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Men's Health

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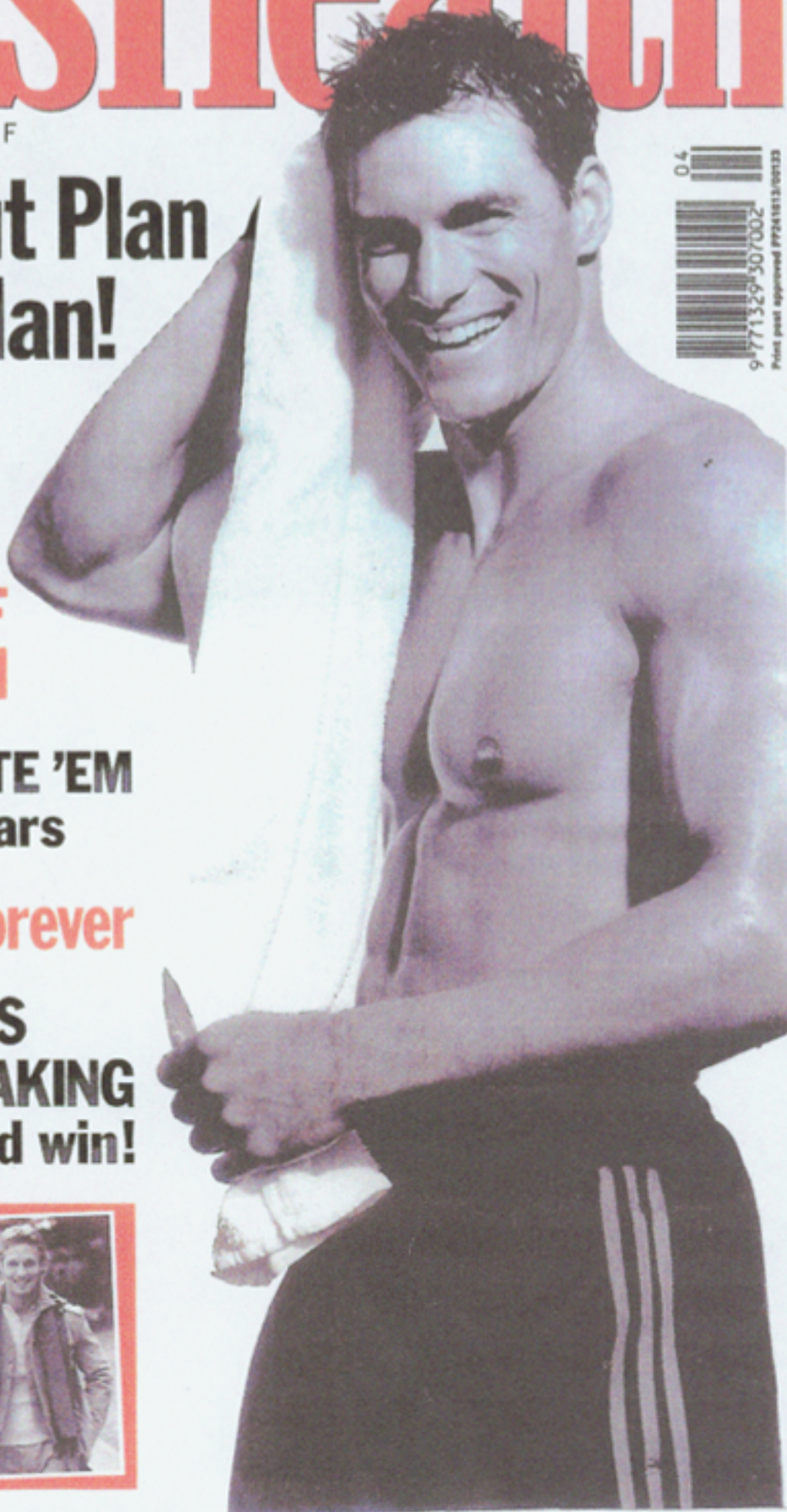
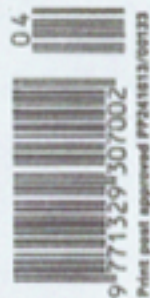
9 SECRETS OF SEDUCTION

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Enter the -ZONE

Can a piece of hi-tech circuitry worn around the neck really enhance stamina, energy and sporting performance? Can it reduce stress and jet lag? Set your dial to Cautiously.

Open-minded and prepare to enter the world of QLink

BY MATT CLEARY

DAYDREAM WITH US for a moment: it's the 18th tee at Augusta in the 2003 US Masters. You lead by one shot over your playing partner, Tiger Woods, who's birdied the last five holes and just smashed his ball 330 metres down the fairway. The crowd is going bananas. Tiger high fives his caddie, double pumps his fist and bellows "C'MON!" like Lleyton Hewitt in a long queue at the bank.

You stand over your ball knowing there are about 300 million people pondering your mental state and that most are assuming you'll choke. Are you cool?

Are bears Catholic? Of course you're not cool! But what may loosen the choke hold of nervous tension is the QLink, a device its makers say neutralises stress and transports golfers into that fabled land of peak performance known as "The Zone".

That place where your mind is at peace: balls fly sweetly off the clubface and putts roll unerringly towards the hole, like bees zeroing in on the first blooms of spring. A place where you really can "be the ball".

Sound too good to be true? Perhaps, but there are enough people singing QLink's praises – and not just golfers – to make one wonder if there might indeed be something to back up the brochure's bold statements, which claim that QLink can:

- » Increase stamina, energy, concentration and resilience to stress;
- » Enhance sleep, sporting performance and mental acuity; and,
- » Reduce jet lag, headaches and fatigue.

WHAT IS IT? QLink is a pendant worn around the neck. It contains a microchip, a gold-plated tuning board, a resonating cell and 25m of copper coil wound into its three-centimetre diameter.

The chip is programmed with what its makers, Clarus Products International, call "sympathetic resonating technology (SRT)" – a pulsating frequency which is claimed to protect wearers from the stress created by electromagnetic fields (EMFs), those invisible waves that radiate from mobile phones, computers and microwave ovens.

QLink, says the brochure, acts like a "tuning fork for the body, resonating with the optimum life-supporting frequencies for the human energy system".

DOES IT WORK? QLink's Web site and pamphlets are packed with endorsements from academics, sports stars and everyday punters. In a November 2001 White Paper, Dr Beverly Rubik, a US specialist in biophysics who served on the White House Health Care Task Force on Alternative and

Complementary Medicine, tabled data from hundreds of tests on the cells, blood, organs and muscles of people wearing the QLink.

The results, she claimed, proved conclusively that "SRT in products such as the QLink pendant... can counter stress from a variety of situations. As a result, performance, wellbeing and dynamic stability are enhanced".

But being new technology with no historical scientific equivalent – it's not a magnet, copper bracelet or Steve Waugh's red hanky – Australian scientists are divided over its effectiveness.

As the head of Biomedical Science at Wollongong University, Dr Paul Else, observes: "In this area, it's hard to find an expert. It falls in the crack. From a personal point of view, the research seems tenuous. Even though a statement like 'biological systems would be strengthened and more self-resonant with its own healthy function' sounds good, what does it mean?"

Not much, according to one physicist, who remarked: "It sounds like total crap and a scam to separate desperate and ill people from their money."

However, the results of clinical trials carried out by Wollongong University and Imperial College, London, studying QLink's effect on combating EMFs had the paper's author, Dr Rodney Croft,