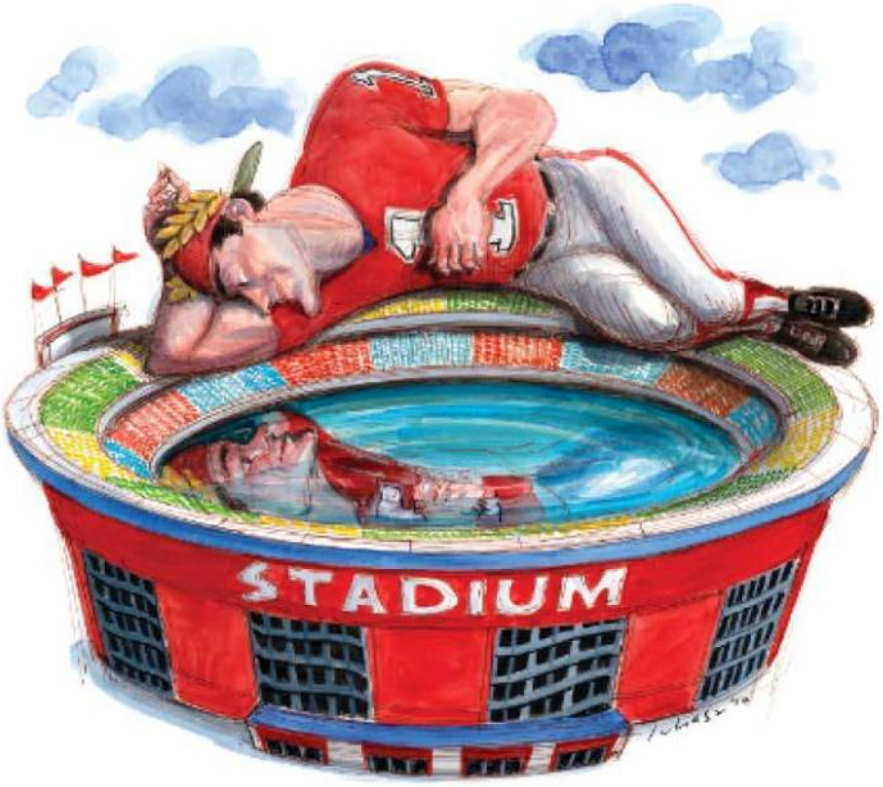
The Red Sox's Munchkinland escapee is a good example of an athlete who's managed to remain in that first stage of gentle tadpole narcissism, on the correct side of a spectrum that stretches to, say, Benito Mussolini. When it comes to sports bragging, the laws of physics as described by Roger Rabbit apply: It only works when it's funny. In other words, as long as it's a 5-foot-nothing guy puffing his chest and raving about how "shredded" he is, calling guys twice his size "meat" and telling his teammates to "bring your glasses for the laser show" when he hits — it's relatively harmless. But inevitably, the guy who opts for that Muhammad Ali "I am the king of the world!" clowning shtick goes to the well one too many times, and next thing you know, he's holding shirtless pressers on his front lawn, or legally changing his name to Super Duper, or pimping a new home-appliance line (coming soon: the Starbury nautical toaster!).

Stage Two: Chad Ochocinco

Chad Whateverhisnameis was once a genuinely funny guy, one who managed to pull off stunts like his notorious "Who Covered 85 in '05" checklist of torched defensive backs without seeming like too much of a tool. If anything, it seemed at first like Ochocinco née Johnson's self-directed humor fell short not because it was pathological, but because it might have been contrived, maybe with the aid of some drearily endorsement-hungry marketing consultant. But then Ocho not only went through with his puzzling and mildly annoying legal name change (couldn't he have picked something catchy à la World B. Free, like Enormous Johnson?) but also named not one but *two* children after himself (there's a Chade and a Chad II), the latter a sure sign he had moved into the more dangerous second stage of self-importance.

Stage Three: Rickey Henderson

They actually have a word for what Rickey Henderson is: *illeist*. The early usage of this word referred to someone who used the third-person pronoun *he* to refer to himself, but in Rickey's case, *he* was insufficiently majestic, so Rickey always used *Rickey*. His all-time



TAIBBI: ROBERT HAGADONE

illustration by **Victor Juhasz**

money quote is his legendary phone call to then Padres GM Kevin Towers in search of a job: "Kevin, this is Rickey. Calling on behalf of Rickey. Rickey wants to play baseball." A former Mariners teammate reported that Rickey would come into the clubhouse wearing a suede hat and announce, "Rickey got a big ranch. Rickey got a big bull. Rickey got horses. Rickey got chickens and everything." Lots of athletes make it to the illeist stage ("A LeBron James team is never desperate" is one recent example), but none would have gotten there without Rickey.

Stage Four: Michael Jordan

Joking with teammates in the dugout about how "Rickey got chickens" is one thing. It's another to deliver a prepared Hall of Fame acceptance speech, an epitaph for your career, and tell the crowd, "Don't be in a rush to try to find the next Michael Jordan. There's not going to be a next Michael Jordan." The awesome thing about His Airness's narcissism is how completely blunt, humorless, and matter-of-fact it is. He says things that could literally induce vomit if you thought about them long enough, a great example being his not-joking-at-all message to his own children during his Springfield speech: "You guys have a heavy burden. I wouldn't want to be you guys." To reach the Jordan stage is to completely believe your own bullshit and move toward the Caligula model of personality development, bored with the society of mere people, or "my supporting cast," as Jordan would describe them, and feeling close only to the gods.

Stage Five: Tiger Woods

Stylistically, Tiger doesn't really belong with a lot of the guys on this list — he doesn't need a self-aggrandizing midcareer legal name change, and it's hard to imagine him wearing a Jose Canseco-style see-through chemise — but he does ably represent one key element of the self-importance game: the total inability to grasp concepts like empathy, loyalty, and shame. That generally means you need an agent or a lawyer to tell you you're sorry for humiliating your wife with every fake-titted skank in the Western hemisphere — and if you do issue a public apology for said transgressions, you do so in a way that is actually both self-congratulatory ("I have not been true to my values") and shifts the blame onto others ("I have been dismayed to realize the full extent of what tabloid scrutiny really means"). It's no coincidence that Tiger takes his cues from another notorious egomaniac: He reportedly discussed plans to buy a "Kobe special," a reference to the $4 million diamond ring Bryant bought his wife after his own gash-hounding became public.

Stage Six: Charles Haley

Even supreme egomaniacs like Kobe know better than to just run off the court in the middle of a game and start mounting cheerleaders. Former NFL star Charles Haley, the great car-tossing defensive end of the 49ers and Cowboys of the late '80s and '90s, wasn't quite *that* bad, but he was close, treating the whole world like his personal Eden, expanding upon Rickey Henderson's propensity for near-constant locker-room nakedness to the point where police probably should have been called. Haley would wave his Godzilla tail in front of teammates and say things like "You know you wanna suck this!" Or, during team meetings, jerk himself off, to ejaculation, while talking about other players' wives. Whether this is narcissism or just sociopathic insanity is an interesting question, but regardless, Haley represents a class of athletes who make it all the way to adulthood without ever having to think about anything beyond the simple question, Where do I stick my penis next?

The Final Stage: Alex Rodriguez

The satirist Ambrose Bierce once wrote that there are only two instruments worse than a clarinet: *two* clarinets. In that vein, only one athlete could be more narcissistic than the one who commissions a portrait of himself in the form of a centaur, and that is the athlete who commissions *two*: Alex Rodriguez. Now, obviously, A-Rod is an easy target because, among other things, he allowed himself to be photographed kissing his own image in a mirror. But make no mistake, he earned his status as the reigning sports narcissist long before that. He's issued more insincere, lawyer-drafted apologies than Kobe and Tiger combined, his two daughters share the middle name Alexander, and his breezily humorless self-congratulation easily reaches Michael Jordan levels. (A-Rod on why people criticize him: "I don't know if it's [because] I'm good-looking, I'm biracial, I make the most money...") This is a guy who once picked the middle innings of a World Series game to announce he was bailing on his contract, and you get the impression that he would have passed a polygraph as he lied to Katie Couric about steroids, since he probably didn't believe he had done anything wrong. Even after signing for $250 million, winning multiple MVP awards, and gorging himself on a veritable mountain of stripper flesh, A-Rod was still so desperate for attention that he felt a need to brag to his mortified teammates about how he spelunkered the elderly pop star Madonna. In sum, A-Rod is the rare person who would ace all 40 questions on the Pinsky narcissism test, and he might get extra points for No. 29: "I like to look at myself in the mirror." ■

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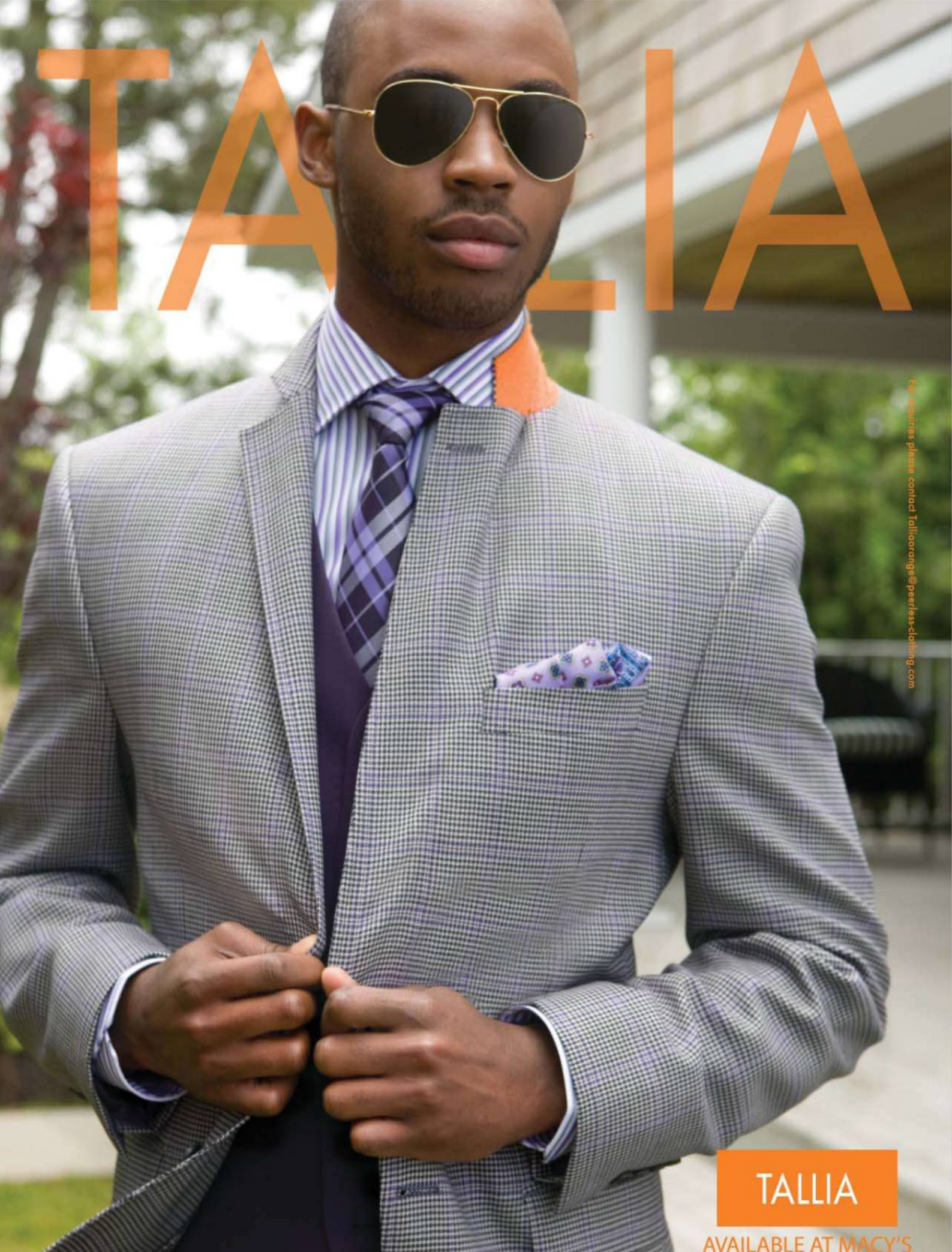
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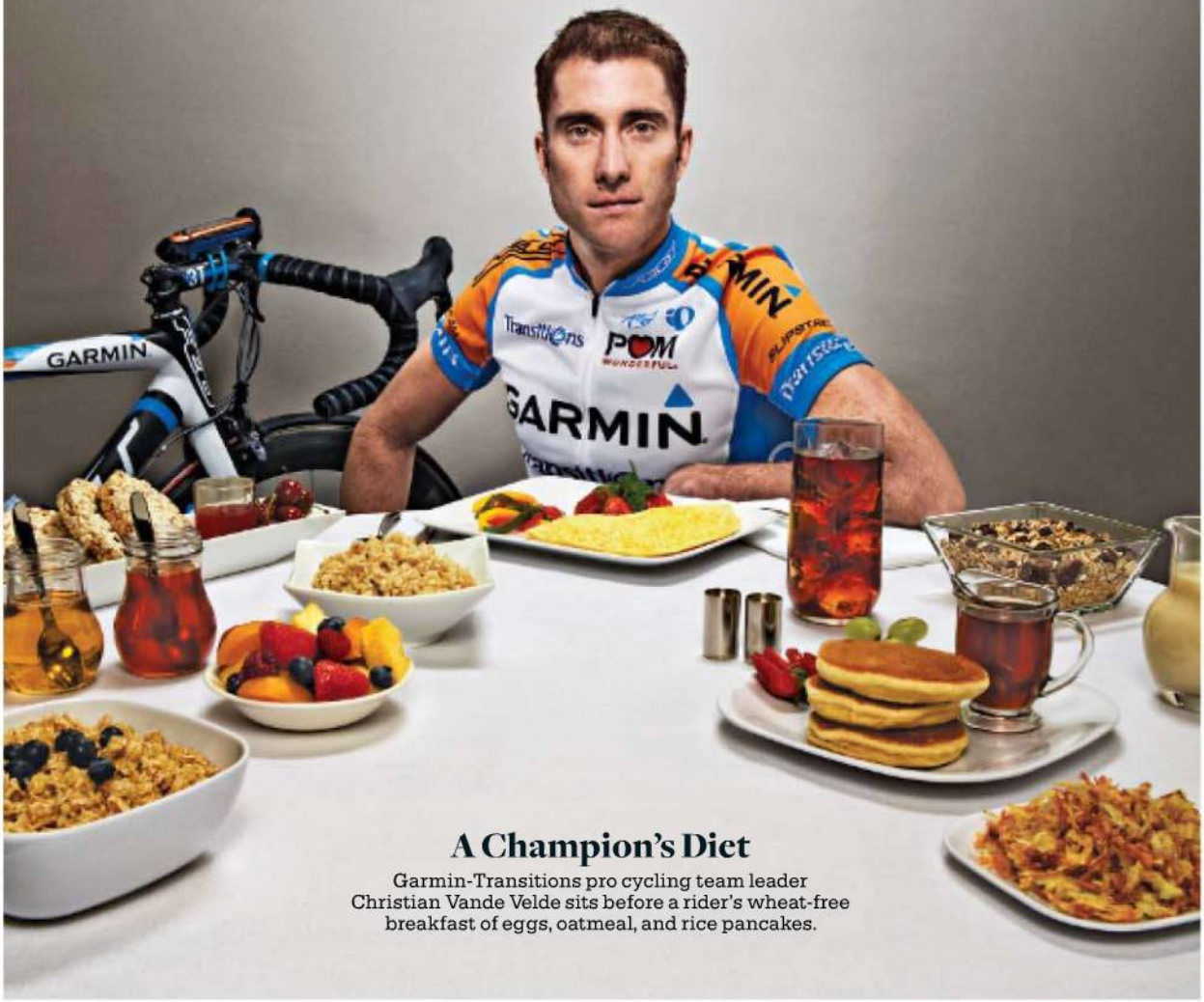
Winning Without Wheat

HOW A GLUTEN-FREE DIET POWERS ONE OF THE BEST CYCLING TEAMS IN THE WORLD — AND HOW IT CAN HELP YOU PERFORM BETTER AND RECOVER FASTER.

by **VANESSA GREGORY**

FOR ENDURANCE ATHLETES, CARBO-loading on pasta and bread is as much a part of their sports as spandex and heart-rate monitors. So when Dr. Allen Lim, former exercise physiologist for the Garmin-Transitions pro cycling team (he's now with Lance Armstrong's RadioShack team), and Jonathan Vaughters, Garmin's founder and CEO, suggested the squad switch to a wheat-free diet, the riders thought they were crazy. "Their first reaction was, 'What? No! We can't race the Tour de France without pasta,'" recalls Vaughters. But the two men were banking on the idea that gluten, a composite of proteins in wheat, is responsible for bloating, stiffness, and gastrointestinal distress — huge performance-hindering problems — and the theory that their riders would recover better from grueling stages by avoiding wheat. Moreover, they knew that the team could get all the carbs they needed by eating other foods.

"I was pleasantly surprised," says Christian Vande Velde, Garmin-Transitions's team leader, who was the first member of the team to experiment with going wheat-free during the racing season. "I just had all-around better digestion, and digestion is the biggest thing



A Champion's Diet
Garmin-Transitions pro cycling team leader Christian Vande Velde sits before a rider's wheat-free breakfast of eggs, oatmeal, and rice pancakes.

photograph by **Taylor Castle**

PROP STYLING BY ANGELA FINNEY. FOOD STYLING BY MARY EAGAN-GRAPSAS

in utilizing the energy I consume." Teammate Tom Danielson had a similar experience when he started following the diet during the Tour of Missouri in 2008. "My performance really improved a lot — there was definitely a correlation," says Danielson. "I think that my digestion is better, and because of that my sleep is better and my recovery is better."

The riders' results aren't surprising given the fact that humans are ill-equipped to digest wheat. Besides people who suffer from wheat allergies and celiac disease — an autoimmune condition triggered by exposure to gluten that affects about one in 133 Americans, causing everything from diarrhea to fatigue — doctors and nutritionists frequently see patients who simply feel healthier and more energetic when they're eating wheat-free. That's because, unlike cows, we lack the enzymes in our saliva and stomach to fully break down and absorb gluten for nutritional use, so parts of the protein just get smashed up before exiting to the small bowel in large pieces. More than 50 different types of those fragments have been shown to cause adverse reactions, according to Dr. Michelle Pietzak, a celiac expert at the University of Southern California. "So depending on your genetic makeup, you can have an allergy, you can have celiac disease, or it could be that you're just not digesting it well," Pietzak says. And if smooth digestion seems minor compared with strength and VO_2 max, think again. "It's a huge deal," says Lim. "It might be the hugest deal."

Since the energy needs of elite athletes such as Vande Velde and Danielson are immense — in the Tour de France, cyclists will eat as much as 8,000 calories daily, or more than three times what a moderately active guy needs each day — following a diet that bans wheat could spell trouble, due to the fact that the grain is a great source of carbohydrates. Carbs break down into glucose and serve as the body's primary fuel during exercise. Excess glucose also gets stored in muscles as glycogen, which provides additional energy during exercise and recovery. Without adequate levels of glycogen, an athlete will bonk.

To make sure that didn't happen, Vaughters hired chef Sean Fowler, a Colorado native who owns a restaurant in Spain, for last year's Tour. Fowler served poultry and eggs as protein sources, fresh fruits and vegetables for vitamins, and for carbohydrates, he simply switched sources. Wheat-based pasta is the carbo-loading standard mainly because it's cheap, readily available, and easy to cook, but other carbs are just as effective, including rice, oats, corn, and quinoa, a seed that's high in carbs and protein. "Every once in a while they'd be like, 'Bread! We want bread!'" says Fowler. But the cravings passed.

THOSE WHO GO WHEAT-FREE MAY NOT BE GLUTEN INTOLERANT, BUT THEY STILL PERFORM BETTER.

FEW OF US NEED AS MANY CARBS AND CALORIES AS Vande Velde or Danielson. But going wheat-free is not like going on the Atkins diet, which famously instructs people to cut most carbs out of their diets in order to lose weight. Athletes need carbohydrates, says Leslie Bonci, a sports dietitian for the Milwaukee Brewers. For active guys, she recommends three grams of carbs per pound of body weight per day. "You have to maintain the energy substrate, or you'll slam into the wall," Bonci says.

Garmin's reliance on vegetables, fruits, lean proteins, and fresh, well-prepared food is universally instructive, as well. Many athletes who stop eating wheat, despite having no real problem digesting gluten, still experience weight loss and performance and digestion benefits from inadvertently dodging other dietary pitfalls. No bread, cookies, or hamburger buns usually translates to less sugar, salt, and processed foods spiked with chemical fillers.

The best part may be that Garmin's wheat-free diet is moderate, a tool for periods of intense exertion rather than a permanent exercise in deprivation. "The gist of it is, if you can avoid it, do," Vande Velde says. The rest of the time, he just tries to eat healthfully, without worrying about gluten. "Believe me, I drink plenty of beer in the off-season." ■

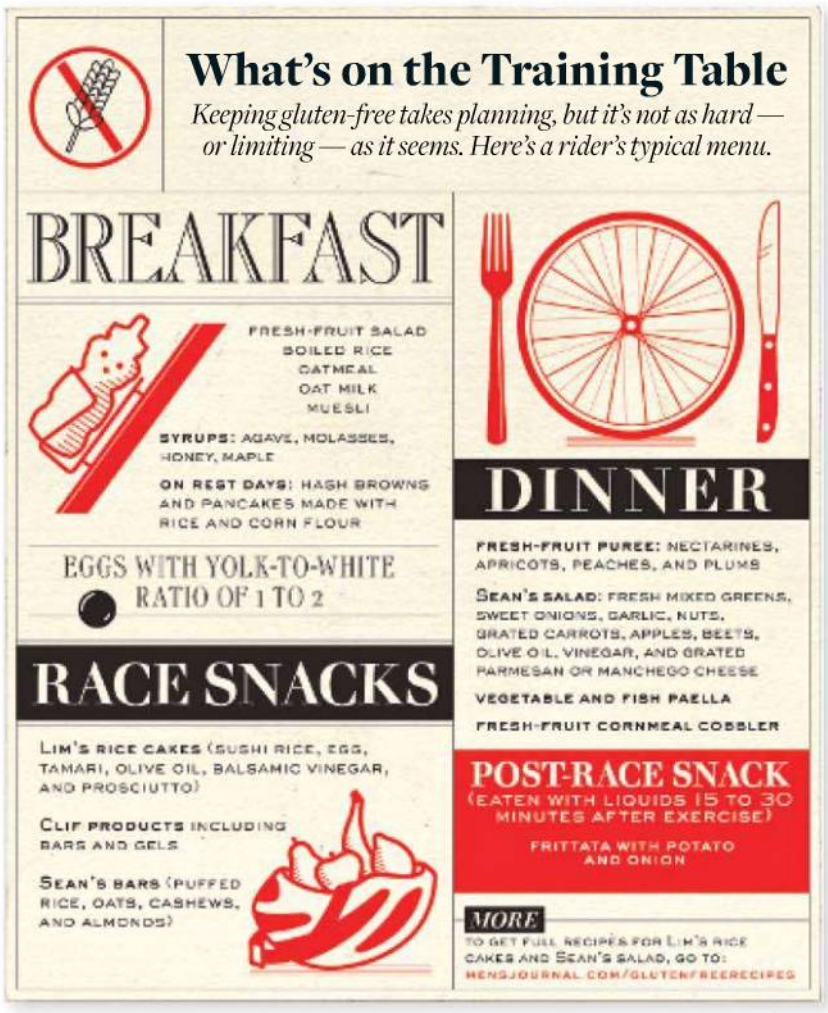


ILLUSTRATION: THOMAS POROSTOCKY

JEFF NEWTON

THE ASSIST / STEVE NASH

Sleep Easier

Nodding off was tough. Then I found the perfect bedtime story.

I'M ABOUT TO SAY SOMETHING that most of you know: Getting the right amount of sleep is crucial for good health and for getting the most out of the time you're awake. For me, sleeping well could mean the difference between putting up 30 points and living with 15. But I'm just like everyone else; life's distractions often get in the way of going to bed early enough. Fortunately, last year I was turned on to a great book called *The Promise of Sleep*, from which I've stolen a couple of tips for sleeping well.

■ **Keep a sleep journal.** I write down the time I go to sleep each night and the time I wake up. Here's why: Research suggests that our sleep needs are cumulative. If humans generally perform best after eight hours of slumber, you can't sleep for six hours one night and think that a good eight hours the next will cure all your problems. Theoretically, you'd need 10 hours the next night to "catch up on sleep" so that over the two nights you're averaging eight hours. This is called sleep debt. By keeping a journal, I can look back and see how much debt I'm putting myself into. If it's bad, the journal shocks me into making sure I get to bed plenty early — even if I'm not tired — since I know it will come back to haunt me later on.

■ **Focus on your breathing.** I've learned that when I lie down, I often won't fall asleep for a while because my mind is fixated on everything from the game that night to what I need to do the next day. It may seem simple, but concentrating on my breathing helps a lot because it's meditative. By doing that, my mind is cleared, and I'm usually out in a matter of minutes.

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WHAT IS LEVITRA?
LEVITRA is a prescription medicine taken by mouth for the treatment of erectile dysfunction (ED) in men.

ED is a condition where the penis does not harden and expand when a man is sexually excited, or when he cannot keep an erection. A man who has trouble getting or keeping an erection should see his doctor for help if the condition bothers him. LEVITRA may help a man with ED get and keep an erection when he is sexually excited.

LEVITRA does not:
- cure ED
- increase a man's sexual desire
- protect a man or his partner from sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV. Speak to your doctor about ways to guard against sexually transmitted diseases.
- serve as a male form of birth control

LEVITRA is only for men with ED. LEVITRA is not for women or children. LEVITRA must be used only under a doctor's care.

HOW DOES LEVITRA WORK?
When a man is sexually stimulated, his body's normal physical response is to increase blood flow to his penis. This results in an erection. LEVITRA helps increase blood flow to the penis and may help men with ED get and keep an erection satisfactory for sexual activity. Once a man has completed sexual activity, blood flow to his penis decreases, and his erection goes away.

WHO CAN TAKE LEVITRA?
Talk to your doctor to decide if LEVITRA is right for you.

LEVITRA has been shown to be effective in men over the age of 18 years who have erectile dysfunction, including men with diabetes or who have undergone prostatectomy.

WHO SHOULD NOT TAKE LEVITRA?
Do not take LEVITRA if you:
- **take any medicines called "nitrates"** (See "What important information should you know about LEVITRA?"). Nitrates are commonly used to treat angina. Angina is a symptom of heart disease and can cause pain in your chest, jaw, or down your arm.

  Medicines called nitrates include nitroglycerin that is found in tablets, sprays, ointments, pastes, or patches. Nitrates can also be found in other medicines such as isosorbide dinitrate or isosorbide mononitrate. Some recreational drugs called "poppers" also contain nitrates, such as amyl nitrate and butyl nitrate. Do not use LEVITRA if you are using these drugs. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure if any of your medicines are nitrates.
- **you have been told by your healthcare provider to not have sexual activity because of health problems.** Sexual activity can put an extra strain on your heart, especially if your heart is already weak from a heart attack or heart disease.
- **are allergic to LEVITRA or any of its ingredients.** The active ingredient in LEVITRA is called vardenafil. See the end of this leaflet for a complete list of ingredients.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DISCUSS WITH YOUR DOCTOR BEFORE TAKING LEVITRA?
Before taking LEVITRA, tell your doctor about all your medical problems, including if you:
- **have heart problems** such as angina, heart failure, irregular heartbeats, or have had a heart attack. Ask your doctor if it is safe for you to have sexual activity.
- **have low blood pressure or** have high blood pressure that is not controlled
- **have had a stroke**
- **have had a seizure**
- **or any family members have a rare heart condition known as prolongation of the QT interval (long QT syndrome)**
- **have liver problems**
- **have kidney problems and require dialysis**
- **have retinitis pigmentosa**, a rare genetic (runs in families) eye disease
- **have ever had severe vision loss, or if you have an eye condition called non-arteritic anterior ischemic optic neuropathy (NAION)**
- **have stomach ulcers**
- **have a bleeding problem**
- **have a deformed penis shape** or Peyronie's disease
- **have had an erection that lasted more than 4 hours**
- **have blood cell problems** such as sickle cell anemia, multiple myeloma, or leukemia

CAN OTHER MEDICATIONS AFFECT LEVITRA?
Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take including prescription and non-prescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. LEVITRA and other medicines may affect each other. Always check with your doctor before starting or stopping any medicines. Especially tell your doctor if you take any of the following:
- medicines called nitrates (See "What important information should you know about LEVITRA?")
- medicines called alpha-blockers. These include Hytrin® (terazosin HCl), Flomax® (tamsulosin HCl), Cardura® (doxazosin mesylate), Minipress® (prazosin HCl) or Uroxatral® (alfuzosin HCl). Alpha-blockers are sometimes prescribed for prostate problems or high blood pressure. In some patients the use of PDE5 inhibitor drugs, including LEVITRA, with alpha-blockers can lower blood pressure significantly leading to fainting. You should contact the prescribing physician if alpha-blockers or other drugs that lower blood pressure are prescribed by another healthcare provider.
- medicines that treat abnormal heartbeat. These include quinidine, procainamide, amiodarone and sotalol.
- ritonavir (Norvir®) or indinavir sulfate (Crixivan®) saquinavir (Fortavase® or Invirase®) or atazanavir (Reyataz®)
- ketoconazole or itraconazole (such as Nizoral® or Sporanox®)
- erythromycin or clarithromycin
- other medicines or treatments for ED

HOW SHOULD YOU TAKE LEVITRA?
Take LEVITRA exactly as your doctor prescribes. LEVITRA comes in different doses (2.5 mg, 5 mg, 10 mg, and 20 mg). For most men, the recommended starting dose is 10 mg. **Take LEVITRA no more than once a day.** Doses should be taken at least 24 hours apart. Some men can only take a low dose of LEVITRA because of medical conditions or medicines they take. Your doctor will prescribe the dose that is right for you.
- If you are older than 65 or have liver problems, your doctor may start you on a lower dose of LEVITRA.
- If you have prostate problems or high blood pressure, for which you take medicines called alpha-blockers, your doctor may start you on a lower dose of LEVITRA.
- If you are taking certain other medicines your doctor may prescribe a lower starting dose and limit you to one dose of LEVITRA in a 72-hour (3 days) period.

Take 1 LEVITRA tablet about 1 hour (60 minutes) before sexual activity. Some form of sexual stimulation is needed for an erection to happen with LEVITRA. LEVITRA may be taken with or without meals.

Do not change your dose of LEVITRA without talking to your doctor. Your doctor may lower your dose or raise your dose, depending on how your body reacts to LEVITRA.

If you take too much LEVITRA, call your doctor or emergency room right away.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF LEVITRA?
The most common side effects with LEVITRA are headache, flushing, stuffy or runny nose, indigestion, upset stomach, or dizziness. These side effects usually go away after a few hours. Call your doctor if you get a side effect that bothers you or one that will not go away.

LEVITRA may uncommonly cause:
- **an erection that won't go away (priapism).** If you get an erection that lasts more than 4 hours, get medical help right away. Priapism must be treated as soon as possible or lasting damage can happen to your penis including the inability to have erections.
- **color vision changes,** such as seeing a blue tinge to objects or having difficulty telling the difference between the colors blue and green.

In rare instances, men taking PDE5 inhibitors (oral erectile dysfunction medicines, including LEVITRA) reported a sudden decrease or loss of vision in one or both eyes. It is not possible to determine whether these events are related directly to these medicines, to other factors such as high blood pressure or diabetes, or to a combination of these. If you experience sudden decrease or loss of vision, stop taking PDE5 inhibitors, including LEVITRA, and call a doctor right away.

Sudden loss or decrease in hearing, sometimes with ringing in the ears and dizziness, has been rarely reported in people taking PDE5 inhibitors, including LEVITRA. It is not possible to determine whether these events are related directly to the PDE5 inhibitors, to other diseases or medications, to other factors, or to a combination of factors. If you experience these symptoms, stop taking LEVITRA and contact a doctor right away.

These are not all the side effects of LEVITRA. For more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

HOW SHOULD LEVITRA BE STORED?
- Store LEVITRA at room temperature between 59° and 86° F (15° to 30° C).
- **Keep LEVITRA and all medicines out of the reach of children.**

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT LEVITRA.
Medicines are sometimes prescribed for conditions other than those described in patient information leaflets. Do not use LEVITRA for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give LEVITRA to other people, even if they have the same symptoms that you have. It may harm them.

This leaflet summarizes the most important information about LEVITRA. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can ask your doctor or pharmacist for information about LEVITRA that is written for health professionals.

For more information you can also visit www.LEVITRA.com, or call 1-866-LEVITRA.

WHAT ARE THE INGREDIENTS OF LEVITRA?
Active Ingredient: vardenafil hydrochloride
Inactive Ingredients: microcrystalline cellulose, crospovidone, colloidal silicon dioxide, magnesium stearate, hypromellose, polyethylene glycol, titanium dioxide, yellow ferric oxide, and red ferric oxide.

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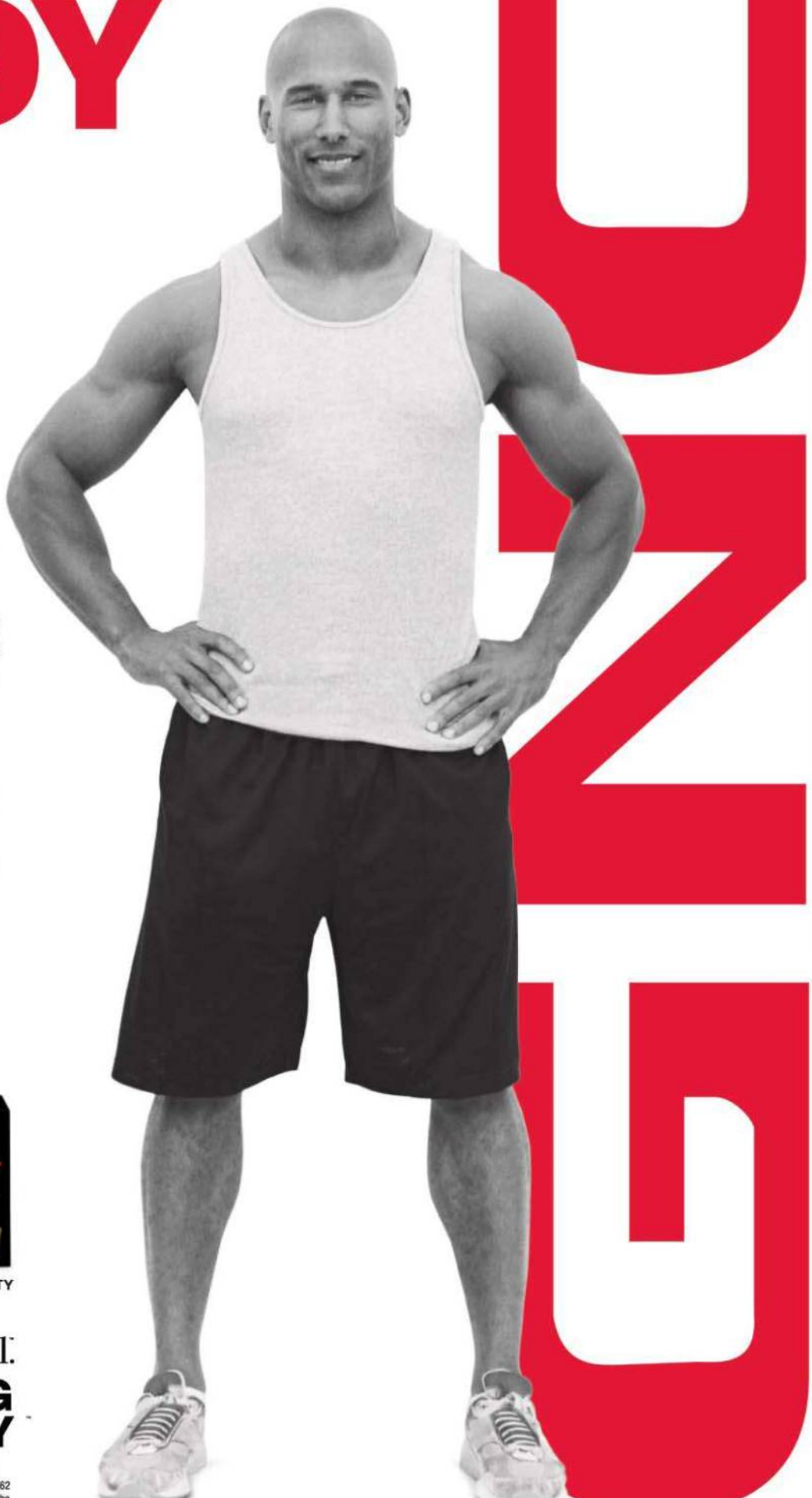

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THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO YOUR

KNEE

by GRETCHEN REYNOLDS

photograph by DAN WINTERS

NO OTHER JOINT IN THE body is as big or as important for smooth, powerful, and elegant movement than the knee. With every running stride, it absorbs and diffuses forces equivalent to at least twice your body weight. It gyroscopes and coils when you pivot, allowing your foot to point one way and your trunk another. And it can do all this because just beneath the skin lies a mad latticework of ligaments and tendons that weave together multiple muscles and bones.

Just behind your kneecap are four integral buttresses: the index finger–size anterior cruciate ligament (ACL), which diagonally joins and stabilizes the tibia and femur; the posterior cruciate ligament stretching across the back of the knee; and the lateral and medial collateral ligaments fortifying either side. Then there's the hamstring, quadriceps, and patellar tendons bringing all the leg's big muscles into play. It's truly a marvel of biological engineering, but its very complexity is also what makes the knee so vulnerable and difficult to fix. It is by far the most commonly injured joint, and there are so many ways you can hurt it — a hard twist, a slight bump, a maladjusted bike seat, a garage sale wipeout on the ski slopes.

Some knee problems aren't serious — a meniscus tear may even resolve on its own — while other injuries, like an ACL tear, could haunt you your entire life if treated wrong. Unfortunately, your surgeon isn't always the source of the best advice, and there's one popular surgery out there that has been found to be no more effective than a placebo procedure (see page 57).

We consulted the country's top surgeons and physiology experts — apparently intent on *reducing* their patient load — to help you better understand the difference between popped ligaments and shredded cartilage, how to choose the right treatment, and how to avoid injury in the first place.

Problem No. 1:

Blowing Out Your Knee

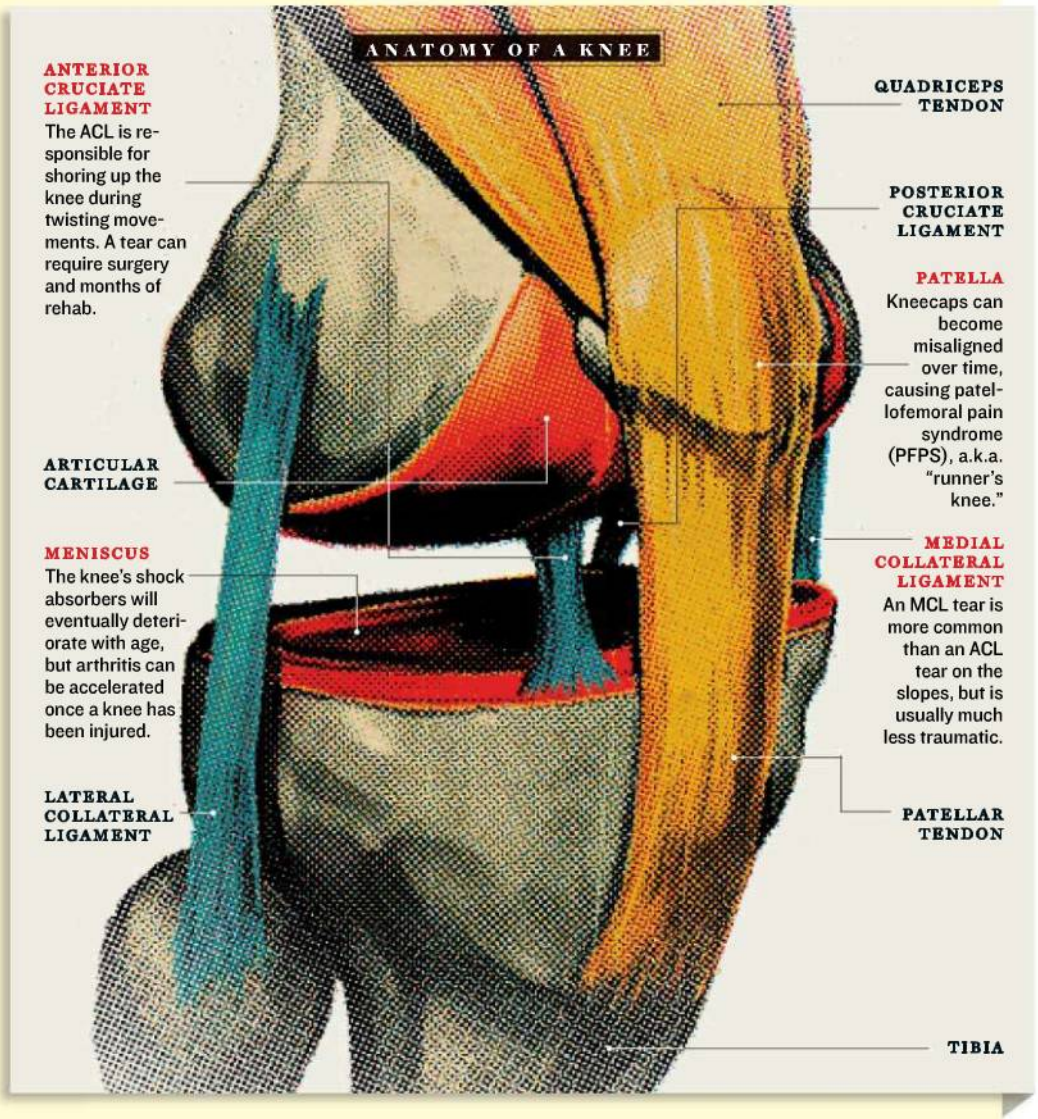
If you've ever hurt your knee badly, there's a good chance you tore the most crucial of ligaments: the ACL. And it can be a tricky injury to recover from unless you know both what to look for when it happens and which treatment is right for you. **AT RISK:** Skiers; players of court sports, soccer, and tennis.

DIAGNOSIS

Dr. Kevin Plancher
ASSOCIATE CLINICAL PROFESSOR IN ORTHOPEDICS AT ALBERT EINSTEIN COLLEGE OF MEDICINE IN NEW YORK CITY; CONSULTANT TO THE U.S. SKI AND SNOWBOARD TEAM

TECHNICALLY SPEAKING...

The ACL connects the femur (thighbone) to the tibia (shinbone) and prevents the tibia from sliding forward. The ACL is easily torn when forces move through the knee as the result of an abrupt twisting motion. Once it's been torn, you lose some of the natural stability within the knee. A torn medial collateral ligament (MCL) is actually a more common skiing injury, but will often heal on its own. I just tell my patients to stay off the knee. One way to tell which you've torn is the pattern of swelling. A torn ACL causes immediate swelling, and you'll probably hear that signature "pop." A torn MCL typically won't cause immediate swelling.



THE ADVICE

You don't need your ACL for your knee to function, but surgical reconstruction has come a long way — from open-knee, in-hospital surgery with major recovery time to an outpatient procedure. The primary aim of ACL reconstruction is to restore stability, making it possible to return to cutting, twisting sports. If you're willing to quit skiing or soccer or basketball, then you can do without the surgery. Most of my patients want to get back to full activity. Deciding which type of graft is best for a patient requires case-by-case consideration.

EXPERT TIP

Though it's rarely an option, try to get to a surgeon within four hours. Otherwise you'll have to wait at least three weeks, until the swelling has gone down. In the interim, you'll be set up with physical therapy. While a sore knee wants to remain still, a swollen, unused knee becomes stiff, which makes it harder to operate on and increases the risk of scarring. Don't slack; do the physical therapy if you want your knee to be at its best. Six months out, you can resume most activities.

illustration by **Tavis Coburn**

CASE STUDY

NAME: Tom Castiglione
OCCUPATION: Professional sailor/sailmaker
AGE: 39
ACTIVITIES: Sailing, skiing, mountain and road biking

HOW IT HAPPENED

It was his first run on the first day of the new ski season at Sugarbush, Vermont, a few years back, when Tom Castiglione "hit some crud or a rock or something," he says, caught an edge, crossed his ski tips, and was down in an eyeblink. The ACL in his left knee had ripped clean away from the bone, and the tissue was shredded. He immediately knew that he was not getting up, and after a toboggan evac, he hobbled out of the local medical clinic with a knee brace and crutches, facing some tough decisions about what to do next.

WHAT IT FELT LIKE

"You know how people talk about hearing a popping sound when they tear their ACL?" he says. "Well, I heard that 'pop,' all right. It practically echoed over the slopes. It was an immediate and intense pain."

TREATMENT OPTIONS

Less than a week later, Castiglione visited an orthopedic surgeon to see what could be done to reclaim his knee. "The first thing we talked about was whether I needed an ACL reconstruction at all," Castiglione recalls. "He told me that I didn't actually *have* to have the surgery." The human knee can operate without an ACL, his surgeon explained, "but I wouldn't have much lateral stability." Since sailing requires a lot of sideways movement, he opted to go under the knife. But a torn ACL must be replaced with fresh tissue, either from elsewhere in the injured person's leg or from a corpse. One option he ruled out immediately was a patellar graft (see below), in which tissue is harvested from the patellar tendon at the front of the knee. However, that procedure is sometimes associated with permanent, irremediable pain while kneeling and crawling — two other necessities of sailing.

QUICK SELF-ASSESSMENT

- Noticeable popping noise at the time of injury
- Severe swelling within three to four hours
- Knee collapsing beneath your weight
- Pain, typically in the middle of the knee

THE FIX

Castiglione decided to go with the treatment that would most suit his active lifestyle: a donor tendon, which was threaded arthroscopically through tiny tunnels drilled into his bones. "I wasn't crazy about the idea of a cadaver ACL," he says. "But the other two options were even less appealing. The recovery was a fairly demonic process, but worth the effort. I was in the physical therapist's office two days after surgery, and, in line with my surgeon's plan, I was back racing boats six months later and on the ski slope (out of bounds in Utah) 12 months later. It's going on five years now; I'm road biking and in the gym as if nothing ever happened."

OPTIONS FOR FIXING ACL TEARS

About 100,000 ACL reconstructions are performed every year in the U.S., but treatments and techniques vary as much as surgeons.

PATELLAR GRAFTS

PROS: The most popular surgical option; uses part of your kneecap (patella) and patellar tendon to replace the ACL. Tends to stabilize the knee well; is generally considered the gold standard.
CONS: Some pain at the front of the knee, where part of the patellar tendon once was.
BEST FOR: People who want to return to sports that require twisting movements.

CADAVER GRAFTS

PROS: Less invasive since it doesn't involve harvesting grafts from your own body; less painful recovery.
CONS: Creepy; risk, though low, of disease transmission; takes longer to heal.
BEST FOR: Active people whose sports require time on their knees (since patellar grafts might cause pain); those who wish to undergo less invasive surgery.

DOUBLE-BUNDLE RECONSTRUCTION

PROS: Two grafts more closely mimic a healthy ACL than one graft; theoretically, it's the best knee stabilizer.
CONS: The surgery is extremely demanding and intricate; technique is too new to show long-term positive results; usually done with cadaver tissue.
BEST FOR: People with access to the best surgeons and better insurance.

LEAVE IT ALONE

PROS: No risk of infection, repeat surgery, or surgical rehab; saves money; no increased chance of arthritis, says one study.
CONS: Knee will probably never be quite as stable; might not be able to return to cutting, twisting sports.
BEST FOR: Those looking to avoid the knife and willing to give up soccer. Consult a sports-medicine physician (not a surgeon) to help weigh these consequences.

FROM TOP: COURTESY CASTIGLIONE; JUSTIN STEELE

PREVENTION

What Every Skier Needs to Know

TUNE YOUR BINDINGS
"Have your skis and bindings set up by a certified technician at a ski shop," says Carl Ettlinger, founder of Vermont Ski Safety. "Many people leave them loose, thinking it's better to come out of the bindings easily during a fall. But knee injuries can result from early binding release, too."

LOOSEN UP
In a cold environment, it's even more important to warm up your legs.

THE SKIER'S STRETCH
Put right foot over left, bow at waist; hands down to 2 o'clock, left glute remains at 8 o'clock.

LEARN HOW TO FALL
A large number of ACL tears occur when a skier tries to get up while he's still sliding. "When you fall, stay down," Ettlinger says. "Don't get up until you come to a complete stop." Lie on the snow for a moment contemplating how lucky you are.

SAY NO TO HOT TUBS
The worst thing you can do for ligament injuries is expose them to heat. Heat can encourage swelling, which can delay treatment. "Ice it. Elevate it," says orthopedic surgeon Kevin Plancher. "I don't care how inviting that hot tub looks. Stay out."

Problem No. 2:

Nagging Aches and Pains

Knee pain is often not caused by a new injury at all — it's the ghost of an injury past. About half of all people who've hurt their knee will develop early-onset arthritis within 10 years. **AT RISK:** Anyone who's suffered a knee injury.

DIAGNOSIS

Dr. Frederic Nicola
DIRECTOR, KNEE AND HIP INSTITUTE, DISC; CONSULTANT, OAKLAND RAIDERS

THE DOC'S TAKE

"Guys come in saying, 'I don't know; my knee just started hurting,'" says Nicola. "Then we ask about their history and find out they did something in a soccer game long ago, hobbled around — maybe had surgery — and then forgot about it. But the knee remembers."

THE ADVICE

If your knees creak, or you feel rubbing or grinding, see a physician. If the knee bones begin to rub directly against one another, this is end-stage arthritis and could require knee replacement.

QUICK SELF-ASSESSMENT

- Swelling
- Pain, often generalized throughout the knee
- Trouble bending at the knee going up and down stairs
- Grinding or creaking

CASE STUDY

NAME: Henry Marks
OCCUPATION: Runs a gravel business
AGE: 49
ACTIVITIES: Cycling, hiking, snowboarding

HOW IT HAPPENED

Thirty years ago, Henry Marks crashed his motorcycle and tore a meniscus in both knees. At the time, surgeons yanked the meniscus from his right knee, telling him he could live without it — that was the standard treatment. Fifteen years later, his knee started to ache all the time. "There was a constant sharp aching pain. I was miserable," he says. "My new surgeon took a look and said I had severe articular cartilage damage, which was probably because of the meniscus removal." Early-onset arthritis or cartilage deterioration is a common side effect of a knee injury, even one that happened long ago. In Marks's case it would require an entirely new procedure. "The cartilage was wearing away really fast," he recalls. "I was worried I wouldn't be able to walk at all in five years."

THE FIX

Marks decided he needed to have the remaining cartilage in his knee stabilized. His surgeon did cartilage paste grafting (see below), which has become an option only in the past 20 years. "After that, I forgot my knees hurt," he says. "I'm probably less active than if I had perfect knees, but I do almost everything I want — hike, play tennis, even snowboard."

OPTIONS FOR FIXING NAGGING INJURIES

HYALURONIC ACID INJECTIONS

PROS: It's nonsurgical and therefore very noninvasive. A quick squirt of lubricant provides some viscosity, so the knee bones won't rub as much.
CONS: Fix lasts less than a year, though you can repeat the procedure.
BEST FOR: Active guys whose knees hurt but aren't candidates for cartilage-repair surgery.

AUTOLOGOUS CHONDROCYTE IMPLANTATION

PROS: Your cartilage cells are suctioned out, multiplied in a lab, then squirted back into your knee. Cartilage may last longer than with other techniques.
CONS: Requires two surgeries; longer rehab; expensive.
BEST FOR: Those who can wait out tissue-growing phase without putting weight on the injured knee.

CARTILAGE PASTE GRAFTING

PROS: Cartilage and stem cells are removed from a non-weight-bearing part of the knee, ground into a paste, and smeared, like a living Band-Aid, over the worn area.
CONS: Difficult to perform on kneecap.
BEST FOR: Forty-ish guys with localized cartilage loss and arthritis who want to return to sports.

MICROFRACTURE

PROS: Surgeon breaks an area of bone near wounded cartilage, causing bleeding and a rush of cells, including, it's hoped, stem cells to build new cartilage.
CONS: "Fill" cartilage is scar tissue, and the results have not been long-lasting.
BEST FOR: Young, active guys with history of ACL or meniscus tears and signs of early arthritis.

PREVENTION

What Every Cyclist Needs to Know

ADJUST YOUR SEAT

It's all about the bike seat: If the seat is too high, the knee overextends, causing pain at the back of the knee or along the outside edge, where the iliotibial band is being overstretched. If it's set too low, the pain usually occurs at the front of the knee — the cyclist's version of runner's knee. When the *Journal of Strength & Conditioning Research* compared several different seat heights for cycling economy and injury prevention, they found that setting your seat so that your knee is bent at a 35-degree angle at its fullest extension (see image below) is ideal for both power production and minimizing knee problems.

CHANGE POSITIONS

Shift your body periodically, suggests trainer Gene Schafer. Remaining locked in the same position for hours can contribute to repetitive-stress and overuse injuries of the knee. Stand up on the pedals for a few strokes every 15 minutes or so.

STRETCH YOUR HAMSTRINGS

Undo the muscle and tendon tightness associated with riding by "stretching in an opposite position" from your riding stance, Schafer suggests. The hamstring stretch is perfect for this (see page 58). Put your right heel up on a bench, with your left foot on the ground, and bend forward.

FROM TOP: COURTESY HENRY MARKS; SM/AUED/STONE/GETTY IMAGES

Avoid This Surgery!

Arthroscopic surgery might sound fancy, but some say it's no better than popping a few anti-inflammatories — and it may even be worse.

NOT SO LONG AGO, IF YOU WERE SUFFERING from arthritis, many surgeons would have dived into your knee with an arthroscope to clean up the joint. The procedure, known as arthroscopic debridement and lavage, was, until recently, one of the most common orthopedic surgeries in the land. Then, in 2002, with funding from the Department of Veterans Affairs, some surgeons pulled a fast one. They divided 180 patients with knee arthritis into two groups. Some received the surgery; others were prepped and told they'd undergone surgery, but in fact hadn't been operated on at all. Afterward, they all had equivalent pain relief, meaning that the fake operation was as useful as the real one — or, more relevantly, that the actual operation hadn't accomplished much.

CANADIAN PRESS/PHOTOTAKE, INC.

A 2008 experiment out of Canada buttressed that conclusion. In it, patients with knee arthritis either followed a regimen of painkillers and physical therapy or went under the knife. Pain relief was about the same for both groups.

Today the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons advises against arthroscopic surgery to treat knee arthritis, unless you have other knee problems, too. If you also have "mechanical symptoms, such as catching, locking, or popping," you may have a cartilage tear or a loose bit of calcified tissue in the knee, says Dr. David Teuscher, an orthopedic surgeon in Beaumont, Texas. In that case, surgery can still be worthwhile. But if your doctor diagnoses simple arthritis and still recommends "debridement and lavage," find a new physician.

RECOVERY

Jury's Out on Rehab Supplements

Glucosamine and chondroitin nutritional supplements have been touted as knee-rehab elixirs for years, but while these over-the-counter supplements (composed of substances that occur naturally in healthy cartilage) are probably the most common and cheapest means of self-treating knee pain, their efficacy is debatable. In one of several recent large-scale studies, participants got little or no pain relief from the pills compared with a control group, and in another, people on glucosamine/chondroitin had about the same amount of cartilage deterioration as people taking a placebo. On the other hand, "there are no side effects," Nicola points out. "And they seem to help a lot of people."

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Problem No. 3:

The Stealth Injury

A meniscus tear isn't as dramatic as shredding your ACL, but it's much more common, especially as men age. **AT RISK:** Skiers, court-sports players.

HOW IT HAPPENS

The meniscus is the knee's shock absorber: a small, crescent-shaped pillow of cartilage nestled between the femur and the tibia. Normally, it's plump and squishy, flattening easily as you bend your joint. "With age, the menisci can dehydrate and become more brittle," says Nicola. The process begins in your 30s. Soon, almost any "abrupt, sheering motion or fall" — even a wrong step or thrashing during sleep — can rip the weakened meniscus, as easily as tearing a well-worn T-shirt. "We see guys who went to bed fine and woke up with a tear," Nicola says.

TREATMENTS

Since the meniscus has almost no blood supply, a bad tear won't heal on its own, so surgery is usually needed. Sometimes the surgeon can stitch up the tear, if it occurred in the outer one-third, where there is some blood circulation. Otherwise, the ripped area has to be removed, leaving as much of the cartilage behind as possible. On the horizon are man-made menisci. One version won FDA approval in '08, but it's too early to know how well it works long term.

QUICK SELF-ASSESSMENT

Pain on one side of your knee, although this isn't inevitable; the meniscus doesn't include many nerves

Swelling

A sense that the knee is catching or stuttering rather than moving smoothly

NEED SURGERY?

Depends. A torn meniscus isn't necessarily sports-career-threatening; cartilage tissue, including the menisci, provides knee cushioning, not knee stability. So your knee will function, but you might have to get used to some low-grade pain. It's like a "hangnail in your knee," says Dr. Joseph Barker, an orthopedic surgeon at Rush University Medical Center. "This little flap catches on the bone every time you bend the knee. It doesn't feel good."

Problem No. 4:

Runner's Knee

Something as simple as bad form can cause patellofemoral pain syndrome — or PFPS, as surgeons refer to it — over time. **AT RISK:** Runners, cyclists, dancers; players of basketball, soccer, and tennis.

HOW IT HAPPENS

PFPS, also known as "runner's knee," is the result of irritation in and around the patella (kneecap). It's one of the most common injuries in sports, and accounts for up to one-quarter of all knee injuries. Those with weak hamstrings, weak quads, and a tendency to land with rigid, unbending knees (because of the weakness of their stabilizing hamstrings and quads) are most at risk.

ARE YOU AT RISK?

Jump up and down a few times. Are your knees straight as you land? Does your knee cross over your big toe, to the inside, when you squat? Those are biomechanics that could predispose you to PFPS. Another risk factor is abruptly increasing your training. Legions of hopeful marathoners have been felled by PFPS because they went from 20 miles one week to 30 the next.

QUICK SELF-ASSESSMENT

Tenderness and discomfort around and sometimes behind the kneecap, especially after a workout

Rarely, swelling; more often, swelling indicates an acute injury, like a meniscus tear

TREATMENT

Runner's knee is an overuse injury, so the best fixes involve strengthening the muscles around the knee (see workout on page 63), switching your running surface from concrete to something softer, like a track or trails, and honing your technique, says trainer and performance specialist Gene Schafer. Also, lessening use often lessens injury. When you do run, consciously keep your knees slightly bent from the time your shoe contacts the ground through toe-off.

PREVENTION

What Every Runner Needs to Know

HIT THE GYM
Weak quadriceps muscles destabilize the knee, making it about five times more likely you'll develop patellofemoral pain syndrome, a.k.a. "runner's knee," according to a study published in the *American Journal of Sports Medicine*. Do squats and knee bends using light weights and multiple reps to build the quads, but avoid straight-leg extensions, as they overload the joint.

KEEP OLD SHOES
Don't stress about cushioning. Soft shoes only seem as though they'd be good for the knees, but a study found that most runners unconsciously alter their strides slightly as the cushioning in their shoes wears out anyway, so it's likely your knee will adapt.

STRETCH
Stretch immediately after running (see below), then massage around the knee using a foam roller, suggests Gene Schafer, an athletic trainer and owner of Arc Athletics in New York City. This loosens your iliotibial band, a long tissue that crosses the knee joint and that can become painfully tight. Lie sideways on the roller so the area just above the side of your knee is centered on foam. Roll back and forth several times.

HAMSTRING STRETCH: Back straight, hinge yourself forward. Hold for 30 seconds, then switch legs.

JUSTIN STEELE

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Problem No. 5:

Arthritis

By age 45, about 10 percent of men will develop arthritis in their knee, even with no prior injury. **AT RISK:** Everyone.

HOW IT HAPPENS

Knee injuries will jump-start post-traumatic osteoarthritis, a.k.a. cartilage degeneration, but the most common trigger for knee arthritis is getting old. This common variety of osteoarthritis involves a slow degradation of your knee's cartilage over the years, usually beginning in middle age. It's a normal part of the aging process and afflicts millions of men past the age of 45. Being overweight is a common aggravator.

WHAT IT FEELS LIKE

Normal cartilage loss can lead to anything from a twinge in the morning, or when you go up and down stairs, to a knee that aches simply when the weather changes (which is thought to happen because changes in barometric pressure affect the pressure within our joints as well).

TREATMENTS

Age-related osteoarthritis may be more difficult to treat than injury-induced arthritis because it's more widespread. Current surgical fixes for cartilage deterioration "work best on small areas of damage," says Nicola. One relatively new option, he says, is a partial knee replacement, which requires a much smaller surgical incision and a shorter rehab than full replacement.

To stave off surgery, move. Despite their whining, stiff knees need to be used; bending and motion naturally lubricate the joint. Or drop a few pounds. Losing as little as 5 percent of body weight reduces a person's risk of accelerated damage.

PREVENTION

Are Video Games the Future of Injury Prevention?

DURING SPORTS LIKE SOCCER and basketball, your brain tires along with your body and your reaction time slows. When you react more slowly, you're at a higher risk for injury. But researchers have found that through the use of virtual reality, your brain can be trained to keep responding nimbly.

Scott McLean, assistant professor at the University of Michigan's School of Kinesiology, had athletes fatigue one lower limb by doing one-legged squats. The leg that wasn't exercised, he says, demonstrated similar changes in biomechanics as the fatigued leg. "This shows that it's the brain that isn't processing information as quickly as it needs to."

The goal of McLean's study was to learn how to train the brain to respond more effectively to unanticipated plays by using virtual reality. McLean began by exposing fatigued athletes to random situations, like an oncoming opponent who must be dodged. Then, using high-speed 3-D cameras, he was able to see whether an athlete's knees were flexing too much or absorbing too much force. Athletes would quickly change their bad habits through this simple analysis. "Once told what they're doing wrong, the athletes were able to adjust their body position and joint rotation pretty well," he says.

It's believed to be such a simple way of improving form that several gyms and athletic performance centers have also begun using the technology. Cybex has developed a specialized reaction training device called a Trazer that costs about $6,500 (*cybex.com*), but running your own experiment at home could be as simple as setting up a video camera while you play Nintendo Wii, then watching the playback. Are you coming down soft and balanced? Most importantly, what happens when you get fatigued?

ALIX MARTINEZ

Doing drills like these regularly for six weeks will help them become an ingrained part of an athlete's performance, though McLean warns that it could take up to three or four years for the body to fully adapt and for the results to show on the basketball court. "The more you practice skills that require rapid reactions, the better you'll be at reacting to random movements during an actual game," McLean says. But he warns that if you don't keep your brain trained, you'll lose some of that coordination.

—MEGAN MICHELSON

RECOVERY

The Debate Over PRP Injections

Right now, platelet-rich plasma (PRP) injections are the most hyped orthopedic treatment on the planet — Tiger had several shots post–ACL surgery, and Hines Ward swears it's all that got him, and his badly sprained MCL, through last year's Super Bowl — but it still may not be right for you. The procedure, which involves putting a small amount of the patient's blood in a centrifuge to concentrate its bioactive proteins and then injecting the concentrate into damaged, healing tissue, costs $2,000 per injection and is typically done more than once. It's a more common treatment in Europe, where small-scale studies suggest it can spur regeneration of ripped tendons and ligaments. "Everyone thinks it's the panacea," says Plancher. "I believe it can work as an augment to repair, but I don't believe it will change the outcome [of recovery]. We caution that there is no rigid scientific evidence of its efficacy."

"I thought at my age there was nothing I could do about it, then I had 'the talk' with my doctor."

Your Doctor Talks to Men About ED Every Day

Your doctor will tell you that there is something you can do about your erectile dysfunction (ED). In fact, millions of men over 40 have already taken the first step and talked to their doctor about ED. And so can you.

Doctor portrayal.

Need Some Ideas on How to Open Up to Your Doctor?

The hardest part about having 'the talk' is getting those first few words out. Here are some ideas to help you break the ice when your doctor asks how everything's going:

The Direct Approach:
"I have trouble sometimes in bed. Could it be ED?"

The Indirect Approach:
"Is it true age affects sexual performance?"

The Silent Approach:
Just hand this ad to your doctor, he'll take it from there.

Running the Numbers

Did you know half of all guys over 40 have some form of ED? Here are some numbers to keep in mind from a recent survey of men with ED:

of men were anxious about talking to their doctor about ED.

of men felt relieved after talking to their doctor.

Tell Me More

To learn more about VIAGRA for the treatment of ED, and ED in general, visit **viagra.com** today. You'll find an online sexual health quiz, videos of guys with ED who've had the VIAGRA Talk and other helpful information.

Over 20 million men have already had their VIAGRA Talk. Isn't it time you had yours?

Important Safety Information

We know that no medicine is for everyone. Don't take VIAGRA if you take nitrates, often prescribed for chest pain, as this may cause a sudden unsafe drop in blood pressure.

Talk with your doctor first. Make sure your heart is healthy enough to have sex. If you have chest pain, nausea, or other discomforts during sex, seek medical help right away.

In the rare event of an erection lasting more than four hours, seek immediate medical help to avoid long-term injury.

In rare instances, men who take PDE5 inhibitors (oral erectile dysfunction medicines, including VIAGRA) reported a sudden decrease or loss of vision, or sudden decrease or loss of hearing. It is not possible to determine whether these events are related directly to these medicines or to other factors. If you experience any of these symptoms, stop taking PDE5 inhibitors, including VIAGRA, and call a doctor right away.

The most common side effects of VIAGRA are headache, facial flushing, and upset stomach. Less common are bluish or blurred vision, or being sensitive to light. These may occur for a brief time.

VIAGRA does not protect against sexually transmitted diseases including HIV.

Please see Important Facts for VIAGRA on the following page or visit viagra.com for full prescribing information.

For free information, including questions to ask your doctor, call 1-888-4VIAGRA (1-888-484-2472).

VIAGRA®
(sildenafil citrate) tablets

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.FDA.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

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IMPORTANT FACTS

VIAGRA® *(sildenafil citrate) tablets* (vi-AG-rah)

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION ABOUT VIAGRA

Never take VIAGRA if you take any medicines with nitrates. This includes nitroglycerin. Your blood pressure could drop quickly. It could fall to an unsafe or life-threatening level.

ABOUT ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION (ED)

Erectile dysfunction means a man cannot get or keep an erection. Health problems, injury, or side effects of drugs may cause ED. The cause may not be known.

ABOUT VIAGRA

VIAGRA is used to treat ED in men. When you want to have sex, VIAGRA can help you get and keep an erection when you are sexually excited. You cannot get an erection just by taking the pill. Only your doctor can prescribe VIAGRA.

VIAGRA does not cure ED.

VIAGRA does not protect you or your partner from STDs (sexually transmitted diseases) or HIV. You will need to use a condom.

VIAGRA is not a hormone or an aphrodisiac.

WHO IS VIAGRA FOR?

Who should take VIAGRA?

Men who have ED and whose heart is healthy enough for sex.

Who should NOT take VIAGRA?

- If you ever take medicines with nitrates:
  - Medicines that treat chest pain (angina), such as nitroglycerin or isosorbide mononitrate or dinitrate
- If you use some street drugs, such as "poppers" (amyl nitrate or nitrite)
- If you are allergic to anything in the VIAGRA tablet.

BEFORE YOU START VIAGRA

Tell your doctor if you have or ever had:

- Heart attack, abnormal heartbeats, or stroke
- Heart problems, such as heart failure, chest pain, or aortic valve narrowing
- Low or high blood pressure
- Severe vision loss
- An eye condition called retinitis pigmentosa
- Kidney or liver problems
- Blood problems, such as sickle cell anemia or leukemia
- A deformed penis, Peyronie's disease, or an erection that lasted more than 4 hours
- Stomach ulcers or any kind of bleeding problems

Tell your doctor about all your medicines. Include over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products. Tell your doctor if you take or use:

- Medicines called alpha-blockers to treat high blood pressure or prostate problems. Your blood pressure could suddenly get too low. You could get dizzy or faint. Your doctor may start you on a lower dose of VIAGRA.
- Medicines called protease inhibitors for HIV. Your doctor may prescribe a 25 mg dose. Your doctor may limit VIAGRA to 25 mg in a 48-hour period.
- Other methods to cause erections. These include pills, injections, implants, or pumps.

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF VIAGRA

Side effects are mostly mild to moderate. They usually go away after a few hours. Some of these are more likely to happen with higher doses.

The most common side effects are:

- Headache
- Feeling flushed
- Upset stomach

Less common side effects are:

- Trouble telling blue and green apart or seeing a blue tinge on things
- Eyes being more sensitive to light
- Blurred vision

Rarely, a small number of men taking VIAGRA have reported these serious events:

- Having an erection that lasts more than 4 hours. If the erection is not treated right away, long-term loss of potency could occur.
- Sudden decrease or loss of sight in one or both eyes. We do not know if these events are caused by VIAGRA and medicines like it or caused by other factors. They may be caused by conditions like high blood pressure or diabetes. If you have sudden vision changes, stop using VIAGRA and all medicines like it. Call your doctor right away.
- Sudden decrease or loss of hearing. We do not know if these events are caused by VIAGRA and medicines like it or caused by other factors. If you have sudden hearing changes, stop using VIAGRA and all medicines like it. Call your doctor right away.
- Heart attack, stroke, irregular heartbeats, and death. We do not know whether these events are caused by VIAGRA or caused by other factors. Most of these happened in men who already had heart problems.

If you have any of these problems, stop VIAGRA. Call your doctor right away.

HOW TO TAKE VIAGRA

Do:

- Take VIAGRA only the way your doctor tells you. VIAGRA comes in 25 mg, 50 mg, and 100 mg tablets. Your doctor will tell you how much to take.
- If you are over 65 or have serious liver or kidney problems, your doctor may start you at the lowest dose (25 mg).
- Take VIAGRA about 1 hour before you want to have sex. VIAGRA starts to work in about 30 minutes when you are sexually excited. VIAGRA lasts up to 4 hours.

Don't:

- Do not take VIAGRA more than once a day.
- Do not take more VIAGRA than your doctor tells you. If you think you need more VIAGRA, talk with your doctor.
- Do not start or stop any other medicines before checking with your doctor.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

- This is only a summary of important information. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for complete product information OR
- Go to **www.viagra.com or call (888) 4-VIAGRA (484-2472).**

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PREVENTION

What Every Court-Sports Jock Needs to Know

STAY ALIGNED
"Adequate knee flexion, or bend, is key to preventing injuries," says Phoenix Suns guard and MJ Mind & Body columnist Steve Nash. "Train and move with your knees bent to improve quadriceps and glute strength, and to improve the absorption of vertical forces. One strategy to achieve this is to ensure good weight transfer in all movements — i.e., getting the center of mass (approximately the belly button) over your feet. You also need to make sure your VMO (muscle above and to the inside of the kneecap) has adequate strength and timing (should fire before the other quads). Complement timing and strength drills" (like the workout to the right).

MOVE WITH PURPOSE
"Make every movement with a purpose," Nash says. "The knee joint does not tolerate rotation well; therefore, the forces must be taken up at the hip and foot and ankle. Ensure all movements are made with a focus on getting the kneecap over the second toe — this is the all-important 'neutral' alignment of the knee joint, which will allow you to respond and absorb unexpected forces safely and maximize explosiveness."

STRETCH QUADRICEPS
Court sports are all about quick deceleration, which stresses your quadriceps. This is why a quad stretch (below) is key. Hold for 20 seconds; repeat with the other leg. If you can't complete while standing, lie on the ground, but standing improves balance.

GARRETT W. ELLWOOD/NBAE/GETTY IMAGES

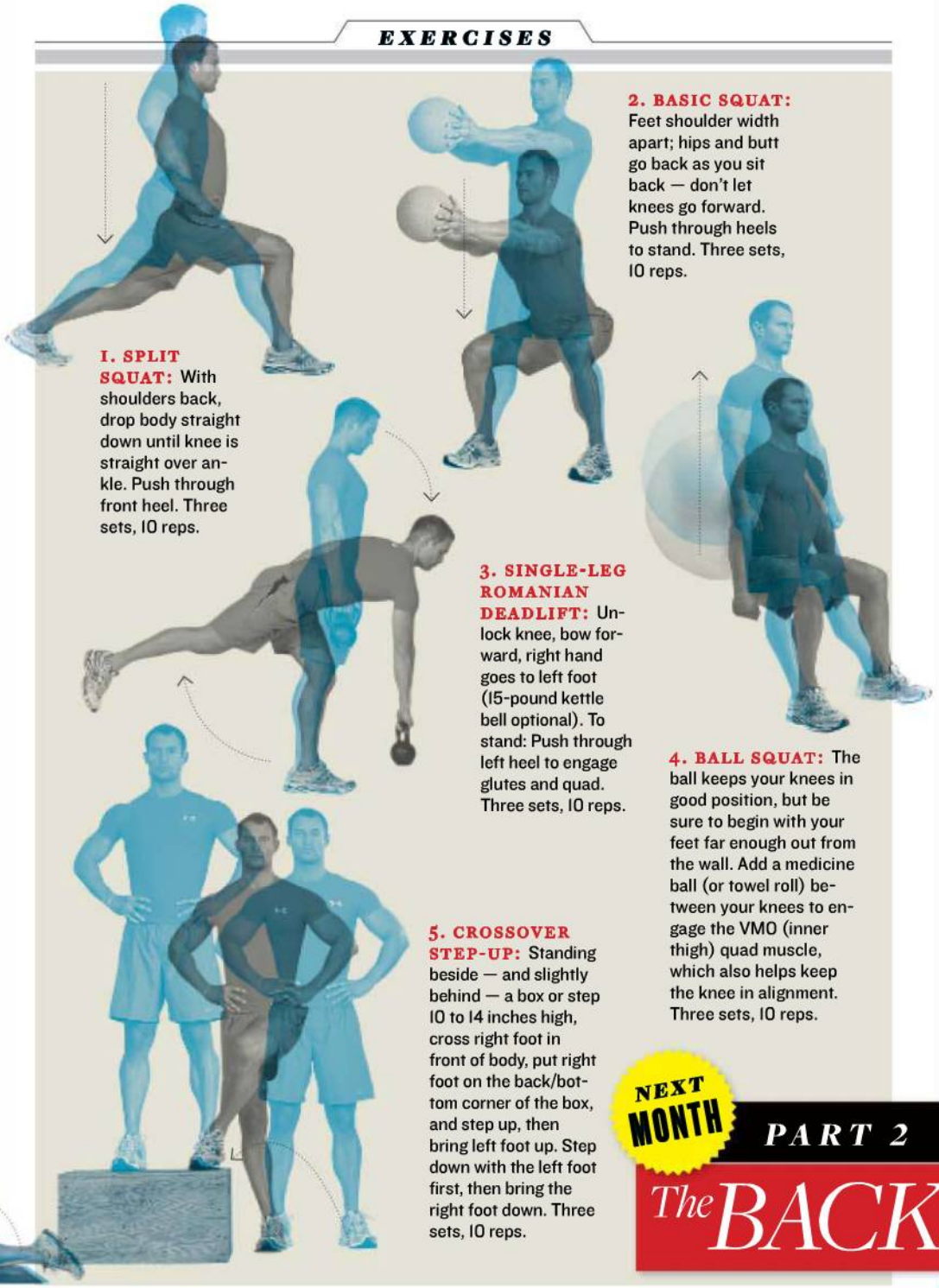
PREVENTION

The Complete Knee Workout

This 15-minute routine will help prevent a first-time injury or a reinjury of old damage by strengthening the muscles around the knee and improving stability.

NEARLY ALL KNEE INJURIES ARE THE RESULT of weak muscles surrounding the joint. Strong glutes (your butt), hamstrings (the big muscles between your butt and knee), and quadriceps (your thigh muscles) will protect you. But it's not all about strength. These exercises, done a few times a week, will help build muscle while also developing the stability you need to play hard.

EXERCISES



1. SPLIT SQUAT: With shoulders back, drop body straight down until knee is straight over ankle. Push through front heel. Three sets, 10 reps.

2. BASIC SQUAT: Feet shoulder width apart; hips and butt go back as you sit back — don't let knees go forward. Push through heels to stand. Three sets, 10 reps.

3. SINGLE-LEG ROMANIAN DEADLIFT: Unlock knee, bow forward, right hand goes to left foot (15-pound kettle bell optional). To stand: Push through left heel to engage glutes and quad. Three sets, 10 reps.

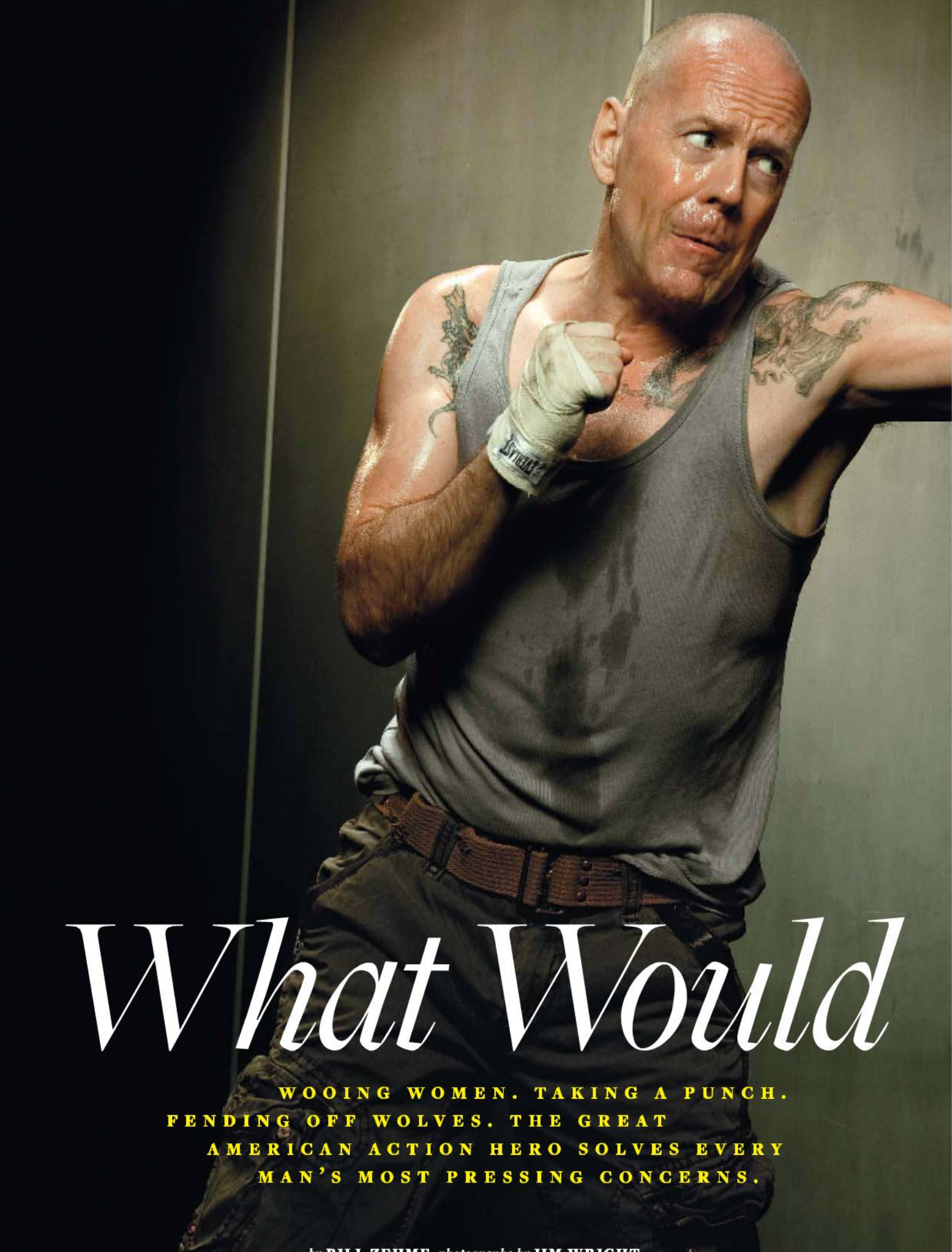
4. BALL SQUAT: The ball keeps your knees in good position, but be sure to begin with your feet far enough out from the wall. Add a medicine ball (or towel roll) between your knees to engage the VMO (inner thigh) quad muscle, which also helps keep the knee in alignment. Three sets, 10 reps.

5. CROSSOVER STEP-UP: Standing beside — and slightly behind — a box or step 10 to 14 inches high, cross right foot in front of body, put right foot on the back/bottom corner of the box, and step up, then bring left foot up. Step down with the left foot first, then bring the right foot down. Three sets, 10 reps.

NEXT MONTH PART 2 The BACK

WORKOUT PROVIDED BY ATHLETIC TRAINER AND PERFORMANCE SPECIALIST GENE SCHAFER OF ARC ATHLETICS IN NEW YORK CITY [*ARCATHLETICS.COM*].

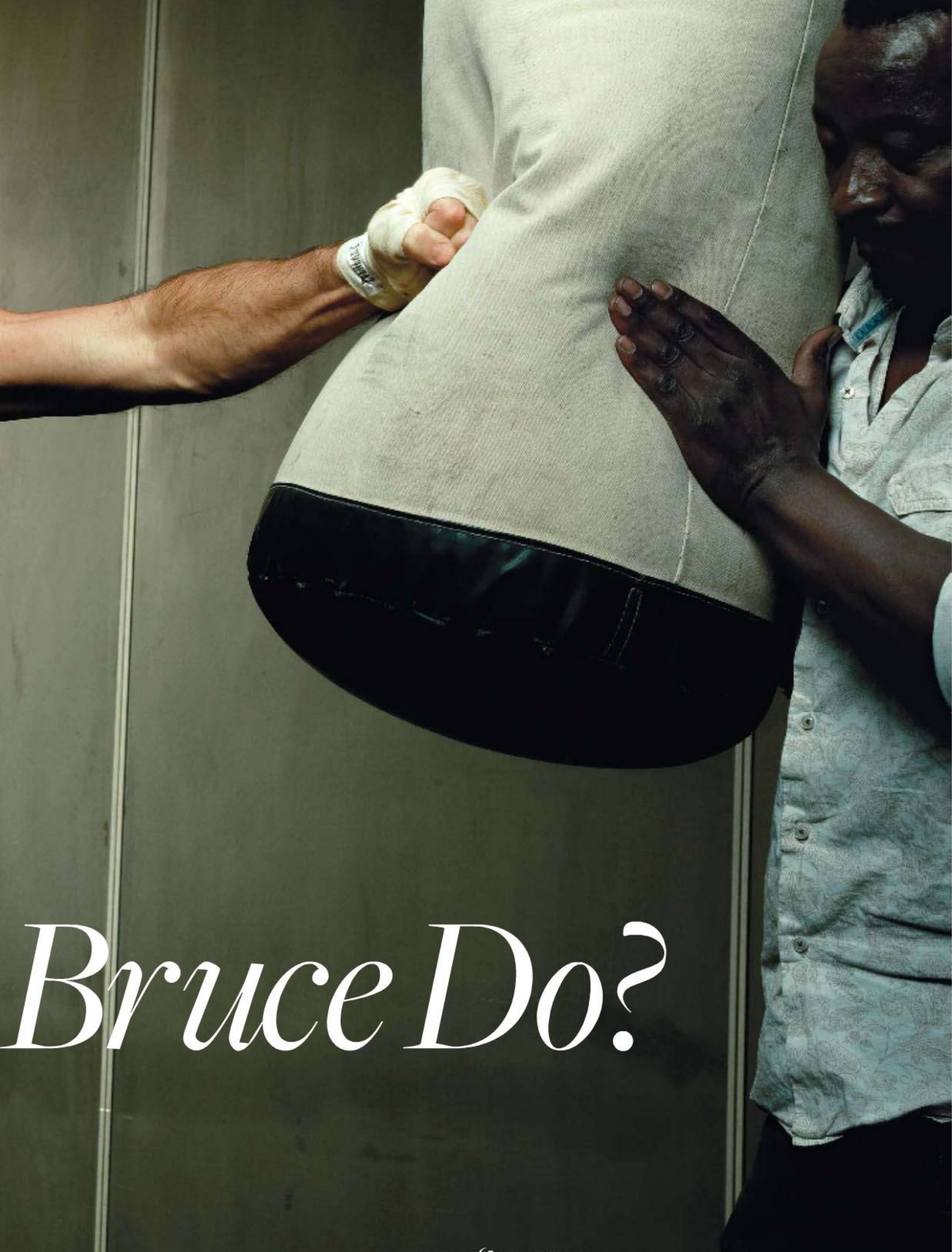
photographs by **Justin Steele**



What Would

WOOING WOMEN. TAKING A PUNCH. FENDING OFF WOLVES. THE GREAT AMERICAN ACTION HERO SOLVES EVERY MAN'S MOST PRESSING CONCERNS.

by BILL ZEHME photographs by JIM WRIGHT



Bruce Do?

I question all of it," he says of life itself just before he begins trying to save mankind (for you) one more goddamned time. "You can bet on me," he will tell you, curling up that golden smirk. But he does reassure for a living, this Walter B. Willis — a man who goes by his middle name, and, frankly, can you blame him? He has endured exultantly at the forefront of Reliable Everymen who step up to cataclysm at a theater near you (lately, less cataclysmically in Kevin Smith's comedy caper *Cop Out*). "I'm kind of a trademark now," he says with belief and disbelief. And then: "If I had ever caught me saying that about myself before, I'd go, 'Shut the fuck up.'" He is a man who answers his every thought with a second thought, and then a third, ad infinitum; they stack up fast and frenetic. "I'm a tangential thinker," he apologizes. "I'm not sure if I've ever come to any conclusion." ¶ Well, he does, and did — if eventually — during a long, twisting soul purge one cold afternoon at a Beverly Hills Hotel bungalow. This day, the youngest of his three colorfully named daughters — famously they are Tallulah, 16; Scout, 18; and Rumer, 21 — has been beset by flu, which inflames her father's vigilance. He takes microbreaks to field sickbed-status texts sent from the nearby home of her mother, Demi Moore, between calls to a doctor friend and to his new bride, Emma Heming. (Sample news flash: "Ohh! A Tallulah update: 'Feeling much better. Temp dropped two degrees, consuming food.' Okay, good, good. 'Giving her Tylenol, fluids. Holding off for now on Tama—' It's T-a-m-i-f-l-u. I correct people's spelling all the time. I try not to. It's a nervous tic.") And so reels the electric Bruce-brain fast approaching its 55th year of minutiae management — "I'm a compendium of useless information," he demurs, quite unnecessarily. "We're just slouching toward wisdom here." Never mind that his posture is plenty damned erect, thank you.

WHAT NEW ENLIGHTENMENT AWAITS A MAN IN THE MIDDLE OF HIS SIXTH DECADE?

These days I find that I'm in a continual process of trying to come to terms with everything that I used to think I knew. In my 20s I thought I knew exactly how the world worked. And in my 30s, I had to rethink it. Forties, same rethink all over again — as in, *man, was I wronnng*. Now I realize I was never right. There are things that you have to accept about yourself — limitations, old instincts and patterns — which is a very, very liberating kind of revelation. But you can't teach that or give it to someone. We all just have to get there.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF OWNING YOUR MISTAKES?

I don't think you learn that much from being right. Or from catching a break. I doubt myself on a regular basis. I now enjoy the language caveat: "I'll tell you what I think, but I'm prepared to be wrong." And being wrong is such a good icebreaker, too: "I was wrong about so many things...." Philosophically, karma-wise, you can say that your mistakes are part of your path in life or exactly what you're supposed to be doing this time around on Earth. *But I may be wrong.*

WHERE DOES THE CONCEPT OF FATE BELONG IN A MAN'S LIFE?

Here is why you can't ever have any regrets or spend time thinking about "if onlys": You can't pull a thread out of the rug without the weave coming loose somewhere over on the other side. Then the whole rug falls apart when it's still a work in progress. Only now can I look back at how I first got hired on *Moonlighting* and say, "Well, if I hadn't been with *that* girl and if I hadn't finished *that* play," etc. — all these things combined to get me out here at just the right moment. Because it was the last week they were seeing actors after they'd already seen 3,000. The whole "meant to be" thing, it's beyond my "comprenshun," as we say in South Jersey. Same deal with love: What if you didn't get on the bus and sit across from that girl who's supposed to be the love of your life? What if you get off the bus before she gets on? I think you've got to forget about the bus, and just know that you're always on the bus, and we really don't have that much to say about it.

WHAT IS THE SECRET TO BREAKING PATTERNS OF OUR OWN IDIOTIC BEHAVIOR?

I'm a big fan of the mentality: "If a man doesn't remember his own history, he's destined to repeat it." Always in wars and in romance, it happens. And, man, I have repeated myself way too many times not to pay attention. I finally addressed my history the really hard way. I just stopped, literally. I took time off from all relationships and said, "There is no way I can fuck it up any more than I have. There is no way I can really ever count on someone of the opposite sex, or anyone, to make me happy if I can't make myself happy."

AFTER A MAN HAS SOURED ON LOVE, HOW DOES HE FIND IT AGAIN?

I was past soured. I turned my back on love. It ended up being four years. Now, there was some interaction with other women, but I was straight right away: "Even if we get along great, it is not going to become anything. So just get all your hopes and dreams out of the way and let's just have a good time tonight." So my stance was to just keep saying no. But I did know that you're unlikely to find your next wife — or any partner — in a nightclub or in a bar. Or doing drugs. That is a different world. It's like looking for water in the desert when the ocean is almost in front of you. Because I never really decided to open myself up — and there it was. I married someone I had already known for three years from working out at the same gym. That doesn't happen very often. Is that Zen? Or was it just dumb luck?

HOW DOES A MAN KNOW WHEN HE IS IN LOVE?

I can look at how I interact with my kids and say, "This is love. I know what it is. I got it." I would step in front of a car for them. I'd do it for my wife now. I'd probably still do it for my ex-wife. I've peeled every layer off and come to the bright core: It's just a light. It's when you can put someone else's welfare ahead of yours. When you say, "You

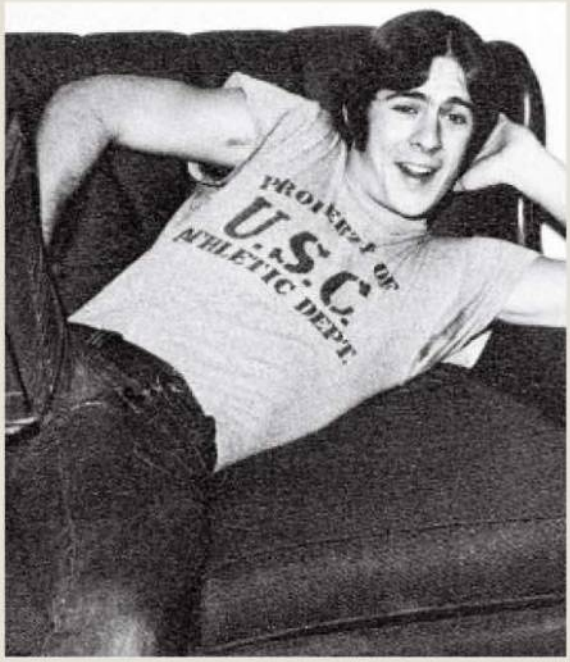
eat first, you go first, you do whatever first. I'm good." It's not a sacrifice. Last year — the year I got married — I was with Emma every single day except for one. Sleeping together and waking up together. Every day. If you knew me at all in my past, that's a fucking miracle.

HOW DOES A MAN MAINTAIN A RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS EX-WIFE?

I was getting something out of it. You can't spend a decade with someone and raise kids with her and come away unfeeling. I just put my head down and said, "The kids come first. And we'll do whatever it takes and maybe even laugh about it." You can fall in love again and bring another person into it, and if everybody is okay with it — and you're not just faking it — we all win. Mr. K and everybody involved should also get credit for the synthesis of this. It's not like you're standing there going, "I hate this guy, he's a dick, this is so painful, this is so uncomfortable for *meeeeeee*." Once you start putting the kids first, it isn't uncomfortable. Bravery is stupid a lot of times, but there's nothing stupid about this particular subject.

WHEN IS IT ACCEPTABLE TO TELL A LIE?

Little babies learn to lie before they can speak; they'll cry or act like they're hurt in order to get what they want. Gorillas have indicated lying to keep peace among the gorilla family. You can explain away lying, or not telling the truth, or shading the truth, or putting some spin on the truth, so you don't hurt someone. But, really, what's the truth? It's hard to tell the truth about yourself. What you can learn to live with is the mark of your character. What you can tell about yourself that is true without having to make up a cover story is the mark of where you set yourself in the world. Not that every truth teller wins. Look at what happened to Jesus.



JERSEY BOY In 1973, his senior year at Penns Grove High. He was student council president.

WHAT IS A MAN'S MOST DEPENDABLE LIQUID INTOXICANT?

I'm a master at this topic from my early bartending years. The only answer: anything with vodka. I remember regularly seeing guys who drank brown alcohol — the nicest guys — become a mess. Next thing you knew two big guys had their arms and were sending them outside with the warning not to come back for two weeks. Brown brought on the madness. I had a long year when I developed a taste for Armagnac. I would get up in the morning, and my daughter Scout was old enough to know that I was pouring a little Armagnac into my coffee. I'd say [*whispering*], "Just a little medicine in the coffee." And she'd give me a look. She still quotes me — "a little medicine in the coffee..."

WHY DO MEN TRY TO FIX THINGS WITHOUT CONSULTING A MANUAL?

I am a hands-on guy. Just today I was fooling around with the air-conditioning at home, doing it myself without a manual. I descend from a long line of mechanics. Every one of my uncles had at least one part of a digit on their hands missing, from working on car engines or welding or various things. My dad almost had the tip of one of his fingers cut off by a lawn mower. But it was all in the name of solving problems. No manual for the heating regulator? Let me see for myself — I can figure this out. And, while it's hard to say this without sounding patronizing, I think women want to talk *through* the problem. That's not a bad thing. But we just want to fix it fast, so you don't have to worry about it. No matter what it takes. I tell ya, if I ever get out of this acting racket, I'm going to go be Dr. Phil's competition. Except I would be the alpha-dog side and tell you how to kill a wolf with your bare hands.

HOW DOES A MAN GO ABOUT KILLING A WOLF WITH HIS BARE HANDS?

Okay, it may never come up. You may never need it, but that one time when you're confronted with that big wolf, this is how you do it. You've got to give the wolf your arm. You've got to lean into it. Stick your arm all the way down his throat. He can't swallow it because he's gagging on your arm. You reach in; you grab a handful of something — guts, the back of his throat, whatever you can hold — and pull it out. And try to avoid those claws while you're doing it.

WHEN IS A MAN BEST SUITED TO BECOME A FATHER?

I don't think I would have had a clue about what to do with kids in my 20s. Back then, I didn't want to be around kids or anyone else's kids. I was busy trying to get this career thing going. I would've been that guy asking, "How am I going to pay for this? Does it all really end now?" For women there's a whole different psychology attached. They start glowing immediately. When Rumer was born, I was 33. The baby was a surprise. But by that age I was really into it, like: "Let's *go*! This is great!" I can say this after having three kids and being at four other births: I was right in there — delivering them, pulling the babies out, laughing, crying. Twenty-five people were in the room — sanitary hospital conditions set aside for the fact that we wanted to share this with all our friends. Demi wanted no drugs. She had the power of 10 men — almost snapped off two of my fingers squeezing them so hard. I went, "Go ahead, break them off. It doesn't matter."

WHICH ESSENTIAL LESSON MUST A FATHER PASS ALONG TO HIS CHILDREN?

You've got to hope that you've sent them into the world with enough information and ammunition to be able to fight for themselves. You don't want your daddy fighting your battles. Rumer worked at a Marc Jacobs store while she was figuring out what she wanted to do. She found out that she had an aptitude for acting, and right away she came back to us and said, "I know you could help me, but I want to either fail or make it on my own without ever thinking that you did something for me." I said, "All right, God bless you, that's great." She abandoned the lifeline. She did the hard thing first — which has always been a sign of character in my book.

WHAT DO WOMEN KNOW ABOUT US THAT WE NEVER KNOW ABOUT OURSELVES?

Forget "about us" — they know things in general, instinctively. Women can see through their own guy's shit better than anybody can. And

PREVIOUS SPREAD: STYLING BY LORI STILSON-ARMSTRONG. GROOMING BY HELEN ROBERTSON FOR SMASHBOX BEAUTY/CELESTINEAGENCY.COM. PROP STYLING BY MUNGAI NGUKU. WILLIS WEARS A TANK BY JAMES PERSE AND PANTS BY JET LAG. THIS PAGE: SETH POPPEL/YEARBOOK LIBRARY

really quick. A woman can size up another woman in about 30 seconds. Just tell her, "I like that woman." *Slut.* I go, "How do you get that? Already?" *She's fucking everything that moves.* And they are right all the time. Dead right. They are working on a wavelength that men could never get to.

HOW CAN A MAN DISARM A WOMAN MOST EFFECTIVELY?

I've always gone for laughter. Not only to disarm, but to try to charm. Entertain them. But don't make a big deal about it. The one that I like the best is to very quietly lean in and say something really goofy to make them burst out laughing so snot comes out of their nose and they are slobbering and going, "Oh, my God, I can't believe you just said that!" It can throw 'em off the track of thinking you're predictable — at least for a few minutes. I will reduce myself to utter foolishness to keep my wife laughing. Here's one just about every guy can pull off: Take a drink of water when they're not looking, then wait until they ask you a question and just start talking and let water dribble out of your mouth. Guaranteed to get a laugh. You can't go wrong.

HOW CAN A MAN AVOID IRRITATING THE WOMAN WITH WHOM HE LIVES?

You could say, "I didn't leave that toilet seat up, must be someone else," but then you've got to tell that lie and you've got to remember your lies. I volunteer things I don't even have to, like: "Here is something I didn't tell you, but I just need you to know — for two days while you weren't here, I reverted to my caveman mind and left the toilet seat up the whole time." The truth is so easy.

HOW DOES FAME CHANGE A MAN?

It's like alcohol. Whatever you are, it's going to make you more of that. Being famous, there really is a lot of illusion to it. It's not the same as being successful. It's a candy store and you can always choose when you want to get off the ride of your life. I think I'm still on it. I don't think I've ever got to the point where I go, "It's time to really start looking for something else to do." I'm still digging it. But if I could tend bar during the day and do low-rent theater every night, I'd still be really happy.

HOW DOES A MAN BENEFIT FROM ESCAPE IN HIS LIFE?

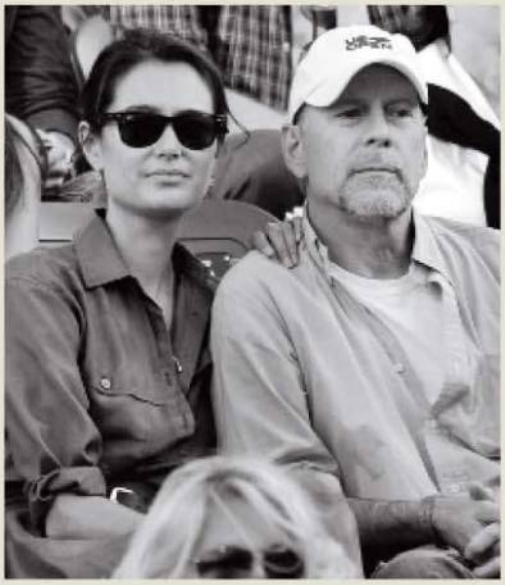
I don't think that I can ever say that I made the choice to live in Sun Valley, but it was an idea that I had because Demi and I were becoming really famous and I said, "Ya know, what if we go to Idaho and live there for a while?" We ended up staying for almost 12 years. And becoming really invested in this little town of Hailey. Great town. I'd get the dogs and go outside and play in the river and mountains. And now I've got a place in Turks and Caicos. It's tough to beat. I've been a lot of places and that one — if there's something else that's calmer, I don't know what it is. Nobody comes up and hassles me. They don't ask me for anything. I'm not compelled to be the big prize bull.

WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO TAKE A PUNCH?

Try to protect your temples — because that's a knockout punch. So is the button, on the chin, so keep it tucked down into the chest. But mainly just try with every ounce of strength you have not to fight. It took me a long time to understand that a lot of guys wanted to be the guy who kicked John McClane's ass. And it's really difficult to explain to someone who has been overserved, "No, I'm *not* that guy." Not that he isn't in here somewhere.

WHAT'S THE BEST WAY FOR A MAN TO HANDLE ANGER?

I allow myself a very short window to be angry. I've been fairly successful in trying to pass that on to my kids. Tallulah is the latest recipient of that little piece of knowledge. Here's an example: "Okay, I know you're mad right now. But, by and large, it's a useless emotion. I'll give you about five minutes. You can be as angry as you want. Bust up the joint. Throw things around, but after that you've just got to accept it, move on, and try to learn from it." That's older-man wisdom. You do have a shorter fuse when you're younger. The hardest thing I had to get over was holding grudges. Now I let them go. But there are two or three big ones that I set in concrete when I was younger that I don't think will ever go away. If it comes up, I go, "Ehhh, I don't think I'll ever speak to that person again in this lifetime." Then I move on. Because it has no meaning or impact on my life now. I've gotten past it and I've survived.



NEW LOVE At the 2009 U.S. Open with Emma Heming, whom he married last year

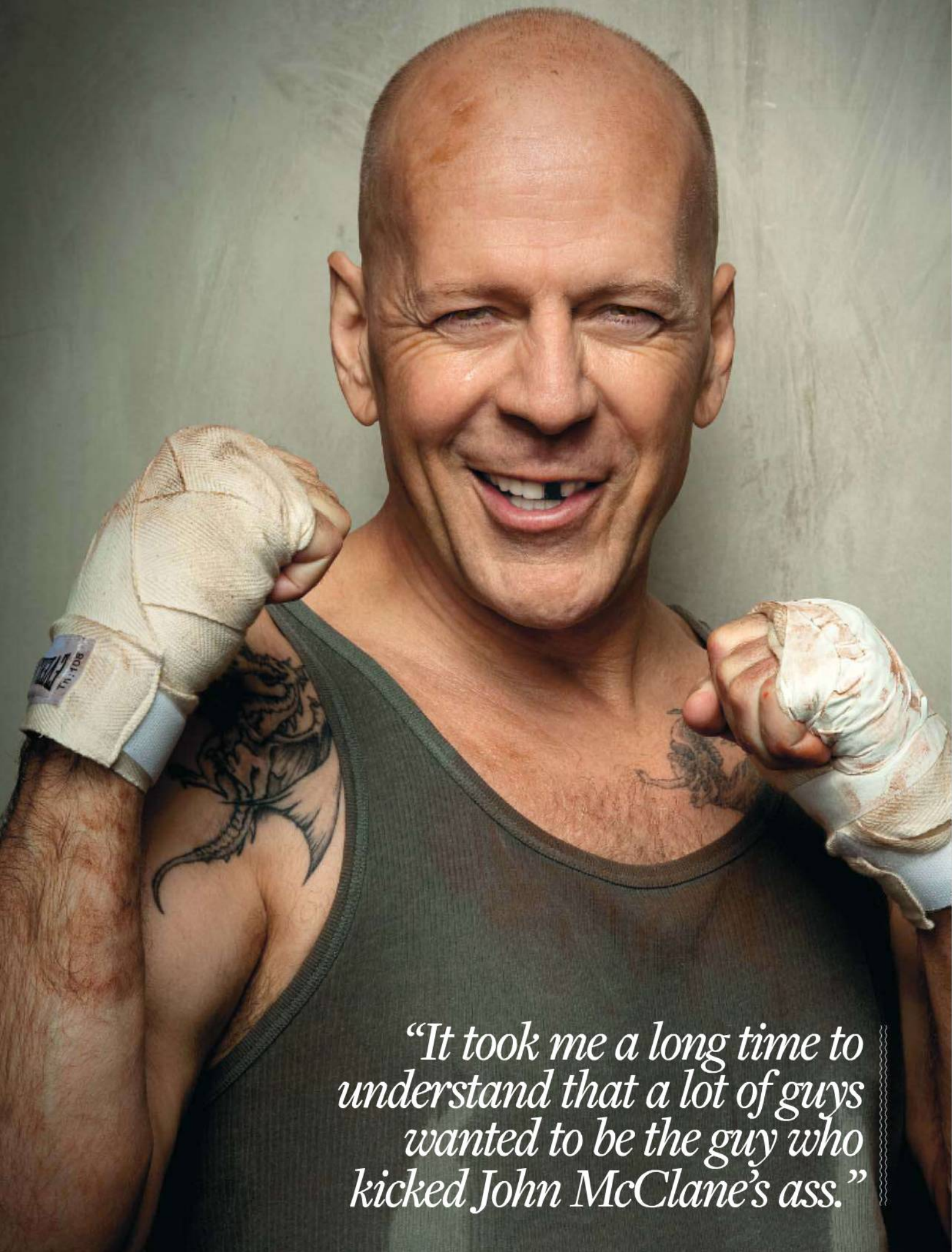
HOW SHOULD A MAN'S MORTALITY FIGURE IN TO HIS EVERYDAY LIFE?

There is nothing to say about our own mortality except that you can hurry it along a little bit. You have that option. You can drink every day of your life. And take drugs every day of your life. I'd rather smell somebody else smoking weed on the street than smoke weed myself anymore. I drink far more water than I drink alcohol anymore. Whenever I'm in the company of someone who used to do this drug that makes you run off to the bathroom to do it, I'm reminded of how often I get up to pee now. And I go, "Oh, my God, I wonder if somebody thinks I'm doing blow in there." Until you have kids, you are not aware of your own mortality. They are little living calendars, and you know that while time is passing for them, it's passing for you. I wonder whether science or medicine can get us to 100 in this lifetime. Because if I can feel as good at 100 as I feel now and still run, still work out, still eat, drink, fuck — all the things that I am still capable of doing really well and enjoying — then all bets are off. So just wash your hands three or four times a day, and cough into the crook of your elbow instead of into your hands. Extending that life span has to start somewhere. Also, I will do everything in my power to not go under the knife. That way lies the acceleration of your death.

HOW DOES A MAN REMIND HIMSELF TO LIVE IN THE MOMENT?

I'm glad we're talkin' about this. Embrace your death. Make friends with it. Know it's out there. Tickle it under the chin, and just know that it's coming. And not in a bad or morbid way — or an "Oh, God, I'm going to die someday" way — but use it as motivation. Use it as an impetus to get everything you want to do in this lifetime done before you die. I was raised in a generation that was saving money for a rainy day: "Don't do anything too rash while you're young; save it all for when you're older." Well, I think it's rainin' right now. I think live it up.

TIMOTHY A. CLARK/AFP/GETTY IMAGES


"It took me a long time to understand that a lot of guys wanted to be the guy who kicked John McClane's ass."

OUT OF THE ABYSS
Jimmy Chin, 800 feet above Low's Gully, with about 1,500 feet to go to reach the summit of the Donkey's Ears

Men's Journal EXPEDITION

BORNEO'S FORBIDDEN CHASM

Climbing's elite headed to the jungle island in search of a bold way to the top of Mount Kinabalu. They had no idea how hard it would be just to find the bottom.

by **MARK SYNNOTT** *photographs by* **JIMMY CHIN**

"WHERE'S YOUR HELMET?"

"Uh, I don't have one," Alex replies, looking me square in the eye, without apology.

"What do you mean? You forgot it back in camp?"

Before I finish my question, I know the answer.

"Uh, no. I mean I didn't bring one on the trip."

"*Intentionally?*"

"Sort of."

We haven't even begun our ascent of the 2,500-foot face that rises out of the depths of Low's Gully in northern Borneo, and it's already clear that sharing a rope with Alex Honnold will test all the habits I've accumulated over a 25-year climbing career. I counted on this, of course — it's why I invited him. I didn't, however, foresee being cast as the overly cautious authority figure or that Alex would decide all on his own that my expedition was helmet-optional.

Three days in and he's already dubbed me "Mr. Safety."

Honnold has turned the sport of rock climbing upside down with a series of free-solo — or ropeless — ascents so far beyond the realm of what was considered possible (or sane) that people at first didn't believe him. Many are calling the 23-year-old the best climber of his generation, and they may well be right. He's certainly one of the boldest climbers I've ever met, but to Honnold, and most people who take extreme risks for a living, the idea of a small slip is totally abstract. I'm guessing that he hasn't given quite as much thought as I have to little things like getting hit by a rock while not wearing a helmet.

I watch as Honnold grabs onto his first handhold and starts up the pitch. I'm immediately struck by the way he moves — fast and confident. The pitch culminates with a large roof that forces him to hoist himself up using the protection he's placed into the cliff instead of the rock itself, but he does it while hanging by his arms only, ascending pull-up style. I call up to offer some advice on making it easier. He's laughing. "I want to do it the hard way," he yells back. "So I can get more of a workout."

I can't help but recall the times in my own climbing career when I'd bend over backward to make my life as difficult as possible, just for the hell of it. Obviously, I still have a little of this inside me or I never would have talked four other guys into rappelling into the world's deepest slot canyon, just to climb back out. But, at 40 — and as a father of three — I've gained some valuable perspective. Watching Honnold as he reaches the first belay is a stark reminder of how much I've reeled things in.

The next pitch is my lead. As I'm getting into a good rhythm, I look up to find several big, loose rocks blocking my path. I'd like to avoid them, but the walls on either side are crackless and covered in lichen. I feel around for handholds, but they're worthless. Honnold is shouting up at me, telling me to just go for

PREVIOUS SPREAD: MARK SYNNOTT. MAP BY HAISAM

UP THROUGH THE JUNGLE The author enjoys the relatively easygoing tourist trail before having to set up base camp on a precarious ridge above Low's Gully. Opposite page: Luggage is divvied up in Kota Kinabalu.

it and climb around them without inserting a new piece of gear into the rock to protect against a potential fall. My gut tells me that if I do that, I'll *definitely* fall. So I carefully slide a small camming unit into a tiny crack at the base of the block, then give it a little tug.

Bad idea. The block shifts and a basketball-size chunk comes loose, slamming into my shoulder as it rockets down toward Honnold at the belay.

"*Rock!*" I yell. Honnold nonchalantly leans to the side, and the rock sails safely past him, then explodes into the base of the gully 200 feet below.

My body is shaking with adrenaline as I inspect the damage. The rock tore through my jacket and two shirts. In all my years of big-wall climbing, it's the first time I've pulled a big block onto myself, and for a brief moment I wonder if playing it safe means losing my edge. Honnold and I share a look, but nothing is said.

BEFORE I LANDED IN KOTA KINABALU — OR KK, AS THE locals call it — my idea of Borneo was pretty much the common caricature: a primitive jungle island crawling with hungry cannibals with bones stuck through their noses. To the rest of Asia, it's actually a popular beach-vacation destination, and while cannibals do still exist in the country's most remote pockets, every year hundreds of tourists, mostly from Japan, trek to the summit of the very mountain we came to climb. But at 13,500 feet, Mount Kinabalu is one of the tallest in Southeast Asia, and there's another, far more forbidding side to it: Low's Gully is a deep, 10-mile-long rift that slices into Kinabalu's north face, having been scooped out by massive glaciers 10,000 years ago. It is also prone to devastating flash floods and known to the local Kadazandusuns as the "revered place of the dead."

As a starving professional climber, I rely entirely on sponsors like the North Face to fund my expeditions; the more bizarre the proposition, the more likely the funding. Borneo, I thought, was sure to be hiding one of these rare gems, and research immediately pointed me toward Mount Kinabalu. But info on the gully itself ranged from nonexistent to downright scary.

I soon learned that only three parties had ever successfully descended Low's Gully, and the first to try it, a 10-man British Army expedition back in 1994, turned what was supposed to be a six-day training exercise into a 31-day fight for survival. The epic is documented in a book called *Descent Into Chaos*. "Back in Kevin's cave, morale sank," the author writes. "Thoughts turned to loved ones at home who might never be seen again.... Of one thing, thankfully, they were not short, and that was water — one of the sources of their misfortune."

As far as I could tell, only three parties had ever climbed the sheer walls that rise out of its depths, and one spent a month just looking for the way down.

The first person I invited on the expedition was Conrad Anker, a fellow member of the North Face climbing team and arguably the most experienced and talented adventure climber in the world. At 47, with 44 expeditions behind him, Anker probably has the most finely tuned mountain sense of anyone I know. Anker, in turn, suggested we invite Honnold, and I have to admit that I was apprehensive at first. Over the years I've done just about all of my trips with older, more experienced guys, and I've always been wary of going on big expeditions with people I don't know. But Anker had just returned from climbing El Capitan with Honnold, where they had completed one of Yosemite's hardest free climbs, and he had been immediately seduced.

"Honnold could be our secret weapon," Anker suggested, selling him as a young, fearless gun to send out on the sharp end of the rope when we silverbacks are all tapped out and a tough pitch needs to be fired. "I guarantee you'll learn a lot from climbing with him." Anker has a well-deserved reputation for having a brutal and tireless work ethic in the mountains, and there aren't many who can hang with him. If nothing else I was curious to see what Anker saw in him.

Honnold's steep rise to fame began with what will probably go down in history as the best rookie season ever in Yosemite Valley. He kicked off his soloing binge with the 1,000-foot crack-climbing test piece known as Astroman, then the infamous Salathe Wall on El Capitan. As people were still trying to figure out where this kid had come from, he took things to another level altogether, with a free-solo ascent of Zion National Park's Moonlight Buttress — a 1,200-foot monolith rated 5.12d that culminates with a searing fingertip layback nearly 1,000 dizzying feet off the deck. Until then it was considered big news when someone made it with a rope; no one had ever free-soloed it. Some consider Honnold's climb the boldest ever.

TEAM BORNEO The crew had about 75 years of climbing experience among them, yet learned a lot from 23-year-old rookie Alex Honnold (above, third from left); Honnold uncoils a rope in preparation for the big climb out of Low's Gully (right).

Before all this, Honnold was an engineering student at the University of California–Berkeley. But college life didn't suit him, so he dropped out and moved into his car. I'd seen a photo of him and his van in *Climbing* magazine. The interior was spartan: some bins filled with climbing gear, a plywood bed, shelves filled with books — many about atheism. It was in this van that Honnold plotted his climbs and from which he suddenly emerged as the world's best free-soloist. But he'd never been on an expedition before.

Honnold was the first to arrive in Borneo, and when I showed up at the hotel at midnight, he was asleep. I sat down, popped open a bottle of duty-free vodka, and was just taking my first sip when he staggered out of his room in his boxers — lean, of average height, with

hassles of a five-member team in a foreign country, we had to sort out the permits to make the climb, which I hadn't been able to do before landing in the country. Because of the international press coverage (and inordinate cost) of the 1994 rescue, it's now almost impossible to get permission to go anywhere near the gully. Even by the time we arrived at the park entrance, we still didn't know if they'd allow our expedition to happen. We decided to wing it.

Finally, on the afternoon of our eighth day in Borneo, we set off from park headquarters with 20 local porters, with permission to "recon" the route. The trail was muddy and narrow, twisting and winding its way below waterfalls and along spiny ridges bordered with wind-stunted trees and colorful pitcher plants.

The porters led us up a steep and slippery slab toward a thin col between two rock pinnacles. Of course, the skies had waited until we arrived at this, the sketchiest section, to unleash on us. When Chin and I finally crested the col at sunset, after 6,000 feet of elevation gain from the trailhead, we found Anker and Honnold sitting next to our small mountain of luggage in the rain. There wasn't a lick of horizontal ground anywhere, and we were perched on the spine of a rocky ridge in a range famous for spectacular electrical storms. This was where we would spend our first night on the mountain.

The following morning, Anker and I got up early to start scouting for the descent route into the gully. When I was researching Low's Gully, I discovered that two other expeditions — British and Spanish — had done what we were attempting, and we had fragments of intel from those trip reports. Ten years earlier, the Spanish team spent two seasons pioneering a rappel route into the gully, then forging a line up a stunning big wall back out. The British followed shortly thereafter, with another new line on the same cliff, and we were hopeful that at least one of the expeditions had left behind anchor bolts from their rappel into the canyon. Nonetheless, finding two tiny steel bolts among the vast gray jumble of rock would still require a lot of luck.

As we scanned the ground, we hadn't realized that

THE GULLY TRANSFORMED INTO A RAGING RAPID. NOW THERE WAS NO WAY OUT BUT UP.

short black hair, his eyes deer-in-headlights huge. I offered him some vodka, but he declined, saying that he didn't drink. In fact, he'd never had a buzz of any kind, he admitted, apart from adrenaline. In the U.K., where he had recently spent a few weeks ticking off a slew of its hardest routes, they nicknamed him "the Monk."

The next day we were joined by the rest of the team: Anker, Jimmy Chin, and Kevin Thaw, all North Face climbers with whom I've shared more than a few epics. "I can't believe we're doing this again," a bemused Anker announced as he walked into the hotel.

"I CAN'T BELIEVE I'VE BEEN HERE FOR A WEEK, AND ALL I've done so far is pack and repack bags," complained Honnold during the three-hour drive to the park entrance.

"Get used to it, Alex," replied Anker, matter-of-factly. We'd been festering in the tropical heat for seven days, and Honnold, in particular, was starting to lose it. In addition to the usual logistical

the upper reaches of the cliff we came to climb had been revealed across the misty 1,000-foot gap. We stood face-to-face with our wall, its spire rising like something out of a Tolkien story from deep inside the seemingly bottomless chasm. It was a clean, unbroken, 2,500-foot sweep of golden-orange granite, streaked with tiger stripes of white, green, and black. Meanwhile, Anker remained tuned in to our surroundings. "Got it!" he yelled, from a small ledge hundreds of feet below.

For the next two hours, we slowly worked our way into the abyss. At one point we touched down on a small patch of hanging jungle, which we had to bushwhack across. It had been eight years since anyone had stepped foot on this ledge, but within seconds Anker unearthed an old trail, which led right to the next set of bolts. I had anticipated that the descent into the gully would take a couple of days, but with Anker in the lead, we had it sussed out in less than three hours.

(continued on page 102)

STRONGEST
AN
300

Ladies & Gentlemen

A SIGHT TO BEHOLD

THE WORLD'S FOURTH STRONGEST MAN

A PHYSICAL SPECIMEN

CAPABLE OF PULLING A

30-TON FIRE ENGINE

DEADLIFTING AN ASTOUNDING

905

POUNDS

OVERCOMING

A Traumatic Childhood

AND

DEVASTATING INJURIES

HE IS SINGLE-MINDED IN HIS QUEST

TO CLAIM THE WORLD TITLE

Presenting the one and only

DEREK POUNDSTONE

BY PAUL SOLOTAROFF

PHOTOGRAPH BY HUGH KRETSCHMER

All right, stop already: Just stop right now, before someone gets badly hurt. There's 800 pounds on that Olympic bar, and he says he's going to jerk it from the floor to his navel — the equivalent of hoisting a Porsche Boxster by its fender — 10 times without stopping? Sure, no one's pulled that much weight for that many reps, but is that any reason to risk life and limb in a ramshackle gym in Connecticut? How many blown discs and torn pectorals does Derek Poundstone need before he finally starts paying heed to the laws of physics?

One rep... Two reps... Three...

Right. Well, those looked easy, but then again, they should: He's deadlifted a single rep of 905 and racked up countless records on his march to power as America's strongest man. Still, why crapshoot with his lumbar spine weeks before the event he's trained a lifetime for, the World's Strongest Man show in Malta? Now is when he should be taking it soft, doing just enough to keep his quadriceps firing, which is no small thing when you stand 6-foot-1 and weigh an art-carved 330. So vast are his thighs, those 34-inch turbines, that he spends hundreds of dollars on custom-made jeans that won't burst at the seams when he sits down. The town of Naugatuck, Connecticut, where the 28-year-old Poundstone is a cop, had to retrofit one of its new cruisers to accommodate his mass, moving the console over a foot and pushing back the bulletproof panel.

DAY JOB Five years ago, he started his other passion: police work.

Four reps... five reps... six...

Fine, whatever. It's Poundstone's funeral if he strokes out or shreds his sacrum — all in the service of breaking an obscure world mark so he can post a clip online. (That's his girlfriend, Kristin Nelson, behind the videocam, egging him on with hoarse shouts.) He's built such a following with filmed feats of strength that YouTube offered him his own channel, the better to commune with the tens of thousands of fans buzzing about America's Samson. For decades, his sport has been owned by Eastern Europe, by double-bellied farm boys from Vilnius and Krakow with names that read like an eye chart. Then here comes Poundstone, big, blond, and ripped, and the promoters of strength tournaments beat a path to his door, sensing a breakthrough star. They've sold him as the next great champion, the guy to wrest the cloud-crown of Strongest Ever from the clutches of the current dynastic champ, the scowling five-time winner Mariusz Pudzianowski. But first he has to get to Malta in one piece, and a stunt like this sure isn't helping—

Seven reps... eight reps... *grrrrrarrr*!

Ah, see, now he's hurting as he hitches the bar, his face turning cyanotic shades of blue and his lower back barking in protest. Three years ago, lifting this very amount, he collapsed to the floor in agony, having crushed two discs and the myelin sheath that wraps the spinal cord. Blood poured into his spinal column, where sepsis can brew and cripple patients by choking off the nerves. But three weeks later he crawled out of bed and set a weight-class record for his age, benching 437 just to stay in shape while his spine inexplicably healed itself, wicking away the blood with such cellular speed that scar tissue had no chance to roost. He did come out of it with chronic inflammation and a back that shuts down twice a year, but pain rolls off him like perspiration; he gives it no lodging or credit.

Months afterward, for example, he ripped a pectoral in half while doing a maximum bench, leaving a tear so big the bruise ran from his sternum all the way out to his elbow. The following week, though, he entered the Arnold Strongman Classic, America's premier strength event, and took second against a monster field. No, physical oppression has never been his problem; it's the other kind, the psychic version, that beats him up at night. The world title lost to Pudzianowski in 2008 when he dropped the final stone; the crass backstabbing of his fellow strongmen, who resent the endorsements that Poundstone's gotten; the father who drove off on him, drunk and war-crazed, leaving him homeless as a kid — these are the things that grind him at 3 AM, when there are no sports cars to lift and carry or jet planes to pull down a tarmac, or any other superhuman acts to stifle the ache of never fitting in or feeling at home. And so—

Nine reps!

The long bar bends and wobbles with plates while he hunts for a final rep. It's in there somewhere, masquerading as pain; all he has to do is find that mental lever before he faints or cracks vertebrae. Fight, he tells himself, fight for every inch, though he had a personal record two reps ago, and besides, who's keeping track? Who cares if he leaves the 10th rep off and walks away to lift another day? What difference could it make, to him or anyone else, if the limits of human endeavor stopped here?

Poundstone drops the bar with a *clung!* He stares through the camera, forlorn.

Oh. I see. That rep meant everything, the gulf between joy and grief. For him, there's no glory in the grand attempt. There's only strength — the triumph of will in action — and the weakness that everyone else calls *almost*.

PREVIOUS SPREAD: WARDROBE BY CHRISTINA KRETSCHMER. STYLING BY JOHN OLSON. PROP STYLING BY HUGH KRETSCHMER. GROOMING BY JANE CHOI FOR VIVIAN ARTISTS. TYPE ILLUSTRATION BY JESSICA HISCHE. THIS PAGE: COURTESY DEREK POUNDSTONE

IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN WITH US, THIS THIRST FOR POWER, man as self-constructed god. The Greeks worshiped strength and built pantheons to it, immortalized the mighty in odes. In the sixth century B.C., Milo of Kroton lifted and carried a full-grown ox from one end of a packed stadium to the other, then reputedly killed the beast bare-handed and devoured it on the spot. For decades, he dominated Olympic wrestling, and is said to have ended bouts by hurling his opponents clear over the wall of the arena. His successors were sung in gorgeous verse by the lyric poet Pindar, whose reports on their feats were widely read, making him the first star sports columnist. (Pindar, who was from Thebes, later wrote odes to the conquests of Sparta and Athens, making him the first hack sports columnist.) Ancient Egyptians vied to see who could press the biggest sand-filled bags overhead. The Vikings trained berserkers — bands of blood-crazed brutes — to drag, throw, or carry boulders and tree stumps while wearing as little as possible. Screaming down the mountain in wolf-skin loincloths and emitting their wild-boar shrieks, they must have looked and sounded like the young Ted Nugent doing "Wango Tango" at the Whiskey. Erik of Norway sensibly banned berserkers in A.D. 1015, but their dread exploits, like Nugent's body of work, haunt us to this day.

Strength obviously had its uses in martial cultures. The Norse were able to ravage much of northern Europe by deploying small gangs of raiders, not armies, and Hitler purportedly stoked his SS troops with the first generation of steroids. But muscle and its pursuit began thousands of years earlier as a path to enlightenment, not murder. The Greeks viewed their bodies as sacred gifts from the pumped-up gods they prayed to and deemed it their civic and moral duty to exalt the flesh through exercise. In India, where participants in the royal sport of *kushti*, or wrestling, trained with weighted clubs, strength was a dialogue you had with Krishna, the means to a rigorous soul. Muscle imposed order on the riot of nature, lent athletes the quaint but elegant notion that they had a hand in their fate. It also, presumably, got them laid, though Milo's booty list does not survive him.

Derek Poundstone was thinking exactly none of these things when he got his first weight set as a boy. He was a kid with a storehouse of nervous energy and the sense that he was born for big things, and every afternoon he came home from class and banged out the preacher curls. There wasn't much else in the way of diversion in his 'burb near Rapid City, South Dakota, and even in middle school, kids would stop and ask him if he wore shoulder pads under his jacket. "I wasn't trying for size or, at that point, girls," he says. "I just wanted to see if I could lift the whole stack, and by 14, I was toying with it."

The younger of two headstrong, mesomorph boys (his brother, Justin, two years older, is 6-foot-3 and a Ferrigno-esque 280), Poundstone grew up on overseas bases as the son of an Air Force sergeant. His father, a demolitions-removal expert, was dispatched for long stretches to do postbattle cleanup in Panama, Kuwait, and Iraq, and even when home had the grim reserve of a man who had seen bad things. Left to their own devices, the Poundstone boys ran amok in small-town Europe, jumping off rooftops onto trampolines, breaking into factories and empty houses, and setting stuff on fire in the driveway. "One night, after dinner, I heard this *whoomp* in the basement and went downstairs to check," says their mother, Colleen, who now lives in Newtown, Connecticut, a half-hour drive from Derek. "There were my boys, completely covered in soot after the gas can they'd messed with blew up." Having to hold a job to keep food on the table — "They ate me into the poorhouse, those two" — she minded their doings as best she could and kept her fingers crossed. "I had a feeling one or both of them would be famous someday," she says, "provided they didn't kill themselves first."

HUMAN JACK At the '09 World's Strongest Man event, Poundstone deadlifted a Mitsubishi Lancer nine times.

COURTESY ROSANAGH ROBERTSON

Though the brothers were recruited from middle school up for football and wrestling, Derek didn't have the animus needed to knock someone into next week. A clumsy kid who had trouble making friends and paying attention in class, he spent most of his childhood on the outside looking in, even after moving back to the States and settling in South Dakota. At 15, however, he joined the Y in town and felt instantly at home with the plates and pins. "I had no one to tell me what to do or how to do it, but my body just knew," he says. "It's like I was born for one thing only: to move weight and push the limit of what's been done." Besides his genetic favors — the wrists and ankles of a blacksmith; the short-strand fibers in his arms and chest, which left him less susceptible to tendon tears — he noticed an odd quirk of personality: He was utterly indifferent to pain. Oh, he felt it, all right, the singe of lactic acid when he powered past failure doing hammers. He just didn't care that his arms were screaming; he knew they had two reps left. "Pain is a lie your brain tells your body 'cause it's scared and doesn't want to keep working," he says. "Once you know it's fear, you learn to gut past it, and that's where the big gains are."

But even as he picked up steam at the gym, getting cruised by girls and building a small circle of friends, developments at home knocked him off of his pins and canceled what was left of his youth. His father, who'd done a year in the first Gulf War and returned from it haunted and sick, began drinking hard to stanch despair. (He'd boarded Kuwaiti buses packed with schoolkids burned alive by roadside bombs and seen women sliced to ribbons by Saddam's goons.) He retired from the military and hid out in bars, where Derek and his mother would inevitably find him after a three-day bender. Eventually he left town, moving to California. "It destroyed our whole family," says Justin, now 30, who lives in Florida and works as a retail banker. "I got into drugs and lost, like, four years; Mom had a breakdown and moved to Connecticut; and my brother was basically left on his own. For 16, he did what he could."

Derek quit school, got a job at Hardee's, and squatted in a vacant cabin without water, showering and shaving in a YMCA bathroom. Soon, he fell in with his brother's friends, drinking a lot of beer, dropping a little acid and X, and sleeping through his fast-food shifts. "The one thing that kept me half-sane was lifting," he recalls. "I was still making leaps — doubled my size in five years — and that, I guess, gave me hope." After a disastrous summer with his dad, who by then had settled in Ohio, he got on a bus with two changes of clothes and moved in with his mother back East. It was the last time he saw or spoke to his father; a couple of years later, Dan Poundstone flipped his car while driving drunk in an Arkansas snowstorm. "I knew he wanted to die," Poundstone says. "I walked in one day and he had a gun to his head, and I called my mom to please stop him. But I loved him a lot and do to this day."

All of 18, he processed grief the only way he knew how, grinding out sets at the gym. He earned a GED and landed a job at a meat market, but was still "hanging out with knuckleheads," he says, and "worrying my mother crazy." Then he caught a break. He was spotted working out in Waterbury, Connecticut, by the health-club version of a shaman. "I saw this kid with insane potential who was going out and lousing it all up," says Dave Petro-Roy, a powerlifting champ who, at 60, is now breaking senior records. "I figured if I could get him to take his gift seriously, the drinking and all that crap would taper off." Petro-Roy, an algebra teacher by day, made Poundstone his after-school project, showing him how to deadlift and squat, and beating home the notion that winners are people willing to endure what others won't. "I'm 5-foot-6 and weigh a whopping 160, but many's the time I've dope-slapped Derek for taking it easy," says Petro-Roy. "The whole gym scatters, thinking he'll pick me up and crush me, but Derek's too nice to hit back. Sometimes I think that's a problem."

NEXT BIG THING? Poundstone, who was once homeless, may be the U.S.'s best hope to reclaim the strongman title.

After they started training, Petro-Roy took him to a contest; Poundstone was instantly hooked. A couple of months later, still learning the basics, he entered a powerlifting show in the state and broke every heavyweight record in his age group. Bigger shows followed and more records fell. In three years, he ran out of titles to win and turned his attention to the Wagnerian agon of strongman tournaments. Hatched in the '70s by the same producer who co-created the made-for-TV *Superstars* contests, the sport had evolved from its stunt-show beginnings into a biblical trial by fire: 6-foot-8 Goliaths pulling rowboats up hillsides and holding Doric pillars aloft. Poundstone, who venerated history's giants — Louis Cyr, the Victorian Atlas who liked to lift horses overhead and push freight trains up steep sidings; Eugen Sandow, the Prussian Adonis who cleaned and pressed two men popping out of hinged barbells while touring with *Ziegfeld Follies* — yearned to leave his mark in the annals of strength, to do things that kids, a hundred years hence, would still be mooning over. He had no experience with the tools of the game: the ponderous yokes called Farmer's Frames and 20-foot iron towers known as Fingal Fingers, which must be raised to vertical, then pushed over. Moreover, he was at a serious disadvantage to men a half-foot taller and 70 pounds heavier. But Poundstone had something the behemoths didn't: a bottomless hunger for the kind of work that enabled, on pain of death, that final rep.

So while teaching himself to carry enormous clay pots up a flight of stairs, or pull a ship's anchor across a parking lot by means of a heavy chain, he decided to even the odds a bit by upping his fitness quotient. Strength is as much about endurance as force, the capacity to work past oxygen debt and a pulse rate verging on tilt, but for most of three decades, the heart and lungs were undertrained muscles in the sport. "What was missing," Poundstone says, "was *athletes*, guys who were light on their feet. I saw that if I trained with high-volume reps and really built my core and balance, I could make up what I lacked genetically, 'cause I'm never gonna be 6-foot-6." Logging mile after mile on climbers and treadmills and lifting weights 20 hours a week, he lost fat but got bigger, packing 40 pounds of muscle on a frame once stalled at 280, and blew past the potbellied nose-tackle types who had years of experience on him.

In breakneck time, he earned his pro card and by '04 was primed for breakout stardom at the age of 23. Then he got a call from the Naugatuck PD. He'd yearned from boyhood to become a cop and had put in an application eight months earlier. Now he'd been accepted. He took a year and a half off to learn his trade. He returned to the sport in '06 and trained so hard that he tore those two discs doing deadlifts. When a neurosurgeon warned Poundstone never to lift again, he didn't shun the counsel as much as stomp it senseless, winning a regional strongman show less than six months later. That spring he claimed the title of America's Strongest Man, dispatching a stellar field by record margins, then beat the best at the '08 Fortissimus, a Canadian show that ranks right behind World's in international prestige. There was the last-second loss to Pudzianowski at the World's that fall, but at the '09 finals of the Arnold Classic the following March, he smoked all comers in the last event, lifting a circus dumbbell weighing more than 200 pounds 15 times overhead. "The second I won those titles, though, I said, So what? When are you going to amaze me?" Poundstone says. To earn the plaudits of his inner critic, he'd have to join the ranks of the Cyrs and Sandows, make the list of iron immortals by winning the World's Strongest Man.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ALIX MARTINEZ

ON A FOUL DAY IN AUGUST, FIVE WEEKS BEFORE Malta, Derek Poundstone drives his Viper with the deafening headers into a dingy former lumber-warehouse lot in Waterbury. He pulls out a bag the size of a field locker and trudges through the door of an unmarked building. Inside, two dozen or so chalk-smudged men plod through dray-horse paces, doing crucifixes with ancient dumbbells and dropping them on threadbare mats. It's the kind of gym women shun on sight: no soap or paper towels in the unmopped john, TVs tuned to cage-match bouts, and the jailhouse whiff of blocked libido. But Poundstone is entrenched here, and it's easy to see why: The owner has given him a tract of floor space to park his Strongman gear.

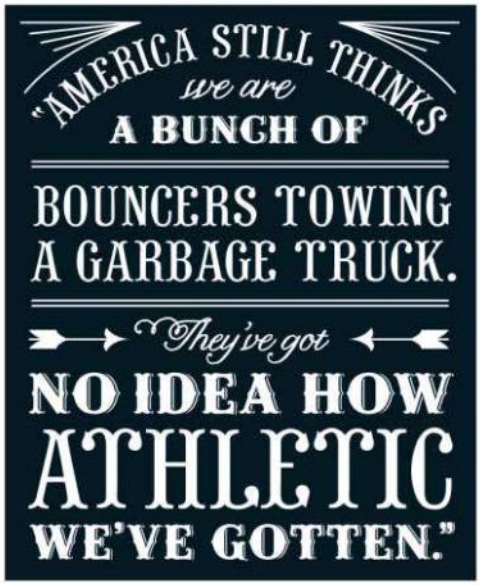
"That's $20,000," he says of the array, which includes a custom dumbbell weighing 200 pounds, sleek steel logs with cutout handholds, and enormous barbells called Apollon's Axles, with plates as big as wagon wheels. His crew of amateur strongmen, usually six or eight deep, needs a half-hour just to lug the stuff outside, where five times a week, three hours per day, Poundstone and Co. walk, jog, and scream, carrying loads that would bog down a semi. It is one thing to hoist a coffin-shaped slab weighing 380 pounds. It is another to haul it 75 feet, then turn without resting and haul it back, all the while being timed and taunted by a half-dozen bruisers in knee wraps. It is a third thing to do it on a day like this, when the heat and humidity are acts of war.

His crew, mostly guys in the hard-hat vocations with handles like Iron Mike and Little Joe, carp about the weather, saying it makes the gear slick. But Poundstone, in neoprene lifting shorts as tight as sausage casing, looks the scene over and grins. "I live for this stuff — I eat and breathe it. Pain is my dopamine rush."

He is 40 minutes removed from a colossal lunch: a 20-ounce steak drowned in A-1 sauce; big sides of coleslaw, fries, and pudding; and the shake he made from a quart of milk and three scoops of Up Your Mass, the proprietary combo of proteins and sugars that his sponsor, MHP, puts out. Poundstone must take in 8,000 calories just to break even each day and is rarely without a cooler holding chicken breasts or a turkey grinder. It's madness, he knows — "I'm shaving years off my life, carrying all this weight around" — and he shudders to think how he'll feel at 40, when the come-and-go aches don't go. He knows he'll have to lose a quarter of his weight when he quits the sport in 10 years, or the vascular mass will turn to fat and swamp his joints and bones. He also knows he can't train forever like Atlas on a banzai charge: the three-hour orgies of eye-bleed hell, toting fridges and thousand-pound yokes. "The average hip can take 800 pounds before it cracks in half. I walk around with *1,400*, if you count my body weight. No ifs or buts about it: I'm looking at 40 years of hardcore knee and spine pain."

Today his lower back's squalling after Thursday's deadlifts, and his right foot woke up swollen and stiff, the result of a deep bone contusion at the 2008 World's. But he's worked too hard to take time off, trained 10 months past the point of affliction for the dual goals of becoming the world's strongest man and making the sport enormous. "We're major in Europe and getting bigger in Asia, but America still thinks we are a bunch of bouncers towing a garbage truck," he says. "They've got no idea how athletic we've gotten or how awesome it is to lift these things and move them around. If we developed a major star here, like Arnold with bodybuilding, we'd be as big as Ultimate Fighting."

The analogy isn't perfect — there's no combat involved, which surely vexes the ghosts of those old berserkers. Nor has the sport found its Dana White, the pit-bull promoter of mixed-martial arts who's tapped the hearts (and wallets) of young men. It has, in fact, no leader at all, and is run, after a fashion, by a company called IMG Media that produces TV shows. (The firm, a sports and entertainment packager, puts on the *World's Strongest Man* series each year and sells the American rights to ESPN, which airs it around New Year's Day.) In the 1990s, the competitors tried self-rule, forming an enterprise called the International Federation of Strength Athletes (IFSA) and mounting a worldwide tour. Founded on best intentions — it paid salaries to athletes and toughened the testing procedures at shows — it was unable to make a profit, and in 2008 IFSA bit the dust, dumping its entrants into a ragtag jumble of one-off shows and prizes. Of the four events on Poundstone's docket each year, only the Arnold, World's, and Fortissimus pay serious money, more than $40,000 to the winner. In Europe, where the crowds and ad base are bigger, icons like Pudzianowski can actually get rich, but here Poundstone's one of a tiny few earning a living at the sport. In a good year, he barely tops the $60,000 he clocks as a beat patrolman.



But cash never made men heft boats and boulders, and it probably never will. "I've watched Derek go from troubled kid to hero, and that all started from this," says Petro-Roy, who still trains at the same gym where he spotted Poundstone and has mentored a number of kids since. "He did it because he wanted to be great, not good. To show that the things that hold you back are mental, not physical. Just watch him work out: When his body says, 'Quit,' his mind says, 'Do five more.'"

Outside the gym, Poundstone steps to the Atlas Stones, a series of ferrous concrete boulders that must be loaded, in ascending order, onto chin-high podiums. His forearms are taped and slathered in gook to hold the comet-size orbs. He easily laps and loads the first four rocks on their plywood stands, but the fifth, weighing 420 pounds, slips and just misses his toes. The pavement buckles, forming a mini-crater, but Poundstone seethes and tightens his belt, resolving to go again. Once more, he blasts through most of the series, then struggles to raise the fifth. Hunched in a squat, the rock pinned to his thighs, he strains and shakes and turns magenta, but the thing won't go past his navel. "Bastard!" he screams as he throws it down. "The sweat kept rolling it off!"

His girlfriend consoles him, saying the heat in Malta will be much less damp than here, but Poundstone won't be coddled. "No excuses!" he says, then says it again. "I have to be better than that!"

On the drive home he laments the stone unturned. "That cost me the title," he says of a similar drop at the '08 World's in West Virginia, where he clearly had Pudzianowski beaten and was moments from becoming just the second American strongman to win in nearly 30 years. "I can't screw up again: There's too much riding. The sport needs a champion who's..."

He doesn't finish the thought, and doesn't need to. Pudzianowski, an exquisite physical specimen who's strutted and clawed to five titles at World's, is the object of equal parts awe and loathing on the strongman tour. He taunts his rivals for their less-than-Greek waistlines, wades through the crowds striking biceps poses. He and his fellow strongmen are widely presumed to be taking steroids and HGH. (Pudzianowski, who denies this when asked directly, was disqualified from the '04 World's after coming up positive for a banned substance.) The testing at tournaments is wildly uneven and the furthest thing from stringent; indeed, when queried in Malta *(continued on page 104)*

WINDBREAKERS
When a sport coat feels too dressy, pull on one of these smart, lightweight jackets, which hit the sweet spot between laid-back and put together.

STYLE

THE LINKS

text by **JOSH SENS** *photographs by* **MICHAEL DWORNIK** *fashion by* **PATTI O'BRIEN**

Blake Adams, left, wears a jacket, $198, and sweater, $425, both by **POLO RALPH LAUREN**; shirt by **L.L. BEAN SIGNATURE**, $59; jeans by **LEVI'S**, $98; shoes by **FRYE**, $198; watch by **FOSSIL**, $75. Josh Teater wears a jacket, $225, and hat, $86, both by **FRED PERRY**; pullover by **K-SWISS**, $60; T-shirt by **HANES**, $16 for three; jeans by **LEVI'S**, $70; sneakers by **GENERIC MAN**, $270.

CRASHERS

SEVEN PGA-TOUR ROOKIES SHOW OFF THE CLASSIC SPRING STAPLES EVERY MAN SHOULD OWN.

"When I was on the Hooters tour, I lived out of my car. I had a Nissan Maxima."
—JOSH TEATER

Officially, they're rookies, but the golfers featured here are more like battered pledges, survivors of a years-long hazing ritual whose reward is an opportunity to square off against the world's best on the PGA Tour. Every year, more than a thousand aspirants attempt this rite of passage. Some grind their way through qualifying school, a four-stage tournament that drags on for three months. Others earn their stripes on the Nationwide Tour, the PGA's farm system, playing no-name events in locales like Fort Smith, Arkansas, and Moscow, Pennsylvania, with no guarantees that their fortunes will change. Along the way, the pressure is intense and the paychecks often meager, if they come at all. Only the top 25 from Q-school and the top 25 of the Nationwide attain the holy grail: an Amex-size piece of plastic known as a PGA card. The seven men in these pages have made it to the promised land.

Their next challenge: proving they belong in the tee box with Tiger, Phil, and Vijay. Dressed here in new twists on traditional spring essentials, they'll at least fit in at Augusta's 19th hole.

Teater, sitting, wears a jacket by **PERRY ELLIS**, $165; shirt by GAP, $40; jeans by **LEVI'S**, $70; sunglasses by **SALT OPTICS**, $340; watch by **DKNY**, $175; shoes by **CONVERSE BY JOHN VARVATOS**, $110. Derek Lamely, left, wears a vest by **NAUTICA**, $475 (sold as a suit); shirt by **GANT**, $98; tie by **EAGLE SHIRT MAKERS**, $60; jeans by **CITIZENS OF HUMANITY**, $154; watch by **CITIZEN**; shoes by **FLORSHEIM BY DUCKIE BROWN**, $295. Alex Prugh wears a jacket by **FRED PERRY** X RAF SIMONS, price upon request; polo by **GAP**, $30; shorts by **BOBBY JONES**, $98; watch by **NAUTICA**, $100; shoes by **SPERRY**, $75.

Associate fashion editor: **BRYNN CARHART.** Grooming by **KRISTAN SERAFINO FOR L'OREAL PROFESSIONALS.** Production by **KEVIN LENK.** All photographs taken at the PGA National Resort and Spa, Palm Beach Gardens, Florida. Special thanks to the PGA Tour. For more information, see Where to Buy, page 102.

SEERSUCKER Don a three-piece seersucker suit and you'll look like you just came from a polo match, but wear the pieces separately and you can class up an otherwise simple outfit. Because the classic pattern functions like a neutral color, it pairs well with everything in your closet: jeans or khakis, polos or button-downs, sneakers or deck shoes.

"My three main worries? Big cities, large crowds, and lots of traffic. A guy like me isn't used to all that."
—BLAKE ADAMS

CHECKS They're the new vertical stripes — less businessman, but still smart-looking. Pair a checked shirt with a knit tie and a jacket if you need to take the swankiness up a notch.

Adams, on the ground, wears a shirt by **POLO RALPH LAUREN**, $145. Cameron Tringale wears a shirt by **J. CREW**, $60; pants by **TOMMY HILFIGER**, $78; watch by **TIMEX FOR J. CREW**, $150; belt by **TALLIA**, $65; shoes by **FLORSHEIM BY DUCKIE BROWN**, $295. Matt Every wears a pullover by **K-SWISS**, $60; shirt by **J. CREW**, $70; pants by **L.L. BEAN SIGNATURE**, $95; sneakers by **K-SWISS**, $70. Teater wears a shirt by **RALPH LAUREN PURPLE LABEL**, $425; tie by **TOMMY HILFIGER**, $58; jeans by **J. CREW**, $98; hat by **DOCKERS**, $20; watch by **TIMEX FOR J. CREW**, $150; shoes by **FLORSHEIM BY DUCKIE BROWN**, $295. Jerod Turner wears a zip-front sweater by **HICKEY FREEMAN**, $295; polo by **L.L. BEAN SIGNATURE**, $35; pants by **GANT**, $125; sneakers by **K-SWISS**, $55. Adams wears a sweater by **L.L. BEAN SIGNATURE**, $185; shirt by **NAUTICA**, $60; tie, $50, and pants, $128, both by **J. CREW**; watch by **FOSSIL**, $75; shoes by **FRYE**, $198.

NAVY Call it the "spring black," because this color goes with damn near everything. Mix it with white for a genteel look on-course and off, or assemble an all-navy outfit for sleek, night-on-the-town style.

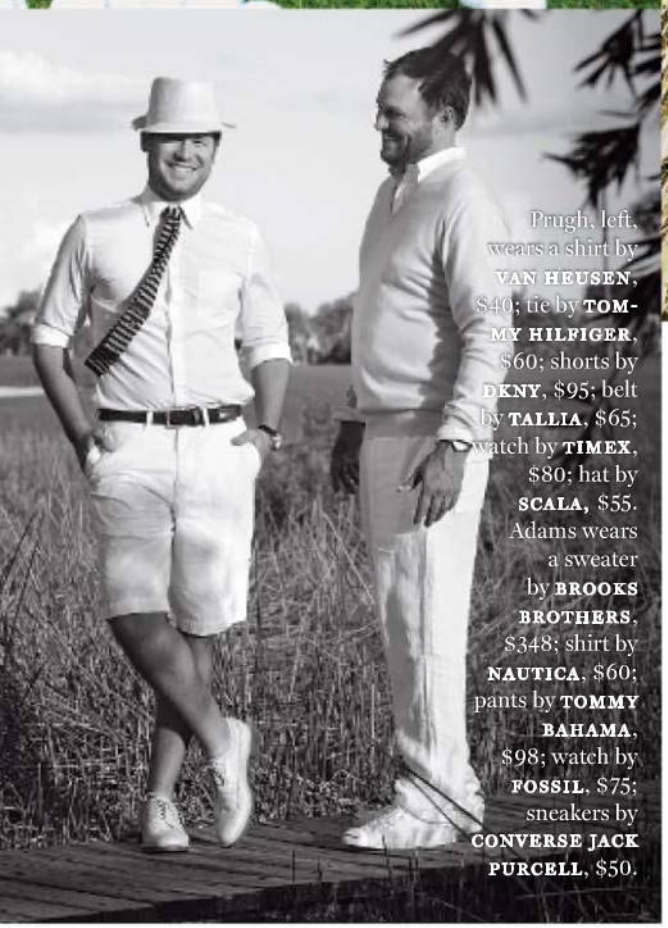
KHAKIS
There is but one rule when buying a pair: The fit should be slim and tailored. Cuffs — and socks — are optional.

Prugh wears a shirt, $40, and belt, $30, both by **GAP**; khaki pants by **GANT**, $125; hat by **BANANA REPUBLIC**, $40; watch by **TIMEX**, $80; shoes by **FLORSHEIM BY DUCKIE BROWN**, $395.

1. ALEX PRUGH, 25
This past winter, Prugh took his girlfriend skiing, waited until sunset, then got down on one knee. "I had sweaty palms and serious jitters," he says. "In golf, there's always another round. But with what I was doing, you only get one chance to do it right." She said yes, putting a charming end on a stellar 2009 that included Prugh's first career tournament win (the Michael Hill New Zealand Open). Now the newly engaged Prugh worries about a different union: "Getting paired with Phil Mickelson would be daunting," he says. "But I hear he's a nice guy and can chat your ear off."

2. BLAKE ADAMS, 34
He drives a pickup, spends his off days in a deer stand, and lives in tiny Nunez, Georgia (population: 131), where no one cares that he finished third in prize money on the Nationwide Tour last year. "That's how I like it," Adams says. "I'm not one of those looky-looky-here types." No surprise, then, that his list of PGA fears includes the first tee at Augusta, home of the Masters. Adams played a casual round there a few years ago, and his hands shook so badly he nearly dropped his driver. "I can only imagine what the actual tournament would be like," he says.

Adams wears a sweater by **CALVIN KLEIN**, $78.



Prugh, left, wears a shirt by **VAN HEUSEN**, $40; tie by **TOMMY HILFIGER**, $60; shorts by **DKNY**, $95; belt by **TALLIA**, $65; watch by **TIMEX**, $80; hat by **SCALA**, $55. Adams wears a sweater by **BROOKS BROTHERS**, $348; shirt by **NAUTICA**, $60; pants by **TOMMY BAHAMA**, $98; watch by **FOSSIL**, $75; sneakers by **CONVERSE JACK PURCELL**, $50.

3. JOSH TEATER, 30
"I'm just a mellow kid who mumbles a lot," says the Kentuckian. "People say that my heart beats no more than twice a month." Even when a win at the Utah Championship — his first ever — helped secure his Tour card, he still didn't muster much excitement for the post-round press conference. "I don't have a lot of clever answers," he says. "I need to work on that." But bring up the Kentucky Wildcats and the quiet Teater turns into Dick Vitale, minus the liver spots. "I could tell you anything you want to know about the basketball team."

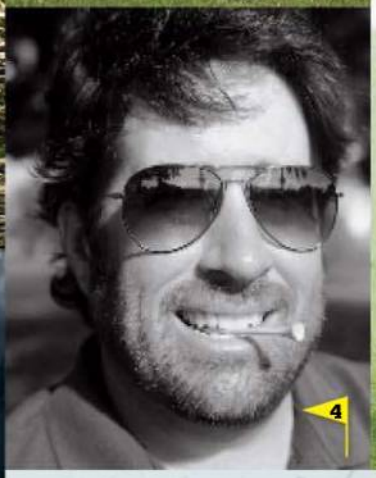
4. JEROD TURNER, 34
While toiling for years on the mini-tours of Texas, Turner worked as a general contractor. "Electrical, plumbing — I did it all." Though his pay scale has improved (his jump in 2009 from 150th place to 17th on the Nationwide Tour money list was the largest in history), he's still thrifty: To celebrate his maiden win last fall, Turner took his caddie to Jack in the Box. With the PGA Tour come both posher treatment and more pressure, but to him, the latter is a matter of perspective: "I don't have to be the number one player. I just want to make a living."

PASTELS
Don't be scared of lilac, mint, lemon, and the rest of the pastel food group. It adds a muted pop of color to a pair of white pants.

5. CAMERON TRINGALE, 22

Growing up in Southern California, Tringale was a grade-school prankster and part-time surf bum. But he was such a natural at golf that he landed a full ride to golf powerhouse Georgia Tech. Four stellar college seasons earned him a spot in last year's Walker Cup, which pits the best U.S. amateurs against counterparts from Ireland and the U.K. "Playing for your country — there's no pressure I can think of that compares to that," Tringale says. Impressive, considering he qualified for last year's U.S. Open (but missed the cut after shooting a first-round 70).

Teater and Adams, see page 83. Tringale, right, wears a jacket by **MARC BY MARC JACOBS**, $328; polo by **L.L. BEAN SIGNATURE**, $59; jeans by **GAP**, $55; sneakers by **TOMMY HILFIGER**, $49. Far right, Lamely, see page 85.



MADRAS

Plaid shorts are more polished than your cargos. Top them off with a button-down and head over to the neighbors' barbecue.

Teater wears a shirt, $98, and pants, $115, both by **GANT**; hat by **SCALA**, $30. Above left, Turner wears sunglasses by **BANANA REPUBLIC**, $68. Above center, Every, left, wears a shirt by **TOMMY HILFIGER**, $98; shorts by **LANDS' END**, $40; watch by **FOSSIL**, $75. Teater wears a shirt by **VAN HEUSEN**, $40; hat by **J. CREW**, $35; watch by **DKNY**, $175. Prugh wears a shirt by **GANT**, $98; shorts by **J. CREW**, $63; watch by **FOSSIL**, $75. Above right, Lamely wears a shirt by **TOMMY HILFIGER**, $60; pants by **RALPH LAUREN BLACK LABEL**, $1,595 (sold as a suit); hat by **SCALA**, $45.

6. MATT EVERY, 26

As a brash teenager, Every turned down a small-school scholarship to walk on at bigger, badder University of Florida. The result: The swaggering no-name became a three-time All-American and the 2006 collegiate player of the year. Unlike the media-savvy automatons of the PGA Tour, he doesn't keep his rage bottled up: "I've probably set records for club-throwing." Last year, Every scorched the field in the Nationwide Tour Championship, then put the $180,000 payday toward two new toys: a Cadillac for himself and a Mercedes for his wife. "I got black rims for mine," he says. "Not ghetto-looking. Fresh."

7. DEREK LAMELY, 29

Back in 2004, Lamely got his first taste of life on the PGA Tour when he qualified for the Western Open. The two things he remembers most: Tiger Woods and the omelet station. He crossed paths with the world's best player in the clubhouse. "He shot the breeze with a couple of guys next to me," Lamely says, "but I was too awestruck to speak." As for the omelets: "It's not every day that someone custom-makes your eggs." Thanks to a stretch of sparkling play last year that included a win and five top 10s on the Nationwide Tour, Lamely has a full season of made-to-order omelets in his future.

TIME TRAVELERS

When you're arcing across the atmosphere at 30,000 feet, flying toward a sandy beach or a business deal, the last thing you want is your timepiece shackling you to the past. GMT watches add either an extra hour hand (paired with a 24-hour bezel) or a discreet subdial to sync you with two time zones. These six are first-class.

photograph by **TRAVIS RATHBONE**

PROP STYLING BY SUSAN GEORGE

1. **ROLEX GMT-MASTER II**
(*$7,000; rolex.com*)

2. **PANERAI LUMINOR 1950 10 DAYS GMT**
(*$17,300; panerai.com*)

3. **ERNST BENZ CHRONO-**FLITE GMT 47MM
(*$4,200; ernstbenz.com*)

4. **SEIKO KINETIC GMT**
(*$550; seikousa.com*)

5. **BALL ENGINEER HYDROCARBON GMT III**
(*$2,799; ballwatch.com*)

6. **TAG HEUER GRAND CARRERA CALIBRE 8 RS**
(*$4,100; tagheuer.com*)

WINNER. WINNER. WINNER. CHAMPION.

The Ridgeline Baja Race Truck, piloted by Gavin Skilton.
2009 SCORE Stock Mini-Class Champion. Ridgeline.honda.com

Specially constructed race vehicle not available for sale. For closed-course competition only. 2010 model shown. © 2010 American Honda Motor Co., Inc.

HONDA

GEAR

Upgrade Your HOME

You don't have to buy everything in the six scenes that follow (though you'll want to). But you will find that one perfect item you've been looking for, whether it's a hammer or a reading chair.

Craftsman Professional 12-amp Reciprocating Saw
Whereas most reciprocating saws are blunt instruments, the Craftsman's 360-degree rotating head makes it a scalpel. One that saws through anything. [*$90; craftsman.com*]

Douglas 18-ounce Finish Hammer
No hammer is more foolproof. Its alloy head extends down to protect the hickory wood handle from mis-hits, and a magnetic slot in the head holds a nail in place for the first strike, keeping your thumb out of harm's way. [*$60; douglastool.com*]

Bosch 18-volt Li-Ion Impact Drill/Driver
A combination drill/driver is great until yours gives up partway through a gnarly deck screw. The Bosch's impact function, with three times the torque of the average combo gun, ensures that you're never left half-screwed again. [*$398; boschtools.com*]

by STEPHEN TREFFINGER & STAN HORACZEK
photographs by TRAVIS RATHBONE

PROP STYLIST: SUSAN GEORGE

Workbench

1. Stanley 3-in-1 Tripod Flashlight
At first it looks like RoboCop's flashlight, throwing 60 lumens from its angular body. But pop out the 3-in-1's tripod, and you can angle each of the three 0.5-watt LED heads up to 120 degrees — or pull one out to find that damn screw you dropped. [*$30; stanleytools.com*]

2. Dremel 4000 Rotary Tool
Dremel is the reigning rotary tool champ for its unparalleled versatility (150 accessories). The new 4000 retains the title belt with a more powerful motor that spins to 35,000 rpm and won't get bogged down. [*from $80; dremel.com*]

3. Bridge City Double Saddle Square
It's a chrome-plated steel ruler with markings as precise as 1/32 inch, with a fold-out stainless-steel saddle square to extend lines around corners. In other words, it's an essential tool *and* an heirloom. [*$239; bridgecitytools.com*]

4. Rapid Warrior Multi-Use Knife
Most utility knives are one-trick ponies. Not the Rapid Warrior. It comes with utility, drywall saw, and hacksaw blades, and accepts reciprocating saw blades, too. No more cutting outlet holes with a dull razor. [*$20; rapidtools.net*]

5. Rockwell Jawhorse
Thanks to a built-in 37-inch-wide clamp controlled by a foot pedal, the Jawhorse is the first sawhorse that works with you, not against you. And a slew of add-ons, like the $55 work table (shown), only up the functionality. [*$200; rockwelltools.com*]

Home Office

1. Pablo Link Task Lamp
Energy efficiency, meet design efficiency. The Link has no internal wiring — its aluminum skin conducts what little power is needed to operate its 18 LEDs. [*$380; 2modern.com*]

2. Dell Latitude Z600 Laptop
Not only is the Z600 the lightest (at 4.5 pounds) and thinnest (0.57 inches thick) laptop with a 16-inch screen, it's the first with an inductive charging stand. Just set it and forget it. [*from $2,348; dell.com*]

3. Bowers & Wilkins MM-1 Speakers
Dual drivers that aim the sweet spot right where you're sitting make the MM-1s a no-brainer. [*$500; bowers-wilkins.com*]

4. Logitech Performance Mouse MX
With a new dual laser system, this wireless pointer can track on any surface, including glass, while four customizable thumb buttons let you control your computer without lifting a finger. Your right hand hasn't felt this powerful since puberty. [*$100; logitech.com*]

5. Bang & Olufsen BeoCom 5 Phone
The handset can handle two separate lines, one of which can be a Skype number, to separate work from pleasure. The perforated steel charging disc doubles as a speakerphone, while the whole package doubles as a work of art. [*$785; bang-olufsen.com*]

6. Microsoft Mobile Keyboard 6000
It's thin, it's small, and most important, it works via Bluetooth. No wires allowed. [*$90; microsoft.com*]

7. BlueLounge StudioDesk
A sliding top unveils space for hiding the accumulated cable-spaghetti of a gadget-strewn desktop. Stow a surge protector inside, and you'll only need to run a single cord from the back of the desk to the wall. [*$600; bluelounge.com*]

8. Vitra AC 4 Chair
The slim yet shapely Antonio Citterio design attracts the eye, but it's the AC 4's automatic weight adjustment, which supports your body no matter how you move, that almost makes sitting down to work an enticing prospect. [*$1,480; vitra.com*]

1. Bottle & Kishu Binchotan
Dropping a stick of Binchotan charcoal into the tap-water-filled bottle might feel odd, but one sip and you'll understand. Not only does the Japanese charcoal absorb chemicals, but it also releases minerals. Your move, Brita. [*$98; sortofcoal.com*]

2. Staub Skillet
Because it's enameled, this cast-iron pan never needs to be seasoned. And those hexagonal divots both prevent food from sticking and allow juice to pool under meat, braising it. [*$90; staubusa.com*]

3. Fusion Silicone Finger Tongs
Normal tongs will keep your digits safe from exploding bacon grease but destroy dexterity. This mitt lets you get right in there with your hands, since it resists temps as high as 500 degrees. [*$18; thinkgeek.com*]

4. Kyocera 6-inch Kyotop Damascus Ceramic Chef's Knife
Ceramic blades are sharper than steel knives, but high-end Kyotop blades are fired twice to increase density (for sharpness) and durability. Each gets a Damascus finish before being riveted into a pakka wood handle. [*$225; kyoceraadvancedceramics.com*]

5. Proteak End Grain Cutting Board
Each slicing slab is made by joining end-cut pieces of teak grown on environmentally sustainable Mexican plantations. The juice channel sends liquid by-products (mmm!) sluicing into a porcelain cup for easy disposal. [*$160; proteak.com*]

COUNTERS PROVIDED BY IKEA

Kitchen Counter

6. Minden Master Range Top Grill
When weather (or laziness) prevents you from firing up the Weber, break out this enameled steel stove-top grill, which fits over any gas burner. The porcelain-coated steel grate — the same as on Minden's full-size grills — ensures you get your char lines. [*$99; mindengrill.com*]

7. Bodum Bistro Flatbed Toaster
We swear it's a toaster. The Bistro Flatbed's al fresco design lets you pull your breadstuffs at the perfect brownness and toast things that would never fit into a one-inch-wide slot. You'll see its genius after your first piping-hot croissant. [*$100; bodumusa.com*]

9. Viking 30-inch-wide Designer Series Gas Range
The undulating cooktop grate is more than a stylistic choice — it lets you easily slide pots and pans around the stove top as needed. Also handy come Thanksgiving: the Viking's large four-cubic-foot oven. Thirty-pound bird it is! [*$3,350; vikingrange.com*]

8. Sidd Tilt Knife Block
Order one, and a Sidd craftsman hews it from a single block of walnut. Then he inlays a strip of Canadian-maple wood to keep your steak knives in place. Finally, the Tilt is rubbed with beeswax and orange oil rather than a chemical protectant. [*$60; sidd.ca*]

Reading Corner

1. White Furniture Morgan Chair
A great reading chair is more than a comfy seat — it's a refuge. In the Morgan, the classic wing shape has been pared down to its basics: a cocooning headrest and plush padding all the way up the back. Enjoy your nap. [*$550; whiteonwhite.com*]

2. Umbra Mimosa Side Table
Simple forms often provide maximum function, as the solid acacia Mimosa proves. Store magazines on the right, Cabela's catalogs on the left, and that copy of Gladwell's *Blink* you still haven't read in the middle cubby. [*$119; iloveuma.com*]

3. Spun Lamp by Chris Lehrecke
Call furniture designer Chris Lehrecke a neo-naturalist. The Spun is handmade using wood found near his upstate New York house, like all his pieces, and topped by a spun aluminum shade. It's an honest piece: eye-catching, but for the right reasons. [*$3,840; ralphpucci.net*]

4. Roros Champagnebobler Blanket
We appreciate the old-world artistry of a grandma-knit afghan, but when you want real warmth, a wool blanket from Norway's Roros is the proper choice. Because it's woven from the fleece of Norwegian free-range sheep, it's soft and airy, never itchy. [*$275; fjorn.com*]

5. Brooks Brothers Nappa Backless Slip-On Slipper
Full-foot slippers make for sweaty dogs, forcing an unending on-off-on cycle that keeps comfort elusive. This suede-soled pair buffers your feet from the floor's chill without swaddling them. [*$148; brooksbrothers.com*]

Entertainment Center

1. Philips 40-inch 7705D LED LCD TV
Behind that ultrathin translucent bezel sits an LED-lit LCD screen that delivers better contrast yet uses 40 percent less energy. A boon, since the TV's built-in Netflix on-demand app means you'll be using it more. [*$1,499; usa.philips.com*]

2. Philips Wireless HDTV Link
It beams HDMI signals from media players, eliminating cords and making a wall-mounted TV look clean. [*$800; usa.philips.com*]

3. Music Hall MMF-2.2LE Turntable
At the intersection of budget and audiophile sits the 2.2LE. Music Hall put the focus on all the right places: a rigid, one-piece alloy arm that tracks true; a shock-mounted high-torque motor; and a Ferrari-red paint job. [*$499; musichallaudio.com*]

4. Crate & Barrel Fulton 56-inch Media Console
The combination of worn teak and an oxidized black steel frame creates a sense of integrity, as if the piece were hand-hewn by a man in his workshop. It's a pleasant juxtaposition against the gadgets the Fulton will hold. [*$999; crateandbarrel.com*]

5. JVC TH-BA3 Wireless Soundbar
Welcome to the lazy man's 5.1 surround-sound system. A soundbar takes care of the front three channels while acting as the brain for two wireless rear speakers and a wireless, 100-watt subwoofer. You just supply the outlets. [*$550; jvc.com*]

6. ASRock Ion 330HT-BD Home Theater PC
The tiny ASRock PC is your new media hub. Install Windows 7 ($200), then the free media app Boxee, and you'll be able to stream Web video (Hulu, YouTube), watch a Blu-ray disc, show digital snaps, and blow a Luddite's mind. [*$530; newegg.com*]

Nightstand

1. Suite New York BL6 Wall Sconce
This 1930 lamp designed by Robert Dudley Best earned classic status when Winston Churchill took a shining to the desk version. But the sconce, which you can swing into reading position, is ideally suited to the bedroom. [*$682; suiteny.com*]

2. Night Carafe
There are better ways to deal with midnight cottonmouth than stumbling to the refrigerator. Before bed, top off this hand-blown Japanese glass carafe (with matching tumbler that doubles as a lid), and you'll be able to hydrate without ever stubbing your pinkie toe again. [*$80; dwr.com*]

3. Area Oneway Linens
Your wife chose the sheets, which is why you sleep in a sea of chartreuse. Add a masculine edge without offending her sense of style with the imperfect slate-gray pinstripes of the 200-thread-count Oneway sheets. [*$200 for a queen set; arealinenshop.com*]

4. XtremeMac Luna Voyager Alarm Clock
The Luna Voyager syncs its clock with your iPhone (no more missing daylight saving time) and has a battery backup for when the power goes out. Bonus: At just eight inches wide, it's perfect for packing as a travel iPod speaker. [*$80; store.apple.com*]

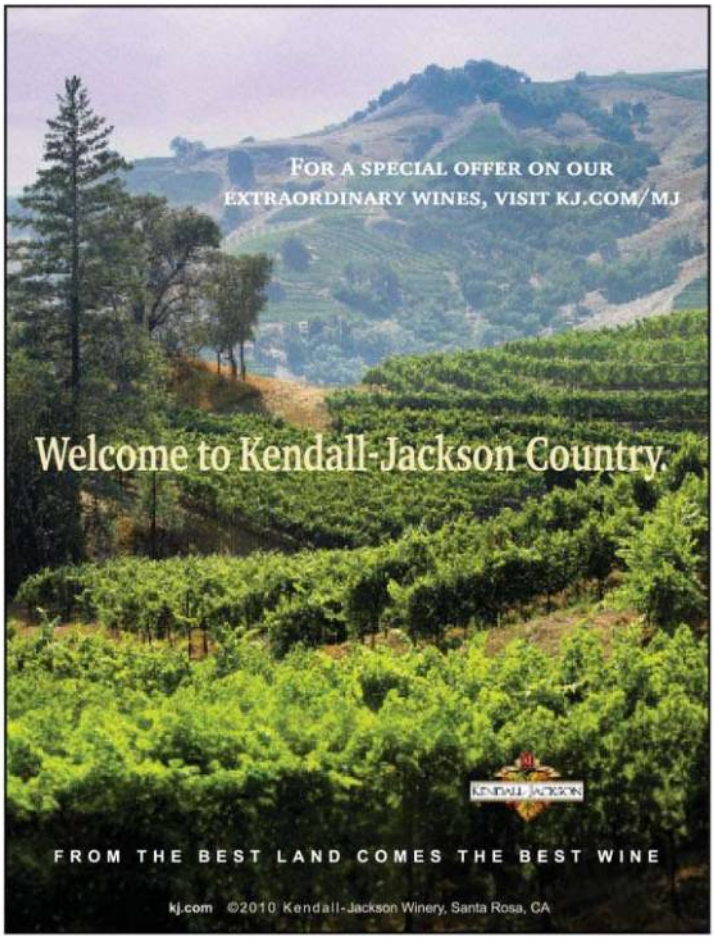
5. West Elm Top Drawer Side Table
No need to complicate matters when choosing a nightstand — you want sturdy and stylish, with storage. The Top Drawer fits the bill to a T, with its modern (but not *too* modern) design skinned in an oak veneer. [*$199; westelm.com*]

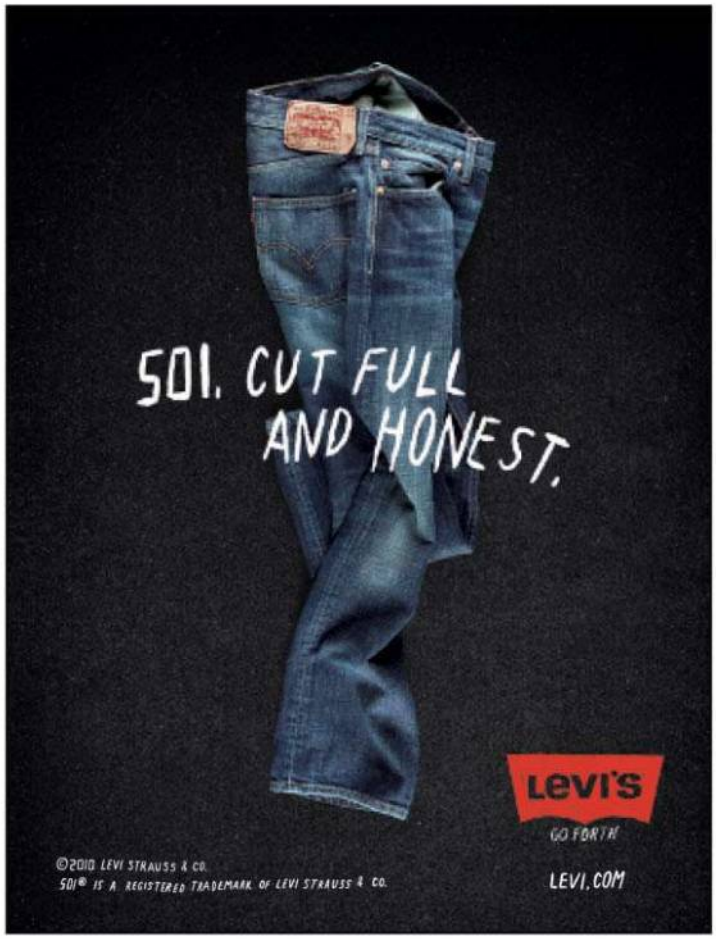
6. BenQ Joybee GP1 Pocket Projector
Why waste precious bedroom space on another TV when the palm-size GP1 can project an 80-inch screen on the wall? It can pipe in video from a cable box, DVD player, iPod, USB drive, or laptop. Hello, Hulu in the bedroom. [*$499; benq.us.com*]

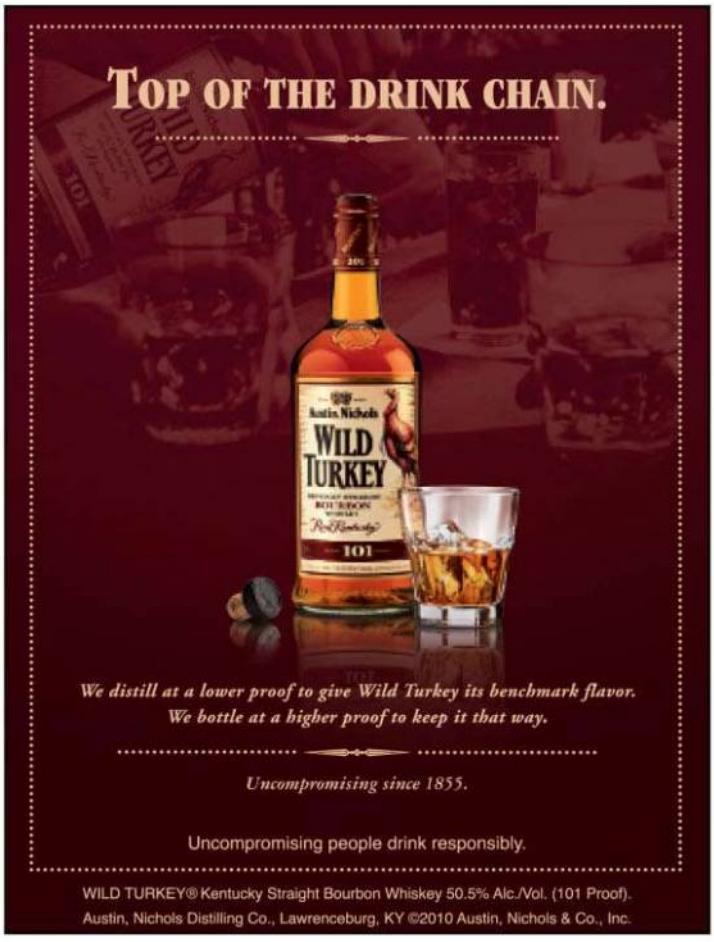
BED FRAME PROVIDED BY IKEA

SIGHTINGS

A special advertising guide to the products, services and events that connect you with the adventurous, stylish and innovative world around you.







BORNEO *continued from page 75*

The bottom of the canyon was only 30 feet across, covered in green water-polished stones and trickling with a small clear stream. We wasted no time in plotting our ascent, craning our necks up at what appeared to be thousands of feet of overhanging rock. The angle seemed to ease for the final 500 feet, then culminate in a cloud-piercing pinnacle. It would require a capsule-style ascent — fixing ropes to a point on the wall where a camp could be established, then moving the ropes up and repeating the process. Once we found a sheltered spot for a portaledge camp, everyone would move up to the hanging bivvy. The hope was that we could complete the climb with four or five nights on the wall.

AFTER JUST TWO DAYS OF WORKING OUR way up the route's lower section, I was in awe of Honnold's focus. He never seems to tire out, and he has an uncanny sense of exactly what will work and what's going to cause a fall. He's amazingly savvy for a climber his age.

A thousand feet up, the cracks we'd been following petered out; the next system was hundreds of feet away. We had hit the crux of the route as Honnold was trying to climb across a long section of blank, dubious-looking gray-and-black granite. There were just enough holds for him to climb it, but there weren't any cracks or crevices into which he could slot a piece of protection. The only way to provide any security at all was to drill a few holes for bolts.

Honnold had never placed a bolt.

On overhanging rock, the only way to get your hands free for drilling is to suspend yourself from a tiny piece of metal the size of a thumbnail called a hook.

Honnold had never placed a hook.

"Is it normal for it to flex?" he called down, sounding nervous, as he dangled 30 feet above me with nothing but a quarter-inch of chromemoly between him and a huge fall.

"Perfectly normal," I yelled back.

Truth be told, I was more scared than Honnold because I knew that on the off chance the hook did blow, he'd fall 60 feet, right onto the spot where I had my belay set up. I just kept reminding myself that he wouldn't be considered the best free-soloist in the world if he didn't have a cool head in situations like this. With the hook in place and a bolt secured, he set off again, confidently navigating another 30 feet of overhanging rock.

Two hours later he reached the shelter of a small roof, 150 feet above me. It was, hands down, one of the best leads I'd ever witnessed. Honnold later named it the "Emily Pitch — Beautiful and Intimidating," after well-known climber Emily Harrington, of whom he was a little enamored. In the small world of the climbing community, everything gets around, and he knew that Harrington would eventually hear about it (and she did when we told her). I wished I'd thought of that when I was single.

Anker was right. I was learning things from Honnold. Well, not so much learning from him as relearning. He brought something to the expedition none of us had anticipated. Every jaw-dropping lunge, every inhuman pull, even every rookie mistake — it all rekindled the fire that we had had back when we were his age. And it showed me, at least, that the fire was still there.

Later, as we settled into our sleeping bags on the portaledge, Honnold needed to get something off his chest.

"You know, I'm kind of feeling like a pansy," he confessed.

"How so?" I asked. "You just did the sickest lead I've ever seen."

"I know," he replied, "but it scared me. I shouldn't have gotten so scared."

AFTER OUR FIRST NIGHT ON THE CLIFF, WE woke up to clear skies, high above the clouds of the jungle lowlands. But our weather window was short-lived. Anker, Thaw, and Chin had set off up a series of free-hanging ropes that were set the day before to push the route ahead, while Honnold and I dropped down to free-climb more of the route. (By reclimbing sections that had before been gained only with the help of gear like hooks and bolts, we could deem our ascent "free," as opposed to "aided.") By 1 PM, a cloud had boiled up from the gully below, and soon everything — the rock, the rope, my eyelashes, the rim of my hood — was coated with tiny droplets of water. Then something eclipsed the sun and suddenly everything went dark.

The squall came in from the north, driving the rain hard into our faces. Massive waterfalls were now pouring off the cliff, and the gully below started to roar as it transformed into a raging rapid. Even if we had wanted to bail, there was no way out but up. Above, I could hear muffled yelling, followed by an alarming amount of rockfall. Anker was somewhere above us doing battle in the chaos.

Honnold and I retreated to our portaledge to find that our rain fly had a few holes and our beds were filling up like bathtubs. Sitting on my helmet, I bailed as fast as I could, but there was little I could do to stop the stream of water pouring through. Honnold had already climbed into his sleeping bag, which was now soaked. Mine was still safely tucked away in its drybag — a fact I was happy to share with my shivering friend.

The big question on everyone's mind was whether we could dash to the summit before the following day's afternoon downpour. Without the protective overhang of the lower wall, we were sitting ducks if a storm arrived. In fact, the final pitches of the climb follow a big gully that clearly serves as a drainage system for the entire top section of the peak. Drowning, not falling, would be our biggest concern.

But the weather cooperated, and we woke up to conditions that were just right for making some real progress. Once we had breached the overhang, the rock morphed from orange and white to dark gray, from smooth to some of the most prickly rock I've ever climbed. The holds were suddenly huge, weirdly shaped cobbles that we call "chicken heads." Best of all, the climbing was suddenly easy, so easy that I could enjoy a magnificent view to the north, where Low's Gully snakes toward the sea. If the weather held, we were just a day away from the summit.

More often than not, the top is anticlimactic — you're so completely frazzled by the time you get there that all you can think about is getting down as soon as possible. Not this time. When I topped out around 2 PM, mantling over the lip into a round of high fives, it was one of those rare summits when we had the time and weather to actually savor the moment. Instead of hastily setting up a rappel and getting the hell out of there, we settled down into the rocks and simply sat back to enjoy the view. It had been about two years since I had personally succeeded on a big expedition objective, but the familiar euphoria came flooding back.

Sharing a rope with Honnold had caused me to think a lot about what I was like at his age. I was never anywhere near as talented as he is, nor as bold, but I did have a youthful hunger, and my tolerance for risk was more than a little excessive. Watching Honnold reminded me that climbing without risk isn't really climbing at all.

Looking over at him, I couldn't help but wonder if he understood the arc that, as climbers, we all seem to follow. If, having spent a week hanging out with a bunch of old-timers, he understood that he would have to accept that if he was going to climb as hard as he does now his whole life, and live to tell the tales, he would need a little bit of luck. "I'm like you guys," he told me later. "I totally want to die a grandpa, some old guy playing cards with the kids. I'm sure I won't want to push myself like this when I'm 50."

Now I've got kids of my own waiting for me to return from expeditions like these, and there's a line I just don't cross anymore. The problem is figuring out where that line is at any given moment. Honnold is one of the brightest climbers I've ever met. If nothing else, he knows that climbing is the kind of sport that will sort you out, one way or another.

WHERE TO BUY PAGES 82–89 **Ralph Lauren** apparel at ralphlauren.com. **L.L. Bean Signature** apparel at llbeansignature.com. **Levi's** denim at levi.com. **Frye** shoes at thefryecompany.com. **Fossil** watches at fossil.com. **Fred Perry** jacket at Mason's, NYC. **Fred Perry** hat at zappos.com. **K-Swiss** apparel at kswiss.com. **Hanes** T-shirts at hanes.com. **Generic Man** sneakers at Barneys New York. **Nautica** apparel at nautica.com. **J. Crew** apparel at jcrew.com. **Gant** apparel at Gant, NYC. **Eagle Shirt Makers** tie at Macy's. **Citizens of Humanity** jeans at nordstrom.com. **Florsheim by Duckie Brown** shoes at Barneys New York. **Citizen** watch at citizenwatch.com. **Perry Ellis** jacket at perryellis.com. **Gap** apparel at gap.com. **Salt Optics** sunglasses at saltoptics.com. **Converse by John Varvatos** shoes at select Bloomingdale's. **DKNY** watch at dkny.com. **Bobby Jones** shorts at bobbyjonesshop.com. **Van Heusen** shirts at Macy's. **Tallia** apparel at Macy's. **Tommy Hilfiger** pants at Tommy Hilfiger NYC, 212-223-1824. **Joseph Abboud** jacket at Nordstrom. **Marc by Marc Jacobs** apparel at marcjacobs.com. **Dockers** hat at dockers.com. **Hickey Freeman** sweater at hickeyfreeman.com. **Banana Republic** apparel at bananarepublic.com. **Timex** watch at timex.com. **Scala** hats at 800-367-3626. **Brooks Brothers** apparel at brooksbrothers.com. **Tommy Bahama** pants at tommybahama.com. **Converse** sneakers at converse.com. **Calvin Klein** sweater at Macy's. **Lands' End Canvas** shorts at landsendcanvas.com.

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STRONGEST MAN *continued from page 81*

about performance-enhancing drugs, the World's founder, Barry Frank, gave out a laugh and blurted, "They didn't get this big eating Wheaties."

"Steroids help recovery, and recovery's half the battle," says Poundstone. "Are guys juicing? I assume so, but as a cop, forget it: We get piss tests for everything."

And synthetic HGH, for which tests are useless? "Again, I don't do it, though I get it if someone does: It grows muscle and boosts energy levels. But did Louis Cyr use when he lifted 18 men? Did Paul Anderson when he one-armed 300? I'm trying to raise this up to where it was back then: a sport of real guys doing unreal things that make regular guys want to get strong."

FOR AGES, THE ISLE OF MALTA WAS USED as cheap parking by Europe's naval despots and pumped-up prophets. A sun-bleached boulder in the middle of the Mediterranean with warm blue bays and fair harbors, it was overrun by Romans, Phoenicians, and Frenchmen, who docked their ships, off-loaded their goods, and stole anything not nailed down or carved in stone. It took 4,500 years for the patient natives to seize their independence, and just one week last autumn to hand it all back to big-armed Huns from abroad.

The 30 combatants for the 2009 World's Strongest Man crown arrive in late September, laying siege to the capital city of Valletta. They block out the sun at their hotel pool, storm the buffet tables and leave them in shambles, and break the elevators by merely stepping inside them, forcing locals to take the stairs. Among the invaders are Zydrunas Savickas, the Lithuanian bull who owns half the world records and a dozen major titles this decade; the great Pudzianowski, with his travertine torso and cohort of hard-eyed handlers; several huge Brits, led by man-mountain Terry Hollands; and a remarkable troupe of American men, among them Phil Pfister, the '06 winner. It is, says the emeritus champion Bill Kazmaier, on hand to call the event for ESPN, the "greatest field of strongmen ever assembled." Kazmaier, an open admirer of Poundstone's (he sends him brawny text messages to pump him up), confesses to being guarded about his chances. "Derek's a huge talent and the future of this sport, but it's a beast this year," he says. "Zydrunas came ready, and Pudzianowski's a machine. He has no love and happiness in his life, which is why he's still the champ."

Unlike other shows, which cram six events into a weekend of nonstop hell, World's unfolds over the course of eight days, favoring brute strength over fitness. Still, Poundstone handily wins his heat in the three-day qualifiers and comes out blazing in the 10-man Finals, standing a strong second two rounds in. "I'm right where I want to be," he says, relaxed, after toppling the Fingal Fingers. "I'm the smallest guy left, but get stronger as I go. These big guys? Let's see 'em hold up."

Later that day, though, at the windy airport, he begins to lose poise and points. Tasked with pulling a full-size jet that is strapped to his back by a rope, he gets the 97,000-pound plane rolling but comes out of his crouch early and sputters. He makes it to the finish line, barely conscious, taking 41 seconds to go the 25 meters — a disastrous seventh-place run. "I choked," he says. "I have to be perfect from now on."

The next morning, he mounts a fearsome rally, pressing a giant barbell weighing more than 340 pounds eight times overhead. Just 10 feet away, though, on a second stage, Pudzianowski matches him rep for rep, before collapsing in a heap, dry-heaving. "My breath...it die," he gasps from his knees as doctors rush over. (A medical team is on hand; competitors have died at other events, usually from coronaries.) Worse still for Poundstone, the leader Savickas hoists nine reps with ease, then pads back to the athlete's tent, yawning as he eats an apple. For a variety of reasons, not the least of them political (for a while after its split, IFSA didn't allow its athletes to compete in IMG events), Savickas has never won the World's before, but halfway through this one, he seems to have cowed the field. "Nine," mutters Travis Ortmayer, a Texan who'd battled to get seven reps up. "How is that humanly possible?"

By the end of the day, Poundstone's race is run. He finishes eighth in the Boat Pull, an act of piquant madness in which contestants, wedged against a block of oak, yank an old trawler out of the harbor and up a metal track. The rope burned the skin right off his palms. The next and last day, marshaling his wounded pride, he blows away the crowd on a port-side deck, lifting a Mitsubishi Lancer nine times. It is a marvelous show, but this year, it won't suffice: Pudzianowski follows with nine, then Savickas nonchalantly pulls 11.

When it is all over — after Savickas has gotten his trophy and Pudzianowksi mocks him by parading around shirtless and taunting Savickas to do likewise — I catch up with Poundstone at dinner. Disgusted with his showing (he'd been bypassed for third by an unsung American, Brian Shaw), he pledges to atone for it over the winter by coming back bigger and harder. When I ask him what the shame was in being *almost* the world's strongest, he draws back his head, offended. "That's like telling Louis Cyr, 'Relax, don't worry; someone else'll lift that giant horse.' Or telling Eugen Sandow, 'Sit tight in England; someone else'll bring bodybuilding to the States.' I didn't come this far to finish fourth."

As Poundstone stalks off in search of a second dessert, I think about something his brother said on the phone from Boca Raton: "Derek started with nothing, and I mean absolute zero, the whole world stacked against him. But the more you put on his back and hurt him, the more it makes him stronger." There is no weight he won't one day move, no burden he won't lift and clear. He is there already, on the mountainside, pushing the rock uphill. One more burst and he'll make the summit, where Milo of Kroton and Olaf the Viking have a boulder waiting for him.

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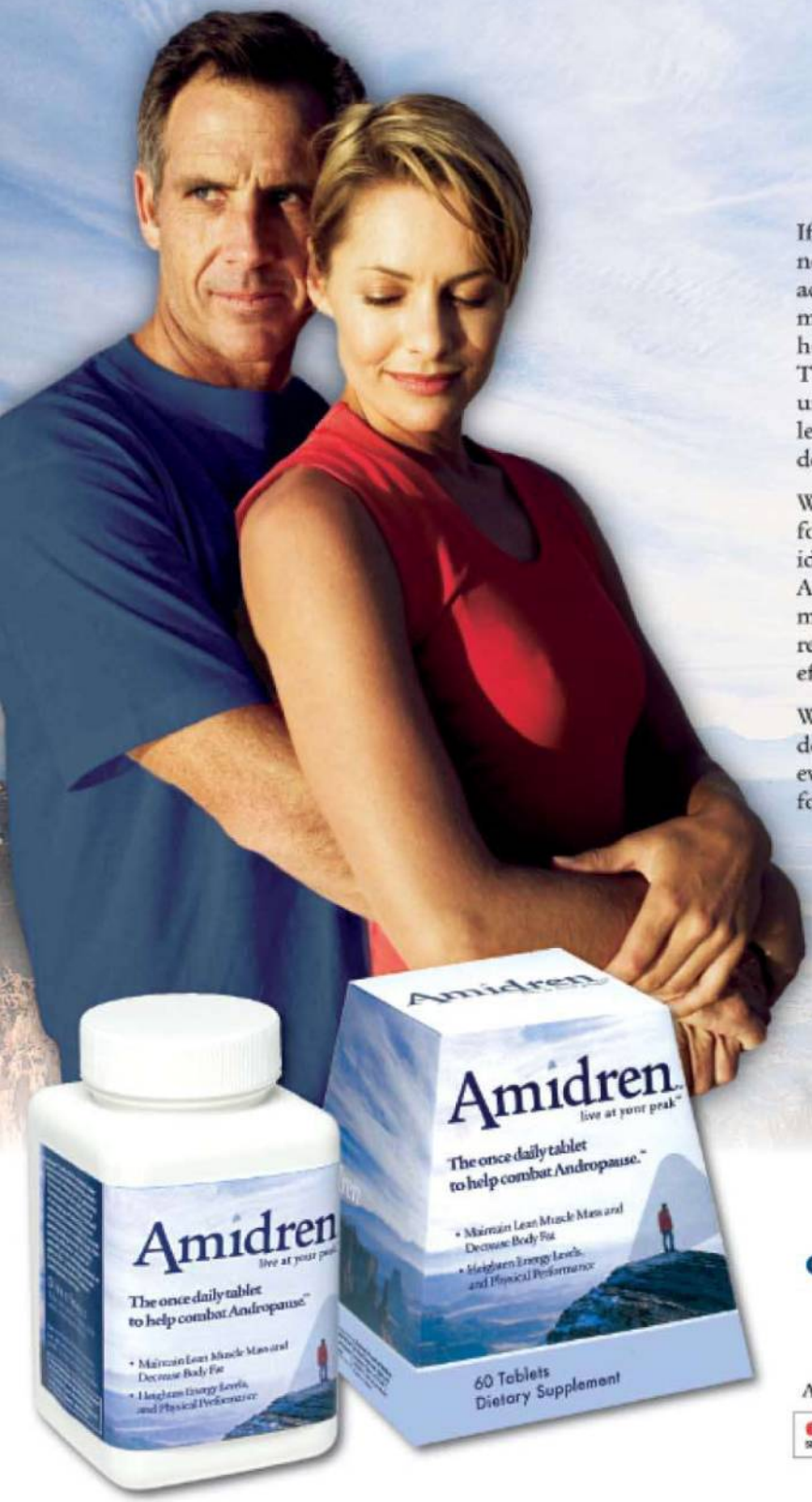

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Rock powerhouse Theory of a Deadman recently performed at the Winter Olympics Medal Ceremony in Vancouver, the highest honor for these hometown Canadian heroes. The band's breakthrough album, Scars & Souvenirs, was released in April 2008 and is still delivering the hits on both sides of the border, including "Not Meant To Be," "Bad Girlfriend," "Hate My Life" and "All or Nothing." The band will be touring throughout the year. For tour dates and more info on the band go to:

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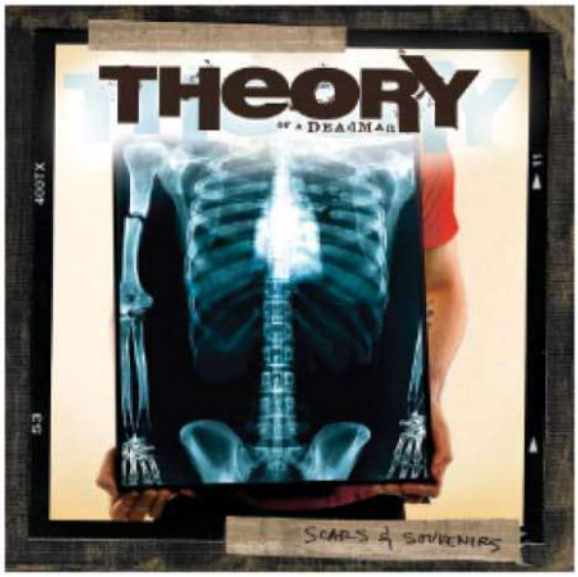

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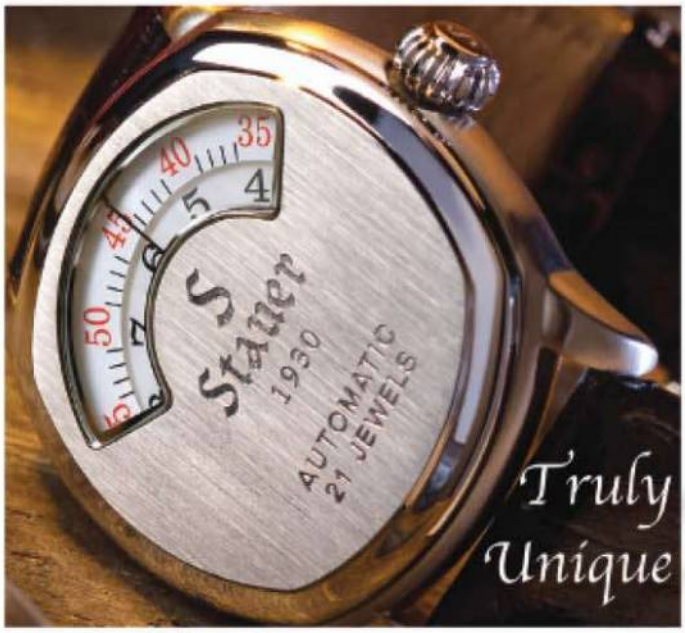

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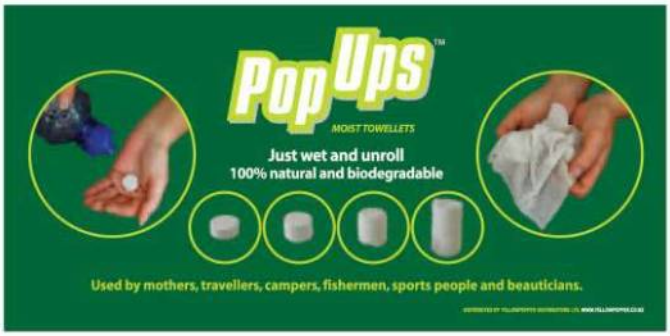

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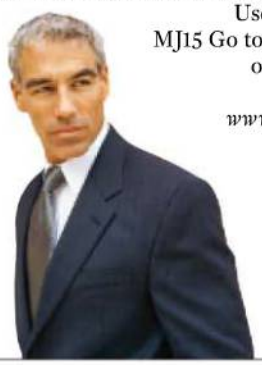

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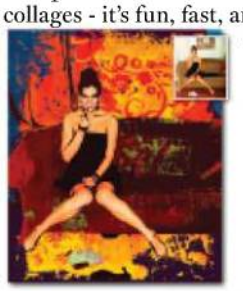

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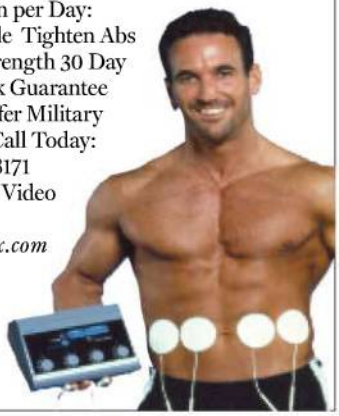

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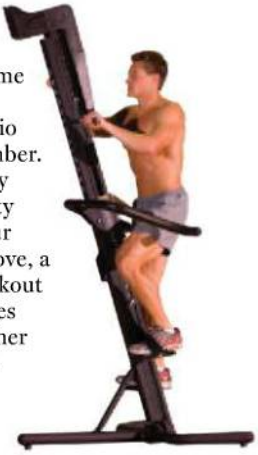

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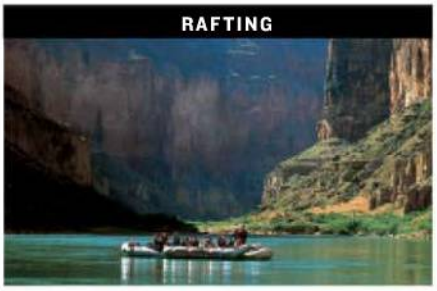

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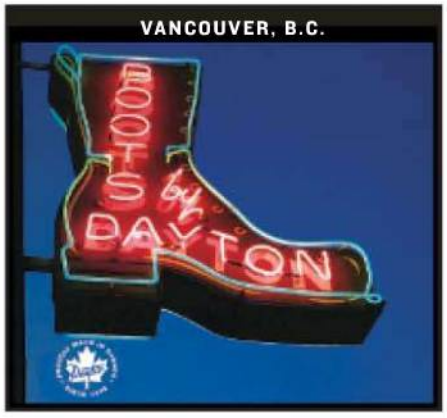

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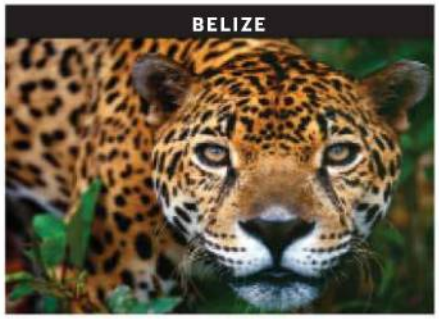

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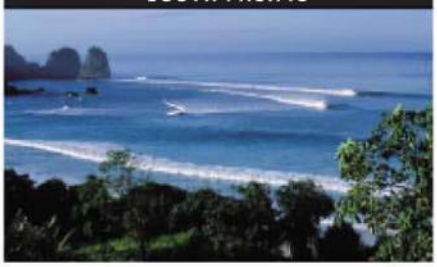

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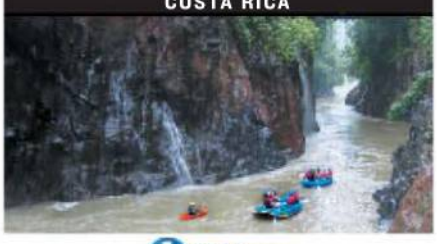

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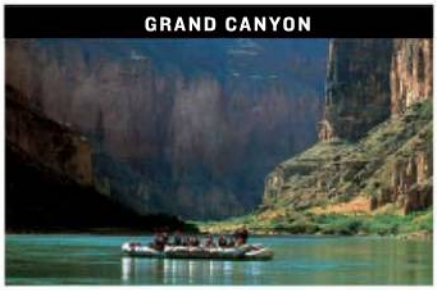

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What's the best survival skill you know?
I like food, but I got tired of being heavy, so I went on a really good regime of eating healthy and exercising for an hour a day and lost 80 pounds over 10 months. I'm not a nutty, macrobiotic kind of guy, but I enjoy being alive.

What should every man know about money?
It's best not to get involved with the power and prestige of money. Treating people with contempt and rudeness is unspeakable. I see this in the movie industry all the time. The main thing to remember is that we all end up in the same dust cart at the end of the walk.

What's the best advice you've ever received?
I was living in London during the Cuban missile crisis. I called my father and told him I was worried about nuclear holocaust. He said, "It's okay because it will be over in a flash in London and you won't feel a thing. If you were still in Wales, you'd suffer from the fallout." I got a big relief from that.

What book should every man read?
There is a book by Theodore Rubin called *Compassion and Self-Hate*. It's not a self-help book, but it is, in a way. It's a look inside the darkness of the human soul — how we get sucked into giving ourselves a bad time and how we can actually talk ourselves away from that.

What movie should every man see?
I'm not a movie aficionado, so I don't know. I like good movies, but some people take it all very seriously. They get consumed and have lectures and talk about the arc of the part and the metaphor. I don't know what they're talking about. Somebody mentions Orson Welles, and I think, "Here we go again." Just learn your lines, show up, and do it. I'm probably a very shallow actor.

When is it okay for a man to lie?
We all are liars. If you see someone who has an unfortunate predisposition to being fat, I think the thing is never to comment on it. A guy said to me once, "You're packing on the pounds." I said, "Your breath stinks. Do I ever tell you that?" When someone says, "Do you mind if I'm honest?" say yes.

Do you have a scar that tells a story?
I was in woodworking class in school, working with a saw, and sliced through almost half the tendon in my left hand. The scar will be with me for the rest of my years.

Who is the toughest guy you know?
Alec Baldwin is a really strong man with great integrity. Before we started filming *The Edge* together in the Rocky Mountains, I dislodged something in my neck. I was in a lot of pain but thought I was duty-bound to finish this film. Alec just stopped everything one day and said, "This is crazy; you're going to the hospital." They found out I had a herniated disc, they operated, and I was back at work within three days. I admired Alec for being tough. Maybe a lot of people don't like that, but I do because he's been very forthright, very honest, and faithful.

How should a man handle getting older?
Accept it. It's funny how life and time change you. It's like the molecules of your being get realigned. I don't take offense as easily as I used to. Everything I do now is like a gravy train. I work when a good part comes along, and if it doesn't, then I paint and write music.

What advice would you give the younger you?
Lighten the fuck up.

—INTERVIEWED BY STEVEN RUSSELL

What's the key to staying young?

I II III

(I) I paint, and I play the piano a lot — complex exercises in Bach and Chopin. It doesn't matter if I play them well or not. I practice and practice to keep supple the coordination in my arms, my hands, my fingers. (II) I do memory tests. I memorize lists of 450 to 500 words in sequence and link them all together with mental images so they flow easily. (III) Then I'll write a story using those words, just to exercise my imagination and brain cells. It's fun.

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