

# STUFF YOU CAN USE

by Mike Deme and Aaron Teasdale

**Big Agnes Fly Creek SL1** (\$300; 877-554-8975, [www.bigagnes.com](http://www.bigagnes.com))

Big Agnes, the Colorado-based camping gear company behind some of the world's lightest tents, has upped the featherweight-shelter-ante with the Fly Creek SL1. Weighing 2 pounds, 3 ounces, this ethereal, free-standing shelter shaves grams at every



opportunity while still remaining reassuringly stormproof. Better still, it's just as weatherproof in its fast-fly configuration (only poles, fly, and footprint), while dropping its weight to 1 pound, 6 ounces, making it perhaps the premier single-person, ultralight touring shelter of its kind. -AT

**Planet Bike Versa Rack** (\$37; [www.planet-bike.com](http://www.planet-bike.com), 866-256-8510).

More and more bikes feature disc brakes as part of their standard package, especially mountain bikes. With this in mind, Planet Bike offers the Versa Rack, and the name fits. Constructed of oversized 6061 tubular aluminum, this rear rack will fit over 95 percent of bicycles out there due to the adjustable upper and lower mount points, and, if your bike doesn't have upper rack mounts,



Planet Bike includes two mounting brackets to make attachment possible. While the rack may not be suitable for an around-the-world bicycle adventure, it is more than capable of meeting the demands of the two-week journey and daily commuting needs. -MD

**Princeton Tec Swerve** (\$30; [www.princetontec.com](http://www.princetontec.com), 609-298-9331).

For us in the northern hemisphere, the earth's movement past the September Equinox means that our lengthy summer days will soon be coming to an end. For bike commuters, it also means it's time to light up our bikes again.



If you're in the market for a taillight for your bike, you should check out the Princeton Tec Swerve. It easily attaches to either seatpost or seatstay and operates in two modes: steady, in which the two lights stay constantly lit; or flash, where they alternately are on and off. It's also possible to move the switch from one side of the light to the other without much problem. The Swerve operates on two AAA batteries and has a burn time of 70 hours. -MD

**Crumpler Part and Parcel** (\$175; [www.crumplerbags.com](http://www.crumplerbags.com), 718-384-3020).

Whenever I commute by bike, there's a messenger bag on my back. I like their versatility both on the bike and off.

The Crumpler Part and Parcel offers just about everything I look for in a messenger bag: adjustabil-

ity, stability while on your back (in part due to the Third Leg strap), ample cargo and organizational space, and protection for important items. In my case, I often carry my laptop computer and the Part and Parcel has a built-in protective pocket specifically for that purpose. The main strap of the Part and Parcel is very long, longer than any strap I've seen on a messenger bag, but it can be adjusted in two ways and the bag features a side loop in which the extra can be neatly tucked away. All in all, the Part and Parcel is an excellent messenger bag. -MD



**Schwalbe Marathon Extreme** (\$78; 888-700-5860, [www.schwalbe.com](http://www.schwalbe.com))

Achieving an almost supernatural combination of off-road traction and on-pavement performance, the latest addition to Schwalbe's venerable Marathon line may be the finest variable-surface, rough-stuff touring tire in the world. Thanks to its ingenious scored-surface, recessed-tread pattern, the Extreme feels almost like a slick on pavement while transforming into a mountain-bike tire on dirt. Sporting integrated puncture protection and soft shoulder-rubber for cornering traction, the Extreme is also surprisingly light at a mere 570 grams for the 26 x 2.00 size. A perfect tire for the Great Divide Mountain Bike Route or wherever your next expedition takes you. -AT

