

NEWS.TRENDS

Swiss watchmaking and Italian style form a successful combination at **Paul Picot**. Whilst the Italian style sense of the founder can be seen in subtle details of the watch, the manufacturing process is based upon the finest Swiss traditions. In this respect the brand icon Firshire is currently celebrating a jubilee: the watch was presented for the first time 15 years ago. Now there are three new variants at the BASELWORLD, including Firshire Ronde Phase de Lune. An automatic watch with a module by Dubois Depraz, displaying hour, minute, seconds, day, month, date and moon phase – in a stainless steel or red gold case. (iwi) **I.O, C25**



Paul Picot Firshire Ronde Phase de Lune.

“Significant growth in Asia”

New technology propels Rado's debuts

With high-tech materials, new watch families, innovative designs, and a widening clientele, Rado expects “positive growth” in 2012, says CEO Matthias Breschan.

BWDN: In 2011, Rado won the prestigious Good Design and Red Dot design awards. What does that tell watch buyers?

Matthias Breschan: Rado is the most-awarded watch brand of internationally acclaimed design awards, with over 30 from product design organisations. We won the Red Dot Award for our Rado Ceramica Automatic Digital watch, which combines the brand's unique high-tech ceramic with an eye-catching digital display, driven by a Swiss-made automatic movement. Rado received the Good Design Award for our new Rado True Thinline, the world's thinnest high-tech ceramic watch. Our achievements and global recognition from world-renowned organisations testify to Rado as a distinctive brand of innovative designs and high-tech materials. That's a creditable reference for consumers.

BWDN: What's the response to the Rado True Thinline, launched in 2011?

Breschan: It rose immediately as a top seller, receiving extremely positive responses from men and women. Its revolutionary mono-coque construction allowed thinness under 5 mm. It also helped us reach a younger clientele, in the 30+ age group. In 2012, we add dial and movement variations, and material breakthroughs.

BWDN: How was 2011 for Rado; what do you expect for 2012?

Breschan: 2011 was a record-breaking year with double-digit growth, despite the strong Swiss franc. We're very optimistic about 2012, as we're launching two new watch families. These again demonstrate our relentless effort to develop ground-breaking materials combined with innovative designs.

BWDN: Tell us about those.

Breschan: Rado is premiering a breakthrough technology in the new Rado HyperChrome collection – a world-first in high-tech ceramic case construction. With the new Rado R-One Limited Edition, Rado propels watch design well outside tradition and convention. Its dramatic shape, inspired by space travel, uses an

unusual combination of high-tech materials and icy blue detail.

BWDN: What are Rado's best opportunities in 2012?

Breschan: We're confident the new product families launched this year will bring Rado positive growth. With the multiple innovations we're introducing in our products, we'll continue to broaden our clientele to a younger age group which increasingly appreciates unique designs and breakthrough materials. We also foresee significant growth in all our markets, especially Asia, the Middle East and USA.

BWDN: How's the response to the new Rado D-Star line?

Breschan: Outstanding, because the Rado D-Star is a perfect combination of historical authenticity and the brand's iconic use of innovative designs and materials. A highlight is the newly-developed material, Ceramos, a ceramic and metal composite incorporating the optimal properties of both – comfort, durability and a platinum look. The latest additions to the Rado D-Star family are Rado D-Star 200 watches, with diving-inspired case design, and water resistance to 20 bar.



Matthias Breschan, CEO Rado.

In 2012, Rado is adding all-black and all-white models to the collection.

BWDN: What does BASELWORLD mean to Rado?

Breschan: It's the most significant annual event for us, and the only event where all our important business partners worldwide gather. BASELWORLD is also a good indicator of how the rest of the year will be.

Interview: William G. Shuster ■

Haute horlogerie goes on a diet

Extra-slim timepieces have again a grand entrance in 2012

Over the past few years, classic design has become a top priority. Many watch brands focus on values such as elegance and simplicity in creating their new models. To emphasis this further, watches have become ever more slender with a desirable aesthetic design. This theme is continued at this year's BASELWORLD and is bound to please watch enthusiasts: complicated watches are now becoming thin, too. Patek Philippe is presenting the Reference 5940 for the first time in Basel, an extra-flat perpetual calendar with an automatic wind mechanism. This premiere combines two high quality watch movements from the traditional Geneva-based brand: the world's first perpetual calendar watch which was first released by Patek Philippe in 1925 is now appearing with the extra-flat patented Patek Philippe automatic movement 240 from 1977. This has been fitted with an integrated gold micro-rotor on the plate. This construction ensures flat dimensions when it comes to the movement of the new model, too: the automatic movement of 2.53 mm in height is fitted with a 1.35 mm flat calen-



Patek Philippe has been honing the art of slim watches.

dar mechanism. Together they ensure that the yellow gold case of the new perpetual calendar measures just 8.6 mm and creates a sense of everlasting elegance on the wrist.

Chiming the time

The Ellicott brand draws on the traditions of an English watchmaker. The brand is based at the heart of Swiss watchmaking in Chaux-de-Fonds. John Ellicott junior was one of the most successful and most highly regarded watchmakers in 18th century Eng-

land and gives his name to the brand. Ellicott presents the Master Complication RS 38 fitted with a movement which is the flattest minute repeater in the world with a perpetual calendar and moon phase display. The watch is 26.20 mm in diameter but just 5.10 mm high and comprises a total of 388 components. It comes in a pink gold case with a surprisingly modern watch dial featuring silver and grey areas.

The new item being presented at BASELWORLD by Hublot is ultra-modern: Hublot shows off a



Hublot's Classic Fusion.



Ellicott's Master Complication RS 38.

skeleton-design ultra-flat timepiece for the first time. The Classic Fusion with refined design embodies the otherwise unmistakable and dynamic style of the company. Inside, it is powered by a new manual wind movement developed by Hublot which bears the characters HUB1300 and is just 2.90 mm tall with skeleton-working throughout.

The aim was to create a modern effect: not just through the graphical lines of the openings but also with the black coating on the watch movement components,

most of which are visible from the watch dial. It is a real challenge to maintain the balance between stability and extensive skeleton-working in such an ultra-flat and skeletonised watch movement. Hublot has mastered this challenge and offers insight into the movement of the balance wheel from the watch dial. A titanium case emphasises the modern look of the Classic Fusion. This version is limited to 1,000 items while the new watch movement in a gold case is available in a limited edition of just 500 items. (iwi) ■