

CLASSIC DRIVER



Icons of watchmaking history no.18: Zenith El Primero

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In our *Icons of Watchmaking* series, timepiece historian Gisbert L. Brunner presents classic watches with a cult status. This week we devote ourselves to the particularly accurate El Primero Chronomaster made by Zenith.

Many regard the El Primero as traditional watch manufacturer Zenith's best work. When Zenith proudly revealed the timepiece in 1969, the response of the trade press was overwhelming; when held in the hand, the watch was found to be surprisingly small and flat. Yet with a frequency of 36,000 alternations per hour, it was accurate up to 1/10th of a second.

The mid-70s saw the arrival of Quartz watches, meaning the El Primero was no longer so sought after. It wasn't until 1986, in fact, that the watch took off again, and its current incarnation – the 'El Primero Chronomaster Moonphase' – effectively combines past and present.

Next week, we take a look at the Tutima Military Chronograph.

Icons of watchmaking history -

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Text: Gisbert L. Brunner

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