

THE **CLEAN TECH**
BUBBLE BURSTS

DEBATE TEAMS
GONE WILD

WORLD'S BEST
CHEATS & CHEATERS

WIRED

YIELD | FEB 2012

**NO
TRAFFIC
JAMS**

**NO
CRASHES**

**UNLIMITED
TEXTING**

**YOUR
NEXT
CAR
WILL
DRIVE
ITSELF**

The unstoppable
future of robotic
vehicles, from
Google to Mercedes.

by Tom Vanderbilt



RECOMMENDATION ENGINE

Banned Sports Gear

Not approved for official play, these athletic aids can give you the unfair advantage you deserve. —Erik Malinowski

LOUISVILLE SLUGGER SL12Z5 Z-1000 COMPOSITE BAT

Perfect for: Making pitchers cower in fear. **Geek factor:** Banned by the NCAA. Aluminum and composite bats must adhere to rules on how quickly balls fly off them. Those that don't, like this 32-inch, 24-ounce cudgel, are supposed to be used only during practice. Rules are for suckers. \$310

HEAVY METAL SENIOR HOCKEY STICK

Perfect for: Getting a grip like Gretzky's. **Geek factor:** Banned by the NHL. Puck control is all in the wrist, and practicing with this heavy steel stick encourages muscle development to gain that control, helping players score between visits to the penalty box. \$235

PRINCE NXG SILENCER RACKET DAMPENER

Perfect for: Keeping your backhand rock solid. **Geek factor:** Not yet approved by the ITF. Vibration is your enemy when returning a 100-mph serve. This plastic clip-on, which fits all tennis rackets, reduces pesky string movement by more than 50 percent. \$3

POLARA ULTIMATE STRAIGHT GOLF BALLS

Perfect for: Slicing a few digits off your score. **Geek factor:** Banned by the USGA. Dimples influence a golf ball's flight, so Polara placed this orb's 386 variously sized dents at strategic depths to minimize sidespin. The result: Hooks and slices cut by 75 percent. \$25 (box of 12)

SPIRA MEN'S STINGER XLT

Perfect for: Proving to your kid that you can still run (sort of) fast. **Geek factor:** Tech not approved by the USATF. Elite runners can win or lose by a hundredth of a second. Spira says that its patented WaveSpring tech returns up to 96 percent of the force of each step, which might be just enough to help you finish first. \$130