



Boating Watches

When the English carpenter and clockmaker John Harrison invented the marine chronometer in 1735 the point was to solve the problem of calculating longitude at sea. A navigator outfitted with a reliably accurate clock set to the time at the prime meridian could reckon position east to west by determining the local time by the sun's position and figuring the difference in degrees, minutes and seconds. In today's age of GPS navigation, modern marine watches are designed for form as much as for function.

Since 1983, Louis Vuitton has sponsored the Louis Vuitton Cup, which determines the team that will challenge the defender of the America's Cup, sporting's oldest trophy, which will be competed for in September 2013 for 34th time. To commemorate this affiliation, Louis Vuitton has introduced a number of special-edition watches. The Tambour LV Cup Automatic Countdown (pictured left, \$11,600) has a flyback five-minute countdown regatta function meant to clock the time before a race starts, so a boat can jockey for the position and reach the starting line at full speed. The buttons opposite the crown activate the countdown function, which scrolls across the window at 12 o'clock. The final minute is displayed in red at 6 o'clock. A line bisects the dial between 9 and 3 o'clock, evoking the starting line.

Longtime Olympics timekeeper Omega has expanded its Seamaster

Planet Ocean range, following up on its proprietary Liquidmetal with a related novel material, Ceragold. The technical process allows Omega to fuse 18-karat gold into ceramic for a bezel with gold numbers and scaling that is seamlessly smooth. The Seamaster Planet Ocean 45.50 mm Chronograph Ceragold (right, \$27,600) is powered by the brand's first Co-Axial chronograph movement. Like all Seamaster Planet Oceans, the watch is backed by a four-year warranty and is equipped with a unidirectional rotating bezel, a helium escape valve and an exceptionally luminous dial.

Rolex has updated its Yachtmaster (center, price upon request), a classic that debuted in 1992. The platinum bidirectional rotating bezel now has a 120-position notched ring for easy, precise setting for intervals of up to 60 minutes to track elapsed times. A new Oysterlock safety clasp enhances comfort and security. The 40-mm Oyster case is fashioned from a block of solid steel and is guaranteed waterproof down to 100 meters thanks in part to a screw-down Triplock winding crown. Rolex designed and produced the automatic Caliber 3135 movement, which is certified by the Swiss Official Chronometer Testing Institute (COSC) to assure a high level of precision that would have been the envy of John Harrison.

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—Laurie Kahle