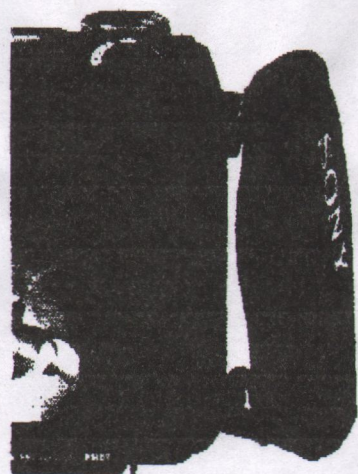


# SAVING!



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**ES&CO**

what we can expect to see on the shelves of sports shops in the millennium came earlier this year when two transport designers from Coventry won a competition staged by the Royal Society of Arts to devise the ultimate running shoe. Toby Birkinhead and Dean Carbis, both heading for careers in the car industry, were snapped up by the competition's sponsors, Reebok, to work in its US headquarters.

Birkinhead spent months analysing the human foot before coming up with the TendonTech, a shoe which mirrors the foot's own tendon structure. Laces are replaced with a system operated by the energy from a watch battery which allows the shoe to expand as you put it on and then contract so that it moulds itself around the foot. There are shock absorbers in the sole and a waterproof upper.

Nike's goat-inspired trainer could well be on the market some time next year. But there is plenty more that our feet have yet to experience before then. "Memory Foam is something we will be adding to our shoes soon," says Eyre. "This is a substance that is already used in ski boots and ensures the inside of a shoe hugs the exact contours of your foot." In the near future, we will be seeing ratchet fastenings — like those on ski boots — instead of laces. But of course, such technical advancement comes at a price — and it is usually a hefty one. In fact, investing in a shoe that will allow you to run up the side of a mountain or protect your feet from the most extreme weather conditions is probably so costly that you wouldn't dream of getting them sweaty and wet.

## WHAT'S AFOOT

- The Adidas Traxion sole (main picture) with protruding "lugs" like football studs for extra grip in rugged or slippery conditions (for stockists call 0161 419 2500).
- Next month Nike launches a range of waterproof trainers with a breathable weatherproof Gore-Tex lining and a "sticky rubber" outsole for added grip.
- Memory foam, which hugs the contour of the foot (Nike stockists on 0800 0561640).
- Reebok's DMX, which give you cushioning where you need it as your feet hit the ground (stockists on 01524 580100).

## On cyberpicket lines



WE'VE got Internet banking, Internet sex, Internet hype (aplenty). Now say hello to cyberpicketing, the most fashionable way for little people to get their own back.

Hacking for Girlies recently sabotaged the New York Times website, replacing the usual sober journalism with a rant in support of imprisoned hacker Kevin Mitnick.

At BP, for instance, they were surprised to discover a new website, [www.britishpetroleum.co.uk](http://www.britishpetroleum.co.uk), that was eerily close in appearance to their corporate home page, [www.bp.com](http://www.bp.com). However, all the site's links led to information about one Mr Bunt, and how his car had been damaged in the carwash of a BP (franchise) garage.

BP was perturbed. Legal soundings were taken, Bunt's Internet service provider was contacted and the site was suspended. But BP did contact Commercial Union (the insurers of the franchisee). Bunt got his repair. David 1, Goliath nil.

When McDonald's notoriously sued a pair of eco-pamphleteers, not only was the year-in, year-out publicity appalling, but it gave birth to [www.mcspotlight.org](http://www.mcspotlight.org). The case is long gone, but the site is still expanding.



And so to Mr Donovan, director of a marketing company which used to think up ideas for Shell. Convinced that some of his ideas seemed to have been adopted by Shell as its own, he started to complain to the company. The full acrimonious saga can be enjoyed at <http://don-marketing.com>. Does Mr Donovan have any pointers for an effective cyberpicket?

First, it needn't cost a fortune. Donovan's site is the work of 19-year-old Nick Gill, who replied to an ad for an Internet wizz. The site has cost hundreds rather than thousands of pounds. Second, don't forget to register the site with all the search engines, otherwise your target's lawyers may have trouble finding you. Third, don't look too professional: It spoils the aura of plucky amateurishness.

**Neil Courtis**

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