

CLASSIC DRIVER



Icons of watchmaking history no.16: Rado DiaStar

23 October 2011 | Classic Driver



In our *Icons of Watchmaking* series, horological expert Gisbert L. Brunner presents classic watches with a cult status. This week, we look at the unusual DiaStar by Rado.

Because a top-quality gold watch is easily scratched, in the early 1960s, the then-head of Rado issued orders for his staff to conduct experiments with 'hard metals' in the hope of creating a scratch-proof watch. However, it was soon clear that contemporary case designs would not produce the desired result, even with new materials.

After many trials and tribulations, in 1962 Rado celebrated a special world premiere: the first scratch-proof watch, christened the 'DiaStar' - the name of the new timepiece originating from the concept of a 'diamond star'. It suffered initially a cool reception in the market due to its unfamiliar, oval design.



That said, the sale of the 1.5-millionth DiaStar in 1987 was proof of the ultimate success of this unusual watch. Those who want one of the first types of watches can still ask for the 'original', as the DiaStar is still very much part of Rado's product line.

Next week is dedicated to royalty, as we induct the Rolex Datejust into the halls of watchmaking fame.

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Text: Gisbert L. Brunner

Photo: Rado

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