

Breitling Chronomatic

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My first Breitling...

A story, and my process...

My Sweet Dear Wife knocked my socks off with this year's birthday gift. We don't usually go this 'big' but this is a special year and she went overboard. Saturday evening she presented me with an Chrono Avenger M1.

It was beautiful. Bold yellow, on rubber with Ti buckle. The finest dive/sport watch i've ever put on my wrist...

You see, i usually hang out at the Seiko/Citizen forum; and my wife can't understand why I already have a dozen wrist watches and a pocket watch. Sure I'd looked at Breitling, but with one young one and one more on the way, I had only looked :) The M1 was stunning: the 'tabbed' bezel and rugged pushers/crown were fantastic. The alignment of the chrono hand on true 12o'clock amazing. The brushed Ti, stunning. Face detail, top notch.

But... I have 6 divers. Not like this, but still: Sieko 'Pepsi', Orange Monster, White Knight, 2 Promaster Citizens, and the beautiful 40th Anniv. Seiko diver. If this purchase was to be a push into watch nirvana, and my likely return trip to be many years off, I wanted a 'dress' watch, or namely, one that I could wear with a suit, and not have to have my shirt's cuff buttons moved :) (Evo, Cockpit, Chrono Cockpit, and SuperOcean owners, don't begrudge me, I love the look of those watches; and although dressier, still are rugged diver types to me). I knew i'd be spending a bit more than my store credit if I went the Navi route, so off to research i went.

So I began to read the 2006 catalog and by 3am Sunday morning had shortened my list to only 8 watches :D I wanted to hold/try on. She was smart and bought from an Authorized Dealer (aka: "AD"), Lynn Jewels in DC and everyone was clear I was probably going to come back and swap it, and swap it I did.

- I started off leaning towards the classic Navitimer...
- Thought the dark/light face to rotating ring and band flexibility beat out the Heritage for me (what do I know, I'd only been researching for 5 hours LOL).
- The 'world' model's 2nd hand is, well, handy - not only for my travels, but on my other GMT capable watches, i use 'em for UTC for server log monitoring, which my servers all spit out in).
- The Cosmo is fantastic, and if my AD had one, might have been enough for me to try it and just do my best to get used to it.
- Montbrillant in white, in the catalog shines, i wonder what it would look like in person...
- Olympus, probably out of my 'upgraded' price range, but in the catalog was prob. my favorite.
- Chronomatic- didn't make my short list. Neat history and retro looks, but didn't do it for me in the catalog.

Off to my AD i went and after trying on and handling them (not the cosmo, none in stock in steel-only), here were my Breitling-novice findings:

- Olympus: yes, beautiful, but thought the date would be hard to read in real-world conditions.
- Montbrillant: beautiful, also; but my eyes kept going to...
- Navitimer World: impressive, functional, jaw dropping looks. But my dealer wasn't as negotiable with this model :(He actually unpacked this newly arrived shipment and told of a many-month effort to get in stock. So the lack of discount made it out of my 'upgrade' budget, but thats okay, because...

- The more I held the Chrono-Matic the more I liked it. It's a bit thinner than the others, feels smaller than the stated 44mm, and is readable, and the black-face with silver dials is just... well, you have to see it. The rotating slide-rule ring is also silver (what the black/red numbers are written on) and that doesn't translate well in the catalog or online. The face etching around the 2 subdials and date are, in person, much more understated than had appeared online (at least for the black model) For budget reasons, the bracelet was off the table, and I decided that I'd rather save for the bracelet so my AD swapped out the Tan-Croc for a black leather Breitling with deployment buckle. The white stitching and meaty strap set off the watch rather well, don't you think?

One of my favorite watches I already own is this one:
<http://www.higuchi-inc.com/sbcj019.html>

and I'm searching for the "1st" gen. version of it (it's a rebirth model, aka: "throwback", too) but i'm still looking. yet, i've already found some Cal.11 circa 1969 left-knob'd Breitlings, i'd love to get the "old one" and have it in my winder next to this new one :) (oh no, i'm sucked in!!!)