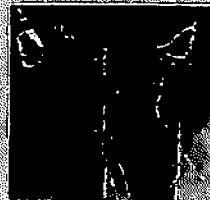


Watchdog Running Behind

If you've wondered whether the finely toned derriere bounding along a country road in a recent Nike TV commercial really belongs to a 51-year-old woman—as the ad claims—the answer is an enthusiastic yes.



The TV spot focuses on the runner's buff bod, then ends with a close-up of the crinkly eyes and graying temples of Kathryn Martin. A relative latecomer to the running world, Martin is a one-time world record holder at the Masters (a competition

for older runners) and has held U.S. records for the 800, 1,500, and 3,000 meters. Cynics may say Nike is engaging in the usual exploitation, but we're giving this ad our seal of approval. Fiftysomething women in ads tend to be a high-

strung bunch, worrying about menopause, arthritis, or their husbands' cholesterol levels. It's refreshing to see a middle-aged woman so self-assured she can flaunt her athletic rear end. Just don't hate her because she's bootyful. —Barbara Lippert