

Men's Journal

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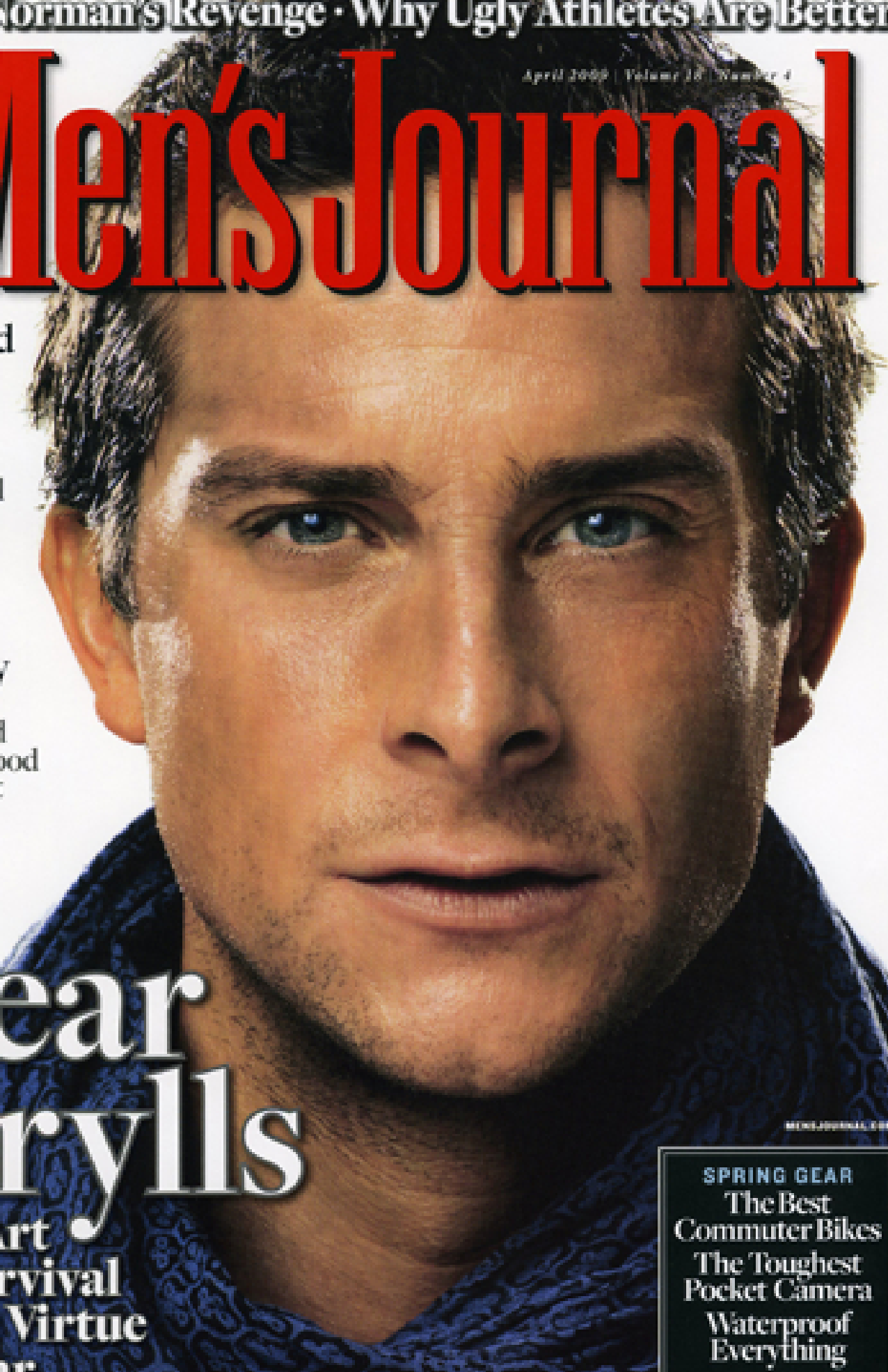
Baghdad on the Border
How the Drug War Has Killed the Good Times in Tijuana

Back-Country Passage
Skiing and Brotherhood in Wildest Idaho

Man Vs. Wild

Bear Grylls

The Art of Survival & the Virtue of Fear



SPRING GEAR
The Best Commuter Bikes
The Toughest Pocket Camera
Waterproof Everything

EVERYDAY BIKES

Whether it's to save on gas, get in shape, or enjoy the outdoors, more people are commuting by bike. We found our favorite two-wheelers for every type of ride.

BY DOUG SCHNITZPAHN AND JOSH FULMER



COMMUTER BIKE
Special Section

DETAIL: A front mud flap keeps grime off your pants; a rear one protects bikers riding behind you.

THE SINGLE SPEED

▶ **KEDLKE 935**
Plenty of cool urbanites have retrofitted old track bikes into single-speed commuters, but if you're not into DIY, the steel-framed 935 comes ready to ride, with brakes, fenders, and fenders bars that let you stretch out without dropping into a back-breaking racing position.

The flip-flop rear wheel hub offers a choice: a freewheel on one side for relaxed coasting down hills, or a fixed gear on the other side for a more intense — and gratifying — ride. [\$499; redlinebicycles.com]
BEST FOR: Commuters with flat routes less than 10 miles.

REVIEWED THIS MONTH

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TOASTERS | pg. 96
HOME PIZZA TOOLS | pg. 98

GEAR

GEAR

THE HAULER

▶ KONA UTE

The 6.5-foot-long Ute transports everything from camping gear to groceries to a trusting passenger. It won't win any races, but the eight-speed aluminum beast felt more maneuverable in Brooklyn traffic than we'd anticipated. Pack smart, though.

Heavy cargo needs to be carried in panniers, not on the acacia wood rack; otherwise a high center of gravity makes the Kona more unstable than Amy Winehouse. [\$699; konausa.com]
BEST FOR: Anyone serious about kicking the car habit.

DETAIL:

The Ute comes with one of Kona's covetous, water-resistant panniers.

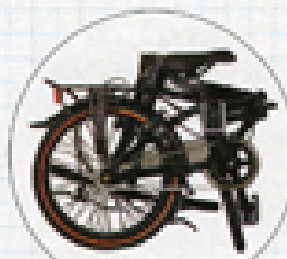


COMMUTER BIKE
Special Section

THE FOLDER

▶ DAHON VITESSE D780

Sport cyclists and folding bikes usually mix as well as water and oil, but once we locked together the aluminum Vitesse, we saw the light. (Well, a dim glow, perhaps.) Despite a short wheelbase and small, 20-inch wheels, the ride was stable — agile, even — during pedestrian sidings. The Dahon comes commute-ready, with a rack, chain guard, and fenders, making it hit the price/quality hot spot in folding bikes. [\$699; dahon.com]
BEST FOR: City folk with limited storage and lots of confidence.



DETAIL: Flip two latches and drop the seat post — which doubles as a tire pump — to fold up the Dahon.



THE ELECTRIC

▶ SCHWINN TAILWIND

The Tailwind is the Prince of the two-wheeled set, with a battery-powered electric motor mounted to the front wheel that augments your pedaling (but won't drive the bike itself). Though its system cuts out at a meager 17 mph, the Schwinn was a pleasure once we sat back and enjoyed the relaxed ride. Then we came home and had to muscle the 50-pound bike into our garage. Walk-up apartment dwellers need not apply. [\$1,200; schwinnbicycles.com]
BEST FOR: Suits who don't want to get sweaty before work.

THE ROAD RACER

▶ FELT 280

The 280's slightly relaxed geometry combines with a carbon fork and seat post to spare your back on long commutes, yet its aluminum frame is stiff enough to deliver powerful strokes when it's time to fly. In fact, with 27 speeds and a weight of less than 21 pounds, it doubles as a decent trainer for mountain and local races. [\$1,099; feltbicycles.com]
BEST FOR: Riders who'll gladly trade some comfort for speed.



DETAIL: The Tailwind needs only a half-hour of plug-in time to recharge. Other electrics need five hours.

DETAIL: The 280's two sets of brake levers mean no changing hand positions if you're riding upright.



DETAIL: The primitive rear coaster brake is backed up by an Avid disc brake on the front wheel.

THE THREE-SPEED

▶ SWOBO OTIS

Swobo designer Sky Yeager so loved SRAM's three-speed gear system, built into the rear hub to protect it from dirt and curb smearing, it inspired her to make the Otis. The result is a gutsy aluminum bike that takes on any hill, yet eagerly bunny hops

curbs and dodges cars. The rear coaster brake (like on your first bike) takes some getting used to, but hard skills will leave you smiling after a long day at the office. [\$739; swobo.com]
BEST FOR: Urban riders with a few too many hills.

