

OVERLAND

JOURNAL



Sahara Empty Quarter, Part II

Family Tent Test

Hi-Lift Jack Skills

Exploring Vermont

A few of the best new products we found at the Outdoor Retailer show

Surefire SAINT \$185

Resistance might be futile. For years I've shunned headlamps because, a) they're dorky, and, b) headlamp wearers always shine them in your eyes when they talk to you, then say, "Oh, sorry!" after destroying your night vision. But the Surefire SAINT might change my mind. Why? First, its black anodized aluminum housing is minimally dorky—perhaps even vaguely SWAT-esque—as well as shockproof and waterproof. The headstrap is by far the most comfortable I've tried. The lens produces an even, dead-spot-free beam in the same wide pattern as your field of vision, and it's adjustable with a twist from 1 to a conversation-partner-dazzling 100 lumens. Plus, it can run on one, two, or three 123a lithium batteries *or* two AA alkaline cells. On three 123s it will burn for 48 hours on the medium, 10-lumen setting. (J.H.) surefire.com, 800-828-8809

Nitelze Figure 9 \$2.50 to \$10

Does the stupid rabbit go down the hole or out of it after he goes around the tree? Never fumble knots again with the Figure 9 rope tighteners and carabiners from Nitelze, which allow you to instantly secure tent guylines or cargo tiedowns. Available with working load capacities up to 300 pounds, the design facilitates fast tension adjustment after the load is controlled, so if, say, a guyline sags because your tent fly stretches in the rain, you can snug it in seconds. (J.H.) niteize.com, 800-678-6483

Trailcharge \$425, Trailbatt \$200

Portable solar arrays with real power are as rare as sunny days in Seattle. The Trailcharge boasts a 26-watt rating, meaning that in real conditions it should approach 20 watts of output, over 1.5 amps at 12 volts. That's enough to effortlessly recharge laptop, camera, or flashlight batteries, or keep a deep-cycle automotive battery topped up. One key to the Trailcharge's efficiency is the pair of aluminum poles that turn the four-panel folding array into a rigid structure, so you can lean it at a proper angle to the sun. You can pair the Trailcharge with the lightweight, lithium, 6-amp-hour Trailbatt for a complete power system. (J.H.) trailcharge.com, 719-488-1600