



SPORTS WATCHES 2010 – real value is back

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Just like the watch industry itself, the landscape of sports watches has changed. Where in the past, flashy, not necessarily useful sports watches have dominated the spotlight, that's no longer the case. In the place of these 'out there' watches are highly usable sports timepieces that are priced realistically and are versatile, durable timepieces meant to be used and abused.

That being said, however, even sports watches have to strive to stand out from the pack, and they do that in several ways with an intriguing package of features, unique designs, professional specifications, or a combination of all of these.

The attraction of sports watches

One of the reasons people are attracted to sports watches is that they are rough and rugged and suited for just about anything. They don't have to be water resistant to 200 metres to go into the pool, into the hot tub, running or mountain climbing, but it certainly doesn't hurt. Consumers buy sports watches so they don't have to worry about them – no matter what they do.

You can't wear a sophisticated dress watch to go snorkeling in Hawaii, you'd ruin it, but you CAN wear some of today's sports watches to the office or a stylish dinner.

Some customers buy sports watches for a specific activity, with an appropriate list of features and specifications, while others buy sports watches to be their primary watch, easily moving from activity to activity, from office to gym and anywhere else.

Here's a look at some of the newest sports watches introduced on the market this year.

Mix Of features

There are some great features that sports watches can offer that other watches can't – because they are bigger, there is more room for things like chronograph sub dials, tachymeter, telemeters, pulsometers, unidirectional rotating bezels, dual time zones, large, easy-to-read displays and more.

This year, many companies presented sports watches that offer useful features. Here is a selection of the best:

TX, part of the Timex Group, continued to introduce traditional mechanical complications in quartz form, at incredible prices. This year saw the debut of the TX 650 GT Fly-back Chronograph, using a movement unique to TX. In addition to the Fly-back chronograph, this watch also offers a tachymeter scale, dual



EXPEDITION MILITARY by Timex

multifunction retrograde displays and a second time zone. Another introduction for TX at BaselWorld was the TX 600 Pilot Fly-back Chronograph in unique grey on grey and blue on blue variations.

Staying in the Timex group, they also introduced a great looking collection called the Expedition Military. Drawing on vintage military designs, this 45mm collection is available in Chronograph and Classic variations. In addition, Timex introduced the Sports Luxury series, featuring Asian mechanical movements with exposed balance wheels, retrograde calendars and power reserve indicators. Also, Timex introduced the 200 metres water resistant Expedition Dive, the Expedition E-Instruments that feature compass, tide and thermometer and the WS4 Carabiner, a carabiner timepiece with a wide screen display that shows time, altimeter, barometer, compass and thermometer.

Breitling debuted its new B01 in-house chronograph movement, available only in its



CHRONOMAT and SUPEROCEAN by Breitling

Chronomat collection for now. An incredible accomplishment, as an integrated chronograph is one of watchmaking's 'holy grails', the B01 is a result of years of development and testing and will be the basis for a number of complications moving forward.

Breitling also revisited the SuperOcean, going back to its launch in 1957 to gain design inspiration. Water resistant to 1,500 metres, this is an attractive, rugged watch that comes in five inner dial ring colours – blue, yellow, red, silver or black.



Victorinox Swiss Army is staying with its commitment to chronographs – 35 per cent of its watches are chronographs, which is double the industry average. Some of the great watches introduced at BaselWorld this year were the Infantry Vintage, which is the

first automatic chronograph in the Infantry collection, a new silver dial in the Alpnach Chronograph and the Chrono Pro collection. For the company's ladies chronograph see Sophie Furley's article in this issue.

ENGINEER MASTER DIVER WORLDTIME by Ball Watch

Ball Watch introduced the Engineer Master Diver Worldtime – this spectacular automatic

BARRACUDA by Cimier

watch, which is a day date world timer, water resistant to 300 metres, was the best value at the show, retailing for \$2,200! Incredible.



Tissot's T-Touch series saw the introduction of the Sailing Touch, with dedicated sailing features. The standard and professional T-Touch watches are feature-laden, giving the customer great 'bang for the buck', as they include alarms, a chronograph, temperature, barometer and a compass.

Cimier, who works with an eclectic mix of sporting ambassadors, including Swiss gold medal snowboarder Tanja Frieden, introduced two very attractive Seven Seas automatic models, the Barracuda and the Blue Marlin, automatic chronographs with a second time zone indication on the bezel, along with a day and date display and water resistant to 100 metres.



TREAD 1 by Devon

Unique designs

Sports watches, just by their rough and rugged nature, tend to stick out from the crowd, while at the same time, some brands really strive to be distinctive and recognizable. Some of the brands that succeeded this year include:

Devon who introduced the Tread 1, which uses multiple moving belts to display the time, resulting in a look unlike anything else on the market. Designed by Jason Wilbur, the Tread 1 is something unique to the industry – a brand new design that was completely developed in the USA. In addition to this, it is being manufactured and assembled in the United States, using a very small percentage of parts from outside the country.

“All the mechanical parts of the movement are custom manufactured from scratch specifically for the Tread 1; from steel, titanium and aluminium, all CNC machined, wire EDM, and so on,” Wilbur details. “No off-the-shelf parts exist in the Tread 1 except for the battery, the microchip, wires and screws.”

The **Bell & Ross BR-01** was a breakthrough in styling and performance, and Bell & Ross is turning heads again with the vintage look of its new Vintage BR, which is capitalizing on an overall trend in the watch industry towards classicism and vintage looks. This watch is no poser, however, as it still has the sports watch chops of 200 metre water resistance and pilot watch looks.

At **Linde Werdelin**, the brand introduced a new ‘tattoo’ version of the Oktopus, where the case is intricately engraved, based on the designs of Henning Jørgensen, a famous tattoo artist, from Royal Tattoo in Denmark. Though expensive, 15,600 Euros, it sure stood out from the crowd.

“I see the Oktopus Tattoo as a contemporary piece of art for one’s wrist, Linde Werdelin’s first lifestyle watch where body art meets *haute horlogerie*,” says Morten Linde, Creative Director and Co-Founder of Linde Werdelin.

VINTAGE BR 123 & 126 CARBON CHRONOGRAH by Bell & Ross



OKTOPUS TATTOO by Linde Werdelin

This year marks the 50th anniversary of **Corum** Admiral’s Cup timepieces. The Admiral’s Cup is a great design and this year Corum introduced some fantastic versions to mark its 50th anniversary. The Admiral’s Cup is the prototype of the true sports watch that is just at home at the office or an elegant dinner.

Eterna is introducing its Heritage limited edition line and two of the more noteworthy watches in this great collection are the Pulsometer and the Kon Tiki. The Pulsometer is from 1942 and helps track the beating of your heart (which should beat faster when wearing this cool watch, limited to 1942 pieces), while



ONE by Snyder

the Kon Tiki, water resistant to 200 metres, honours Thor Heyerdahl's 1973 expedition and is limited to 1973 pieces.

One of the newest brands on the market, **Equipe** from Detroit, Michigan in the United States combines interesting designs and features with a value price point. Though some of the designs in the collections are a bit derivative, the use of ball joints for lugs and the details from the automotive industry (like pistons, gauges, tire tread straps, etc.) make this brand quite interesting.

Anonimo, following a trend in the industry, introduced an interesting case colour, called Drass, which is gun metal grey that results from sandblasting steel to increase its resistance to wear. "Anonimo has been a case manufacturer since 1939, in Firenze, Italy," says Federico Massaccesi, President of Anonimo. "We want to emphasize our cases." In addition, Anonimo introduced a new opening price point of \$2,300 which, according to Massaccesi, "is a good answer in today's market."

Professional specifications

There is still a strong portion of the sports watch market that focuses on watches for the

professional, including specifications not needed, but often very much appreciated and desired, by the general population.

Oris has had a long association with aviation and this year Oris introduced the BC3 Advanced, redesigned for the first time in ten years. Advanced is the aerobatics class for experienced pilots and this watch was developed with acrobatic pilot Don Vito Wyprächtiger. In diving, Oris introduced its Col Moschin Italian Special Forces series, which accompanied these professionals on 9,000 metre skydives and 40 metre dives. Water resistant to 1,000 metres, this watch was developed for these commandoes.

Another professional watch is the Luminor Deep Diver, water resistant to 500 metres and designed for actual use.

At **CX Swiss Military**, the record holder for deep dives, the '20,000 Feet' lives on. Massive, the 20,000 Feet is a real tool, capable of going down to depths unheard of – 20,000 feet (6,000 metres), and it's a COSC-certified automatic chronograph as well. "We came across

CRONOSCOPIO MARK II DRASS GOLD by Anonimo
20,000 FEET by CX Swiss Military



BALLJOINT by Equipe

several articles in diving magazines where professional divers complained about today's diving watches being 'chocolate box' watches, good for the yacht club but not of much use when doing some serious diving," says President Frank M. Bürgin. "We decided to buck that trend and come up with a new interpretation of the ultimate diving watch – ultimate not in price or complications (who needs a tourbillon when diving?), but ultimate as in 'reduced to the





P'6780 DIVER by Porsche Design

max' – form following functionality, no frills, the perfect back-up instrument that will never let you down."

Luminox, long renowned for its work with the Navy SEALs, law enforcement and military all over the world, introduced the new Deep Diver this year at BaselWorld. Water resistant to 500 metres and using an automatic helium release



YACHTIMER by Nautica

valve. Designed to be used in the world's oceans by professionals, the 45mm Deep Diver timepiece is individually numbered and limited in production. The watch comes in a specially-designed, water resistant box, which can be used to store gear like the diver's mobile phone, camera and more safely while on deck. Corum, with the Admiral's Cup, has long had an association with the sea, but since the discontinuation of the Dive Bubble, the brand has been missing a true diver's watch. This BaselWorld changed all that, with the introduction of the Deep Hull, a 48mm titanium dive watch water resistant to 1,000 metres.

Doxa has long been one of the most recognized dive watches, thanks to its signature orange dial. This year, Doxa introduced the Sub 800 TI Professional, a lightweight titanium timepiece water resistant to 800 metres.

Porsche Design's new dive watch, the P'6780 Diver, is the brand's second diving watch in more than 25 years. This brand-new timepiece is powered by an automatic movement, handles depths of up to 1,000 metres and features a dial that offers excellent readability in the darkness of the abyss. The Diver's three-part case design is both unique and particularly intricate: acting as the housing for the dial and the movement, a circular stainless steel container hinges back into a bead-blasted titanium bridge structure.

Bremont expanded its revolutionary movement suspension system and the technology refined through the development of its Martin-Baker exclusive timepiece to the SuperMarine line. "These watches have to go through all the tests that the ejector seat has to go through, like vibration, shock, climate, temperature extremes, salt and much more," says Nick English, Bremont Watch Company. "We had to redesign the way the watch works. We have new technology in the case, so the movement is suspended in a rubber mount. It took two years of testing to develop this. I am pretty sure that this has got to be one of the most tested watches in the world."



MARTIN-BAKER by Bremont

Breguet introduced an interesting version of its Marine Royale, which is water resistant to 300 metres and features an underwater alarm. This offers users a way to remind themselves when it's time to come up from the deep.

Sporting associations

Sports and timepieces have a natural symbiosis, as many sports need to be timed. This year marked the announcement of many new partnerships and associations. First and foremost, **Cabestan** announced its association with Ferrari. Previously with Girard-Perregaux and Officine Panerai, Ferrari has chosen to work with Cabestan on a very exclusive, 300,000 Euro watch that can only be sold to Ferrari owners. The Scuderia Ferrari One, designed by Cabestan's Jean-François Ruchonnet, is limited to 60 pieces. "I met the people at Ferrari, and they said that there should be real value in the watch - you can't just put the Ferrari logo on the dial and try to sell the watch," he explains. "Every one of their cars has real value. We started with the Cabestan movement, the engine, then built the body around it using materials from Ferrari and Formula 1."

Speaking of Formula 1, **Hublot** announced that it is now the official watch of Formula 1,

supplanting Jacques Lemans. You can expect some Formula 1 themed watches in the near future. **Bovet** announced an association with high-end car builder Pininfarina, including a limited edition Bovet Tourbillon Grande Date by Pininfarina (limited to 80 pieces worldwide), while **Graham** is working with the Mercedes GP Petronas Formula One team.

Staying in auto racing, Luminox and Tony Kanaan introduced a new watch designed in partnership with Kanaan and featuring his colours. "At Luminox, we are delighted to be working with Tony Kanaan," says Luminox President Barry Cohen. "It's an honour for a Luminox timepiece to be part of his essential gear. Having him so deeply involved with the design was a true pleasure and we look forward to developing this partnership in the years to come."

TW Steel and Dario Franchitti worked together on a special watch. "I told Stewart Morrison, a fellow Scot who does the PR for TW Steel, that I'd love to do my own watch, because I love watches, and we came to an agreement," Franchitti, the winningest British open wheel driver in history, remembers. "We worked on the design together and we launched the watch this year in Indianapolis at the Speedway. "The company came up with the basic design, then I added my own touches," he adds. "It was a fun process to get involved in - I wanted some



BOVET TOURBILLON GRANDE DATE by Pininfarina



CHRONO 4 BADBOY by Eberhard & Co.

detailing on the dial, to make it distinctive to me. The material of the strap was something I specified, it's really comfortable and has an association with racing. I've shown the other drivers in IRL and the reception has been great."

Alpina continued its relationship with the 12 Hours of Sebring, introducing a new Automatic Chrono GMT.

Certina, part of the Swatch Group, just announced the addition of young Swiss driver Fabio Leimer, driving in GP2. The Certina logo will be on Leimer's race car, his helmet and his overalls.

In golf, Breitling announced its sponsorship of Rickie Barnes, an up and coming American golfer, who is currently ranked 39th on the PGA tour.

Jaermann & Stübi introduced a watch called the St Andrews Links Course Timer & GMT 'The Old Course', limited to 18 watches, with each watch representing one hole of the internationally renowned Old Course, to celebrate the 150th anniversary of The British Open. Like all the brand's watches, these 18 timepieces will feature a G-Shock-Guard system with a



ST ANDREWS LINKS COURSE TIMER & GMT by Jaermann & Stübi

flexible winding-stem, patented and specially designed for golf, as well as a course timer.

2010 was a great year for sports watches, seeing a return to value and to real-world usability, from the depths of the abyss to the dizzying heights of the boardroom, and everything in between.

Tissot virtual reality

One of the key questions watch people ask when they are thinking about buying a watch is "How will it look on my wrist?" Tissot recently introduced a web application called 3D Augmented Reality that will allow you to try watches on in front of your computer screen!

Focusing on the Tissot Touch collection, you will be able to virtually 'try on' a selection of styles and colours. In addition, all the watches will tell the correct time in digital and analogue.

"It's really easy -- all you need is a computer and a webcam," says Duy Quan, Developer for Tissot. "You only need to install the software and then everything is automatic. The program starts the webcam by itself and all you have to do is cut the watch out with a pair scissors and show it to the camera."

Is this the future of watch shopping? No one knows, but it certainly is fun. <