

*Fw Fratello watches*

# SPEEDY TUESDAY

## MAGAZINE



ALL ABOUT THE OMEGA SPEEDMASTER

[www.fratellowatches.com](http://www.fratellowatches.com)



## EDITOR'S LETTER

# SPEEDMASTER LOVE

"THE WATCH WORN ON THE MOON was an Omega," my dad said. I was probably not even 12 years old and it didn't mean much to me, as I was born in 1977. Only a few years later I realized that my father was wearing an Omega watch himself, but not a Speedmaster. Much later, on a day in 1999, I was bicycling through the center of The Hague, when I passed a shop selling pre-owned watches. On display was a Speedmaster Professional. I stopped and took note of the shop's name. Not much later, I found myself selling my car to be able to finance this watch. I was a student, so I decided I could do without a car but not without that Speedmaster. At that time, I knew the Speedmaster Professional was also known as the Moonwatch, as my interest in watches had really taken off in the years before.

There wasn't much out there on the subject. Only a few online sources discussed the Speedmaster, one of them a personal website from this fellow by the name of Chuck Maddox. I got in touch with him and from that moment on, there was no turning back. We discussed a lot of details about the Speedmaster and the variations we came across. Already back then, there was a (small) online community that was crazy about the Moonwatch. After Chuck's passing in 2008, friends made sure to keep his website alive and moved it to [chronomaddox.com](http://chronomaddox.com). In the meantime, I started a blog about watches, [fratellowatches.com](http://fratellowatches.com). There you will find an interesting interview I did with Chuck Maddox back in 2004.

This blog, Fratello Watches, turned into an online magazine over the years and the Speedmaster was mentioned in an article occasionally. That changed in 2012. During a holiday with my wife in Cannes, I took a photo of the Speedmas-

ter on my wrist and posted it on Facebook. I just gave the short description "It is Speedy Tuesday," as it happened to be a Tuesday.

### #OVER 250 ARTICLES IN FIVE YEARS

Ever since 2012, we have published well over 250 in-depth articles on the Speedmaster in our 'Speedy Tuesday' section. The online community of Speedmaster fans is huge in 2017, and we celebrated this a couple of times with so-called get-togethers in various cities and countries. One of the highlights was last year's Speedy Tuesday event at Omega's headquarters in Bienne, Switzerland. There, we also initiated the idea of celebrating the fifth anniversary of Speedy Tuesday with something truly special: the Speedmaster Professional Speedy Tuesday limited edition.

This Speedy Tuesday magazine consists of a collection of our published online articles, as well as new articles written especially for this issue. Older stories have been updated and we made sure all facts are correct as far as we know. We also updated some of the older images with more recent photo work by Bert Buijsrogge.

I hope you will enjoy this Speedy Tuesday magazine as much as I did creating it, together with the team of Fratello Watches. For the love of Speedmasters, happy reading!

Robert-Jan Broer



Limited Edition  
0/2012

OMEGA

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SPEEDMASTER SPEEDY TUESDAY LIMITED EDITION

# TRIBUTE TO ALASKA PROJECT III

TEXT: ROBERT-JAN BROER PHOTOS: BERT BUIJSROGGE

*We've been asked very often how Speedy Tuesday started. The story is quite simple: I took a wristshot of my Speedmaster Professional sometime in May 2012, put it on Facebook and only wrote "It is Speedy Tuesday," as it was on a Tuesday.*





ONLY A FEW MOMENTS after my Facebook post, I realized that this could be a topic for a recurring item on Fratello Watches. At first, we wrote Speedy Tuesday articles once every three or four weeks, but it turned into a weekly item very soon.

For many of our team, the love for watches started with a Speedmaster and if it didn't, they bought one (or more) later. It is one of the most iconic watches with a real story, not something made-up, and we've always found that the watch offers great value for money. Even without the NASA story it would be our favorite chronograph based on the design of the case and the readable dial. But the fact is that there is a story to the watch and perhaps the best one out there. It was used on the Moon.

Since 2012, we have written over 250 Speedy Tuesday articles to date and the #SpeedyTuesday tag has been used over 55,000 times on Instagram by the Speedmaster community. For the fifth anniversary, we were thrilled that Omega used this inspiration to create the Speedmaster Professional Speedy Tuesday limited edition.

#WATCHES FOR THE  
SPACE SHUTTLE PROGRAM

In the past five years of Speedy Tuesday, one of the watches that impressed us most was an original Alaska Project III that we discovered in a private collection. Omega delivered only 56 of those watches to NASA for their Space Shuttle program after the re-qualification in 1978. The watch stood out due to the radial dial and the specific NASA engravings on the caseback. This Alaska Project III watch was part of the inspiration for the Omega Speedmaster Professional Speedy Tuesday limited edition. This, together with the “reverse panda” dial, adds something new to the mix for the Speedmaster Professional. The “reverse panda” has been done by Omega before, for example in 1966, but never seen in a Speedmaster Professional.

With those ingredients, Omega designed the Speedmaster Professional Speedy Tuesday limited edition. On top of that, they added more interesting details. The basis for the Speedy Tuesday limited edition is the standard Moonwatch 42-mm case with its renowned lyre lugs. However, this version has a brushed matte finish, including the bezel, pushers and crown. The crown is also signed with the old-style Omega logo. The dial has white opaline-silvery subdials with large radial numerals. Interesting are the inverted numerals ‘40’ on the small seconds dial and the ‘10’ and ‘20’ on the minute

recorder for example. There is no other reason for this than the original Alaska Project III drawing from 1978. That drawing shows the same design of subdials. In the Omega archives, a technical drawing of the radial dial was found dating back to 1972, with the exact positioning of the numerals as the Alaska Project III and Speedy Tuesday watch. However, the exact reason for this is still unknown.

A little nod to vintage Omega pieces is the applied old-style logo at 12 o'clock. Another novelty for the Speedmaster Professional is the luminous written text, as can be seen on the image. The subdials are also luminous but very readable due to the small black hands. The hands are all-brushed and therefore pay tribute to the original idea of the Alaska Project watch, to have as few ‘reflections’ as possible.

Of course, this Speedmaster Professional Speedy Tuesday limited edition comes with the characteristic domed Hesalite crystal, with central Omega logo. A different movement than the reliable hand-wound Omega Caliber 1861 chronograph was not an option, really.

On the back, you will find a special engraved case-back stamped with the Speedmaster's iconic Seahorse medallion. On the upper half you will find “Speedy Tuesday Anniversary” and “Limited Edition” and on the lower half it has the wording “A Tribute to Alaska Project III” as well as the limited edition number (x/1212). Circling the outer edge of the caseback is the word “Radial.” Although it is a screw-in caseback, it is always in the same fixed position in such way that the text is aligned (top starts at 12 o'clock) correctly.

Furthermore, the watch comes with two straps: a vintage-cut brown leather strap with vintage-style buckle and stitching as well as a black and white striped NATO strap with vintage-style buckle. One of the keepers has been laser-engraved with “#SpeedyTuesday.” The Speedmaster Professional Speedy Tuesday limited edition is delivered in a special leather watch roll that contains the watch, the spare strap and strap-changing tool.

On January 10, 2017, the watch was announced on Omega's Instagram account. Besides, a lot of websites spread the news and published this watch: not only that it was a watch to celebrate the fifth anniversary of Speedy Tuesday, but also because it was the first time that Omega offered a watch for sale via their website. All watches were reserved in just a few hours' time and that was beyond expectations. I reckoned it would take a couple of days, but it went faster. Far faster: four hours and 15 minutes.



Above and left: It is all about details with this Speedmaster Professional Speedy Tuesday limited edition.

Below: Both straps are supplied with a vintage-style buckle. The Speedy Tuesday limited edition has luminous subdials and writing on the dial.







SPEEDMASTER 60<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY LIMITED EDITION

# CELEBRATION

TEXT: ROBERT-JAN BROER PHOTOS: BERT BUIJSROGGE (5) OMEGA (5)

In 1957, Omega introduced the **very first Speedmaster**, a watch that was meant for sportsmen, race car drivers and engineers. Now, 60 years later, Omega felt the time was right to pay homage to that first Speedmaster.





IN THIS SPEEDY TUESDAY MAGAZINE you will find a lot of different Speedmaster models that Omega has introduced over the last 60 years, but certainly not all of them. That would require a bit more paper. You could say that the Speedmaster Professional Moonwatch always continued to have the same style and design, with a few exceptions. Besides the Moonwatch, Omega introduced their Mark series as well as other variations of the Speedmaster. Sometimes, they did not look like the traditional Speedmaster at all (like the Speedmaster LCD from 1977 for example) and sometimes, they did (Dark Side of the Moon). Up till 1969, the Speedmaster (Professional) was basically one model with a few iterations based on the very first Speedmaster from 1957. The first three Speedmaster generations, the References CK2915, CK2998 (including the 105.002) and 105.003 were a bit smaller than the Speedmaster Professional Moonwatch (1965), had straight-lug cases and no guards to protect the crown and pushers. Each generation had undergone some slight changes, until it eventually became the watch we know as the Moonwatch, which is still available today.

Omega has developed the tradition of introducing certain special editions to commemorate an event or a specific watch from the past, especially for collectors and enthusiasts. This year, Speedmaster fans all over the world held their breath as it was clear to all of them that 2017 would be an important year for the Speedmaster.

**#TRILOGY TIMEPIECES**

Sixty years ago, Omega introduced the Speedmaster, Seamaster 300 and Railmaster – all in the same year and aimed at an audience that would professionally use these watches. With the Speedmaster, Omega aimed at persons that required a chronograph to record the duration of certain sports events or scientific tasks. The association with race cars was suggested by Omega using advertisements showing auto sports. This chronograph had similar design features as the Seamaster 300

(CK2913) and Railmaster (CK2914), like broad arrow hands and the same case shape. While the Railmaster (hand-wound movement) and Seamaster 300 (automatic movement) were time-only watches, the Speedmaster was equipped with a hand-wound chronograph movement, Caliber 321. The case diameter was 38.6 mm, a bit smaller than the later 42-mm Moonwatch.

The original Speedmaster (Reference CK2915) is one of the most sought-after timepieces in the world, but unfortunately out of financial reach for many enthusiasts and collectors. In 1997, Omega introduced the Speedmaster '57 relaunch edition that had similar characteristics as the first Speedmaster from 1957, but in a modern Speedmaster Professional case. Just a few years ago, Omega also introduced a Speedmaster '57 with the automatic Co-Axial chronometer Caliber 9300. This watch also had a couple of design elements of the original Speedmaster from 1957, like the broad arrow hands, lack of crown guards and metal bezel.

Now, in 2017, Omega has paid a true homage to the Reference CK2915 by introducing the Speedmaster Reference 311.10.39.30.01.001, the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition. It has a case with the same dimensions as its 60-year-old ancestor, broad arrow hands and a stainless-steel bracelet in the same style as the original one. Furthermore, the watch has the Hesalite plexi crystal and uses a hand-wound movement.

**#DESIGN CODES RESPECTED**

The fact that Omega stayed true to the original Speedmaster design means that the watch is a bit smaller than the Speedmaster Professional (42 mm). With a diameter of 38.6 mm, you could say this watch is rather small for today's standards, but this size does reflect the original Speedmaster proportions. To be honest, when I tried it on during the introduction at Baselworld I was immediately smitten.

At first sight, the modern bracelet is one of the few things that gives away that this is not the Speedmaster CK2915. The watch approaches the Speedmaster from 1957 in a very detailed manner, even the Super-LumiNova has a yellowish color to match the patina you see often on vintage Speedmaster watches. This is perhaps not to everyone's liking. I tried to imagine the watch with white printed hour and minute markers and that didn't make sense to me. The yellowish Super-LumiNova gives the watch a distinguished look. The same applies for the Railmaster and Seamaster 300 from this trilogy of course.

From left to right: The normal Speedmaster Professional Moonwatch and the Speedmaster 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on a NATO strap and on a bracelet, respectively







Besides the bracelet, the Speedmaster 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary comes with two extra straps: a NATO strap and a vintage-style leather strap. Especially on the latter, it comes very close to the CK2915. The bracelet looks like the first – rather flat – bracelet on the Speedmaster CK2915 with Reference 7077. The new bracelet is modernized, meaning it is thicker and has a more solid clasp. It also does not have the spring-loaded links that enabled some ‘stretching’ of the bracelet, as was the case with the old bracelet. This was done so people did not have to enlarge the bracelet when it was worn during high temperatures. On the clasp, you will find the vintage-style Omega logo.

The case of the Speedmaster 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary looks very similar to the case that Omega introduced in 2012 for their ‘First Omega in Space’ model – a tribute to the Reference CK2998 (second generation Speedmaster from 1959 to 1962) that was on the wrist of astronaut Walter Schirra during his flight in space (Sigma 7 mission). The Speedmaster ‘First Omega in Space’ of 2012 also had a straight-lug case, but upon closer inspection the Speedmaster 60<sup>th</sup> case has slightly different dimensions. The stainless-steel bezel has the ‘Base 1000’ scale and connoisseurs will notice the Dot-Over-Ninety on there. The caseback has a ‘step,’ like the original, and is engraved with the seahorse logo and ‘Speedmaster’ writing as well as ‘60<sup>th</sup> anniversary’ and the unique number of each watch. The size between the lugs is 19 mm, also like the original Speedmaster Reference CK2915. It is a true homage to the first version of one of the most iconic chronographs in the world.

This Omega Speedmaster 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary watch is a dream come true for many enthusiasts out there. So are the other two iconic commemorative editions of the Railmaster and the Seamaster 300. However, if you are a Speedmaster enthusiast I am sure you can appreciate the use of Hesalite crystal and the hand-wound movement whereas the Railmaster and Seamaster 300 have a sapphire crystal and a METAS-certified automatic movement. The chronograph Caliber 1861 is the same one that is also being used in the Speedmaster Professional Moonwatch. This movement is a direct descendant of Caliber 861 that has been in the Moonwatch since 1968. The very first Speedmaster CK2915 used Caliber 321, but this movement was discontinued in

## SPEEDMASTER 60<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

*A true homage to the first version of one of the most iconic chronographs in the world.*

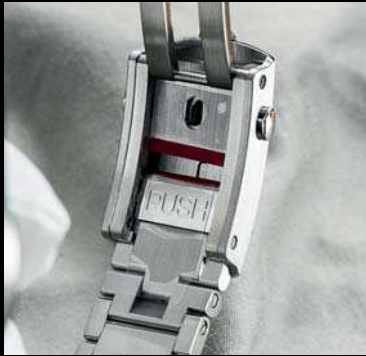
1968 for several reasons. From 1968 and onwards, the Speedmaster Professional used Caliber 861. When the new Speedmaster 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary was shown for the first time at the annual exhibition in Basel, collectors expressed their sympathy for the use of this hand-wound movement. It would have been very easy to use one of the newer in-house-developed Omega movements for a watch like this, but the hand-wound movement makes the watch perfect and as close as it can be to the original CK2915 reference.

### #SPECIAL PACKAGING

The Speedmaster 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition comes in two flavors: a limited edition of 3,557 pieces that comes with an impressive large box and with two extra straps, or as part of the Trilogy of the Seamaster 300, Railmaster and Speedmaster 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary editions, limited to 557 pieces each (and with two extra straps each).

The watches from the Trilogy set have the wording ‘Trilogy’ on the dial as well as their unique numbers. The trilogy box as well as the separate boxes will be in the same style as the original packaging from 1957. There is the Seahorse on the lid of the box, a retro Omega logo and red corduroy lining. The extra straps come with Omega signed buckles in the same style as they were in the 1950s. The trilogy set comes in one big box. This special engraved oak box is made from a tree that was found near Omega’s headquarters in Bienne and dates to 1880. Of course, Omega has included a tool so you’re able to change the straps and bracelets yourself.

**Happy anniversary, Speedmaster!**



Above: The Trilogy set comes with extra straps for all three watches.

Left and far left: The Speedmaster 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary bracelet and new clasp

Below: The caseback of the Speedmaster 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the clasp of the new bracelet with the vintage-style Omega logo





INTERVIEW WITH OMEGA'S PRESIDENT AND CEO

## MEET RAYNALD AESCHLIMANN

For this **Speedy Tuesday Magazine**, I asked Raynald Aeschlimann (President and CEO of Omega since June 1, 2016) about the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Speedmaster.

TEXT: ROBERT-JAN BROER PHOTOS: OMEGA

RAYNALD AESCHLIMANN started his career at Omega in 1996 as Sales and Marketing Project Manager. Before he became President and CEO of Omega, he had been Vice President and International Director of Sales, Retail and Distribution since 2001.

Immediately after his assignment as CEO, an important task needed to be done: the celebration of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Speedmaster (and Seamaster 300 and Railmaster for that matter). Besides that, there was the Speedy Tuesday Limited Edition that required an entire new approach as it was only available online, and of course the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Apollo 17 mission that has been celebrated with the Speedmaster Apollo XVII limited edition – a couple of good reasons to ask Aeschlimann about his personal view on the Speedmaster, its anniversary and a few things more.

*This year we celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Speedmaster. What does that mean to you?*

It's a source of great pride, as the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary is not just a celebration of the Speedmaster's birth in 1957, but an acknowledgement of its enduring appeal. Even after all these years, fans can't get enough of the Speedmaster. It's more popular than ever.

*How would you define the typical Speedmaster owner? And in what way do they differ from buyers of the Seamaster collections, for example?*

I'd say the key difference is that the Speedmaster owner is drawn to the 'story' of the watch. Of course they love how it looks, how it performs, but what really keeps them coming back for more is the Speedmaster's fascinating legacy. They are also curious as to how the





watch will evolve and how each generation of Speedmasters fits into their own personal history.

*How do you make sure to target the Speedmaster to the new generation of consumers that grew up with their smartphones and tablets and do not necessarily have an interest or connection to the Moonwatch story?*

It's vital that we maintain a balance between the use of new materials and a respect for heritage. This is something young people respond to. They certainly have access to the most cutting-edge tech, but they are also drawn to products with a specific provenance. You can see this in their choice of cars, clothes, coffee, etc. And they won't be fooled. You can't just make up any old story. It has to be fascinating – and true. The Speedmaster is genuinely linked to world-changing events. This has enormous power when reaching out to a generation of consumers in search of a more authentic experience.

*There are a lot of collectors out there of older and vintage Speedmaster watches. How important is this group of people to Omega, even though they seem to concentrate on vintage (and thus already sold) watches and have no interest in new models?*

They're very important because in many ways they are the keepers of the legacy. These types of collectors play a huge part in keeping the Speedmaster front of mind, because they are obsessive about details and they pass the Speedmaster story down, in a very passionate way. As a brand we are thrilled and very grateful to have such people flying the flag for our famous watch, especially as we know that very often, their love for watches started with Omega.

*Often, when I come across other people who are wearing a Speedmaster, I ask them about the watch. Without too many exceptions, I get to hear interesting stories about why someone purchased the Speedmaster or about his relationship with the Speedmaster watch. It's never happened to me that a person did not know a bit of history about this watch or didn't have a special connection with it. Can you explain why people are so personally connected to the Speedmaster?*

Yes, I have found the same thing. It seems to be a watch that draws in people who love history and as such they love to tell stories. One story you hear often is that the Speedmaster was worn by the owner's father and he has passed on the passion. As a father myself, this is a story I find very moving.

*"The first day I started at Omega, I went across to visit the brand's museum. It was there that I understood the true scale of Omega's involvement in space."*

*Some people tend to criticize the number of limited-edition Speedmasters. On the other hand, it works for Omega as collectors love these rare and limited models. What are your thoughts about the topic of limited-edition watches?*

Again, it's about finding a balance, because we have to meet the demands of our customers without over-doing it. A limited-edition watch is a fantastic way of celebrating the incredible heritage of a timepiece and the people who wore it; and as you say, collectors love the opportunity to acquire one of their own. But it's one of those situations where it's impossible to please everybody, so with each new limited-edition model we have to rely on our own instincts. Of course the one and only "original" is still available!

*Today, the Speedmaster Professional is still NASA's official watch for EVA (extra-vehicular activities) and in recent years, Omega developed the X-33 (Skywalker) together with ESA (European Space Agency) for professional use. Are there any future plans for the Speedmaster and space travel?*

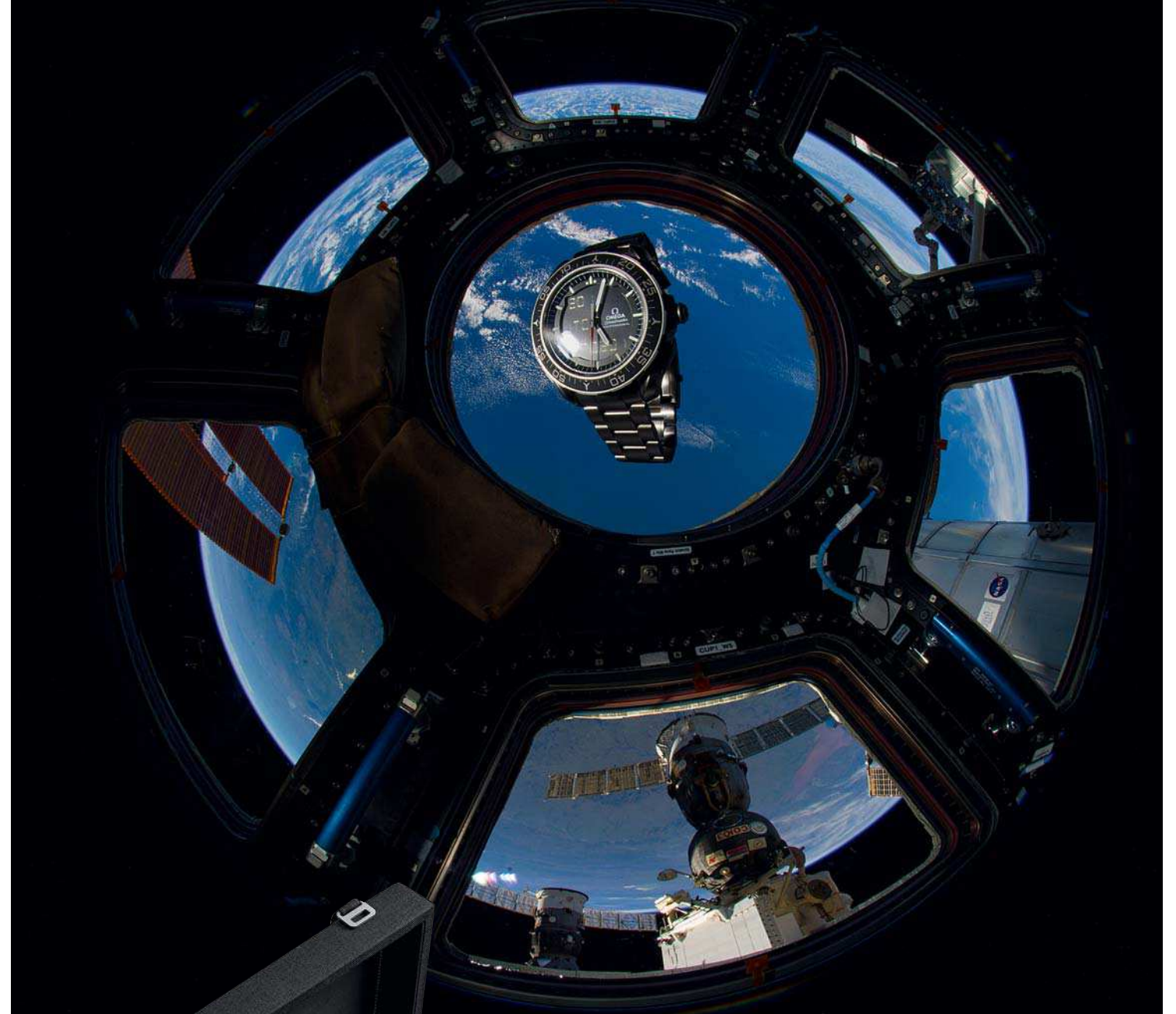
It's a very exciting area but we need to be guided by our friends at the space agencies, because it's about meeting their needs. Personally, my plan for the Speedmaster is to be the first watch worn on Mars.

*What would have happened to Omega if it had been decided to discontinue the Speedmaster Professional during the quartz crisis?*

This is a good example of how resilient the Speedmaster is. Not only did it survive the rapid overturning of technology from mechanical to quartz – it prospered. Very few products survive this kind of seismic shift, let alone go on to become even more popular, but when they do, it's because they have a certain integrity and of course, an amazing history.

*Can you tell us something that nobody knows about you (until now)?*

The first day I started at Omega, I went across to visit the brand's museum. It was there that I understood the true scale of Omega's involvement in space. I was struck by the huge impact a watch can have on history and that was a defining moment for me, because I knew right there, I wanted to play a part in that story.



Above: The Speedmaster X-33 in space.  
Left: The complete Speedmaster Professional Moonwatch package.  
Below: The Speedmaster 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition



HOW THE SPEEDMASTER BECAME THE MOONWATCH

# THE MOONWATCH

TEXT: ROBERT-JAN BROER PHOTOS: BERT BUIJSROGGE (5) NASA (3)

Walter Schirra wearing his CK2998 watch right after the Mercury-Atlas 8 mission. He is talking to the President onboard the US Navy ship USS Kearsarge.



*On July 20, 1969, the Apollo 11 Lunar Module put astronauts Neil Armstrong and Edwin “Buzz” Aldrin on the surface of the Moon. On July 21, at 2:56 UTC, Armstrong set foot on the Moon and spoke his famous words. Moments later, Buzz Aldrin followed him. On his wrist, the Omega Speedmaster Professional – from that moment on, the **‘Moonwatch.’***

A FEW YEARS BEFORE the Omega Speedmaster became the Moonwatch, astronauts Walter Schirra and Gordon Cooper purchased a couple of Speedmasters for use during flights. This was in 1962, and both Schirra and Cooper bought a Speedmaster Reference CK2998 watches. The CK2998 is the second reference of Speedmaster watches, not counting some of the sub references (CK2915-1 to CK2915-3). Where the CK2915-3 can be considered a transitional model with its black bezel and alpha shaped hands, the CK2998 was the new reference with all these features.

## #SPEEDMASTER IN SPACE – SIGMA 7

On board the Sigma 7, during the Mercury-Atlas 8 mission (October 1962), astronaut Walter Schirra was wearing his Speedmaster CK2998. Schirra was the only astronaut to fly all three of NASA’s early manned spacecrafts (Mercury, Gemini and Apollo).

In 2012, Omega commemorated the first Speedmaster CK2998 being used in space with a “First Omega in Space” model. Today, similar models are available in Omega’s Sedna gold and as a modern re-interpretation of the CK2998 with 2016’s Speedmaster CK2998 limited edition.

## #A WATCH FOR GEMINI AND APOLLO MISSIONS

There was a need for officially tested and qualified watches. All equipment used in the Mercury program was being evaluated, and NASA hired a team for the procurement of equipment for the Gemini and Apollo missions. This included a watch suitable for training and during flights. One of the people who was hired for this job at the time was NASA engineer James “Jim” Ragan. Previously, he was responsible for testing equipment for the US Navy’s Sealab program.

## #NOT FROM A JEWELER IN HOUSTON

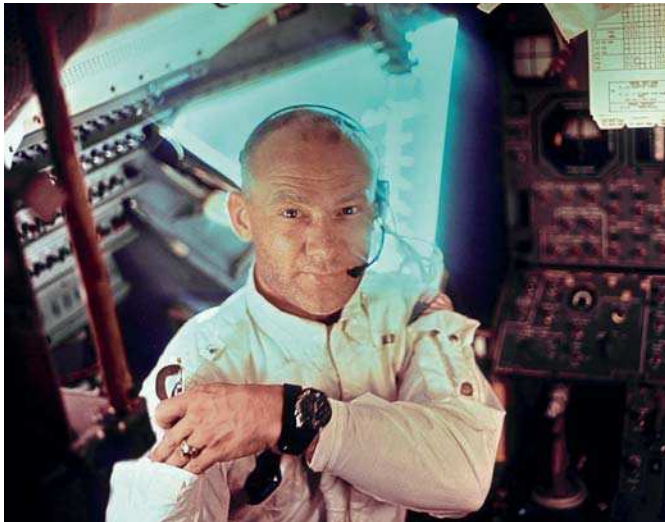
NASA’s Operations Director Deke Slayton wrote an internal memo to the procurement department on September 21, 1964, making his requirements clear for a watch with chronograph functionality. There has been a rumor going on for years, perhaps decades, that NASA just bought a couple of watches themselves from a jeweler in Houston. This is, of course, not the case. NASA would never send a couple of guys to a watch and jewelry store to buy a couple of watches for official use. No, there was a procurement process, like





This picture was taken during the suiting-up exercise for Gemini 6, in 1965, showing Schirra still wearing his Sigma 7 Speedmaster.

Buzz Aldrin showing his Speedmaster during the Apollo 11 mission



James Ragan and the author during the Speedy Tuesday Event in 2013

any serious organization would have. So, Jim Ragan put out a request for proposal that stated that at least six watch brands should provide chronographs for NASA’s purposes.

#A COUPLE OF BRANDS

On official documentation, it can be seen that the delivery of those chronographs should take place before October 24, 1964. That was only a month after the internal memo by Deke Slayton. Remember, this was an era without e-mail, so going back and forth with letters was already consuming quite a bit of time. To be sure, Ragan sent out his request for proposal to 10 different watch brands. Only four out of 10 brands responded to NASA’s request. One brand actually sent a pocket watch instead of the chronograph wristwatch that was requested.

Since in the end only a few brands responded, Ragan asked all of them to provide three watches each. Omega provided NASA with their Speedmaster Reference 105.003.

#OMEGA SUBMITTED  
A SPEEDMASTER 105.003

Reference 105.003 is considered to be the third generation of Speedmasters. This can be disputed, as there was a 105.002 reference between the CK2998 and the 105.003. However, that was more of a transitional model, as Omega decided to change their reference number system. The 105.003 had a new design regarding the hands, which were now white baton ones instead of Alpha hands. The white baton hands were more legible.

This reference is the model that was tried and tested by NASA and eventually qualified, or ‘Flight Qualified for all Manned Space Missions,’ as you see engraved on the casebacks on later references.

PROCUREMENT

A request for proposal was sent to 10 brands. Only four responded.

#11 TYPES OF TESTS

NASA designed a couple of tests for these watches, that weren’t meant to keep the watches in one piece. They were designed to test the watches to the point of destruction. In a relatively short period (months), the following tests were performed on the watches:

- 1. High temperature.** 48 hours at a temperature of 160°F (71°C) followed by 30 minutes at 200°F (93°C). This under a pressure of 5.5 psia (0.35 atm) and relative humidity not exceeding 15%.
- 2. Low temperature.** Four hours at a temperature of 0°F (-18°C).
- 3. Temperature-pressure.** Chamber pressure maximum of 1.47 x 10<sup>-5</sup> psia (10<sup>-6</sup> atm) with temperature raised to 160°F (71°C). The temperature shall then be lowered to 0°F (-18°C) in 45 minutes and raised again to 160°F in 45 minutes. Fifteen more such cycles shall be completed.
- 4. Relative humidity.** A total time of 240 hours at temperatures varying between 68°F and 160°F (20°C and 71°C) in a relative humidity of at least 95%. The steam used must have a pH value between 6.5 and 7.5.
- 5. Oxygen atmosphere.** The test item shall be placed in an atmosphere of 100% oxygen at a pressure of 5.5 psia (0.35 atm) for 48 hours. Performance outside of specification, tolerance, visible burning, creation of toxic gases, noxious odours, or deterioration of seals or lubricants shall constitute failure to pass this test. The ambient temperature shall be maintained at 160°F (71°C).
- 6. Shock.** Six shocks of 40 Gs, each 11 milliseconds in duration, in six different directions.
- 7. Acceleration.** The equipment shall be accelerated linearly from 1 G to 7.25 Gs within 333 seconds, along an axis parallel to the longitudinal spacecraft axis.
- 8. Decompression.** Ninety minutes in a vacuum of 1.47 x 10<sup>-5</sup> psia (10<sup>-6</sup> atm) at a temperature of 160°F (71°C) and 30 minutes at 200°F (93°C).
- 9. High pressure.** The equipment to be subjected to a pressure of 23.5 psia (1.6 atm) for a minimum period of one hour.



**10. Vibration.** Three cycles of 30 minutes (lateral, horizontal, vertical), the frequency varying from 5 to 2,000 cps and back to 5 cps in 15 minutes. Average acceleration per impulse must be at least 8.8 Gs.

**11. Acoustic noise.** 130 dB over a frequency range of 40 to 10,000 Hz, duration 30 minutes.

**Results.** On March 1, 1965, the tests were completed. On June 1, 1965, the Omega Speedmaster 105.003 received the official qualification for use during manned space missions. One of the other watches failed the humidity test while another failed during the high-temperature test.

At the end of March 1965, during the Gemini III mission, the new Speedmaster 105.003 was brought into space on the wrists of astronauts Virgil Grissom and John Young. Also in 1965, Edward White wore his 105.003 when performing the first American spacewalk during the Gemini IV mission.

#MOONWATCH

So, the 105.003 is the Moonwatch? We're not quite there yet. You should know that the Speedmaster 105.003 was in production for a long time, from 1964 until 1969. In the meantime, Omega also introduced the newer references, 105.012 and 145.012. NASA ordered their Speedmasters in four different batches, the last one in September 1968. The reason for this is that Omega introduced the newer Caliber 861 for their Speedmaster chronographs. This would mean the rigorous tests needed to be performed all over again.

The 105.012 and 145.012 had lyre lugs and crown guards as opposed to the straight-lug Speedmaster 105.003. Also, the 105.012 and 145.012 had 'Professional' written on the dial. It is a common misunderstanding that 'Professional' was printed after the qualification on March 1, 1965. This is not the case. In 1964 Omega had introduced the 105.012 with the word 'Professional' printed on the dial. The Speedmaster 105.003 was also issued to Apollo astronauts, as NASA had it in stock from the original procurement.

#SPEEDMASTER 105.012

For a long time, it was a mystery which specific references were used during the Apollo 11 mission. Or whether a Caliber 861 Speedmaster ever was on the Moon. In the meantime, a lot has changed and research has been performed on this topic by numerous experts and institutional archives in the United States. For a couple of years it has been known that the first Speedmaster on the Moon was actually a reference 105.012 on the wrist of Aldrin. Armstrong's watch was left behind in the lunar module as the electronic board clock failed.

#SPEEDMASTER 145.012

Michael Collins, who remained in the Command Module of the Apollo 11, was wearing a Speedmaster Reference 145.012. So it did not make a trip to the surface of the Moon that first time. During the third mission where astronauts set foot on the Moon, Apollo 14 astronaut Alan Shepard was wearing the Omega Speedmaster 145.012. This reference was in production from 1967 to 1969 and had a new design for its pushers. The pushers were screwed into the case and had slightly larger caps. It is the last reference to have the column-wheel chronograph Caliber 321.

At this point, you would probably like to know the exact case numbers from the Speedmasters worn by Aldrin, Armstrong and Collins. For Aldrin, it is believed to be the Speedmaster 105.012-65. Armstrong's watch was definitely a 105.012-65 and Collins was wearing the 145.012-68.

#SEARCHING FOR THE MOONWATCH

Although the vintage Omega Speedmaster 105.003 and Speedmaster Professional 105.012 and 145.012 models are still available in the vintage market today, you can also decide to choose the modern version of the Moonwatch. The current Speedmaster Professional pays a great tribute to the Moonwatch of 1969.

An Omega Speedmaster Professional 145.012-68, similar to the one Michael Collins wore

An Omega Speedmaster 105.003-65 'Ed White'



An early Omega Speedmaster CK2998, the reference that Schirra and Gordon bought privately

Another Speedmaster Professional 145.012, with a brown colored dial







Above and left: the Speedmaster Professional Reference 105.012. This was the first reference to be worn on the Moon, in 1969.

WHICH MODERN SPEEDMASTER IS CLOSEST TO THE ORIGINAL MOONWATCH?

# TODAY'S MOONWATCH

We receive quite a few of questions regarding the Speedmaster, and some of these bear great resemblance. One of the recurring questions we receive about the Omega Speedmaster Professional is about its **Moon heritage**.

TEXT: ROBERT-JAN BROER PHOTOS: BERT BUIJSROGGE (3) OMEGA (2)

ONE OF THE SPEEDY TUESDAY FANS asked us the following question: Which modern Speedmaster is closest to the original Moonwatch?

Here's our answer (or opinion, as you wish). The number of different Speedmaster watches in the current Omega collection can be a bit confusing for people. Although Omega refers to the Dark Side of the Moon, Grey Side of the Moon, White Side of the Moon as well as the stainless-steel and titanium Speedmaster Caliber

9300 versions and the First Omega in Space as 'Moonwatch' models, they are not. The Moonwatch is per definition a hand-wound watch and while the First Omega in Space is based on the original CK2998 reference (1957 to 1962), it is not really a direct descendant of the Moonwatch.

The two references that made it to the Moon are the Speedmaster Professional 105.012 and 145.012. These references were delivered to NASA after the qualifica-



## SPEEDMASTER MOONWATCH

*You can safely say that the Speedmaster Professional 311.30.42.30.01.005 is the current 'Moonwatch' version.*

tion in 1965. Omega sent them to NASA in the 1960s and engraved them with their own serial number (SEB) like they did on every piece of equipment. So you could say that the original Moonwatch is a 105.012 or a 145.012. Recent research also shows that the Reference 105.003 was flown occasionally as a secondary piece. The Speedmaster Professional 105.012 and 145.012 models are becoming more expensive and have increased rapidly. The well of Caliber 321-powered Speedmasters is drying up, and the 145.012 (which was always the most affordable Caliber 321 reference) has reached prices that were paid for CK2998 references only a few years ago.

So yes, the Speedmaster Reference 105.012 or 145.012 are the ones to get if the Moonwatch heritage is very important to you. However, if we take into account that the Speedmaster Professional was never taken out of production, you can easily do the math yourself on which reference today would be the descendent of the original Moonwatch. The 145.012 was followed-up by the 145.022 in 1968 and was in production until 1982. The 145.022 came with several updates or changes, hence the -68/69/71/74/76/78 indicators after 145.022. The 145.022-78 was produced until 1982 but in 1981 a new reference was introduced: the 145.0022 (unlike some people think, this is not a service case number as it was with the 145.0012.).

### #TRUE DESCENDANT OF THE ORIGINAL MOONWATCH

The 145.0022 was replaced by the 3590.50 reference in 1988. In that year, Omega started using a new coding system for their reference numbers called PIC (Product Identity Code). The 3590.50 was replaced by the 3570.50 in 1996 and ran until 2014. In 2014, Omega introduced a new "full set" Speedmaster Professional that comes with a huge presentation box, a loupe, two extra straps and a tool to change them. This new model has the reference number 311.30.42.30.01.005.

So in the end, you could say that the Speedmaster Professional 311.30.42.30.01.005 is the current 'Moonwatch' version. Of course, there have been some special and limited-edition models based on the 145.0022/3590.50 and 3570.50 but let's exclude them for now. The Moonwatch was also available with sapphire crystal, transparent caseback, etc. But the original Moonwatch should always have a Hesalite (plexi) crystal and a stainless-steel caseback.

In the end, the 105.012 and 145.012 were used for the Apollo missions and the 145.022 was qualified in 1978 for the Space Shuttle missions. But rest assured that the current 311.30.42.30.01.005 and previous 3570.50 are considered to be original Moonwatches as well.

In essence, nothing much has changed (except for Caliber 321 via Caliber 861 to the current Caliber 1861 and some minor cosmetic changes). Perhaps the only advice I can give you is to start with a new(er) reference. And if you happen to like it that much, start your quest for a nice vintage model and use the modern one for daily wear.

Clockwise, starting at the top: Omega Speedmaster Professional 145.022 with Caliber 861, current Moonwatch box set with extra straps and accessories, today's Speedmaster Professional 'Moonwatch' with Caliber 1861





SNOOPY AND NASA

# WHY IS THERE A SNOOPY ON THE DIAL?

TEXT: ROBERT-JAN BROER PHOTOS: BERT BUIJSROGGE (2) OMEGA (3) NASA (1)

Charles M. Schulz's Snoopy is on the dials of certain Omega Speedmaster Professional watches. But why is this the case? An explanation of how **the world's most famous beagle** is connected to NASA and Omega.





IF YOU ARE A SPEEDMASTER AFICIONADO, and you know a thing or two about the Apollo missions, you probably are already familiar with the use of Snoopy by NASA. In 1968, NASA chose the famous beagle as an icon to act as a sort of “watchdog” over its missions. In the same year, NASA decided to use a sterling silver Snoopy pin as a sign of appreciation to NASA employees and contractors together with a commendation letter and a signed framed Snoopy certificate. Each of the sterling silver Snoopy lapel pins has been flown during a NASA mission.

Cartoonist Charles M. Schulz, who created the “Peanuts” comic strip, was a supporter of the NASA Apollo missions and agreed to let them use “Snoopy the astronaut” at no cost. He even drew the Snoopy figure for the sterling silver lapel pin.

In May 1969, the Apollo 10 mission flew to the moon to do the final checks for the following mission, Apollo 11, to land on the Moon. The Apollo 10 mission required the Lunar Module (LM) to check the Moon’s surface from nearby and “snoop around” to find a landing site for Apollo 11. Because of this, the Apollo 10 crew (Gene Cernan, John Young and Thomas Stafford) named the LM “Snoopy.” The Apollo CM (command module) was nicknamed “Charlie Brown.”

Fast-forward to 1970. In the interim, humans had set foot on the Moon and, about one year later, the Apollo 13 mission was meant to bring another team of NASA astronauts to the Moon (Lovell, Swigert and Haise). The mission’s objective was to explore a certain area on the Moon called the Fra Mauro formation. It didn’t get that far, as there was an explosion on board the service module at approximately 200,000 miles away from Earth.

#ROLE OF THE SPEEDMASTER

NASA’s ground control came up with a solution in the end, which required the astronauts to get creative with some materials on board their module. After fixes were made and all systems worked (more or less) again, the crew started their journey to Earth.

This is the really quick and dirty version of the story of course; the entire adventure is depicted in the 1995 movie, *Apollo 13*, starring Tom Hanks.

Now comes the part where the Speedmaster played an important role. The Apollo 13 crew needed the Omega Speedmaster watch, first to time ignition of the rockets to shorten the estimated length of the return to Earth, and secondly, to time the ignition of the rockets to decrease speed and raise the flight path angle for re-entry into the Earth’s atmosphere. This 14-second operation was crucial, since any mistake in the timing could have led to an incorrect entry angle and, as a result, potential disaster for the crew.

As explained before, NASA used the Snoopy award for special contributions and outstanding efforts from both NASA personnel and contractors. On October 5, 1970, NASA gave Omega a Silver Snoopy Award to acknowledge the crucial role the watch played during the Apollo 13 mission.

So now you know. When there is a Snoopy on the dial of a Speedmaster, it actually means something. In the end, of course, one need not be versed in all this history to purchase and appreciate this watch; one may just be a fan of Snoopy.

#OMEGA SPEEDMASTER SNOOPY AWARD

In 2003, Omega introduced the Speedmaster Professional “Snoopy Award” to commemorate this 1970 milestone. As a limited edition, Omega produced 5,441 pieces of the Speedmaster Snoopy. The number has to do with the 142 hours, 54 minutes and 41 seconds that the mission lasted.

In 2015, for the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Apollo 13 mission, Omega introduced the Speedmaster Silver Snoopy Award. This limited edition of 1,970 pieces is only a bit more ‘over the top’ than its 2003 predecessor. A white dial with several comic details, like a sleeping Snoopy at 9 o’clock, 14 comic frames on the minute track and a text balloon above the center pinion. The caseback shows the large Snoopy, made of sterling silver. The Speedmaster Silver Snoopy Award is long sold out and fetches high prices on the pre-owned market.



Astronaut Thomas Stafford presented Omega with NASA’s Silver Snoopy Award after the Apollo 13 mission.



Photos of the first Omega Speedmaster Professional Snoopy Award (2003, opening page and top left) and the more-recent Speedmaster Professional Silver Snoopy Award (2015). Both editions feature the famous beagle dressed in his spacesuit on the caseback.







SPEEDMASTER DARK SIDE OF THE MOON VINTAGE BLACK

## NEW PATINA

*After the successful launch of the Dark Side of the Moon watch in 2013, Omega started introducing a number of variations. The **'Vintage Black'** model with its yellowish patina hits the spot with Speedmaster collectors.*

The second generation of the Speedmaster Dark Side of the Moon showed variety. The Vintage Black edition was also well received by Speedmaster collectors who normally only fancy the hand-wound Moonwatch models.

TEXT: ROBERT-JAN BROER PHOTOS: BERT BUIJSROGGE

I'VE BEEN LOOKING FORWARD to giving the Speedmaster Dark Side of the Moon Vintage Black (Reference 311.92.44.51.01.006) a test drive. Omega sent us this Vintage Black variation of the original Dark Side of the Moon model to do our review and take it into our own photo studio.

You are probably already aware of the specifications of the Dark Side of the Moon models, and they are not very different for this Speedmaster Vintage Black edition: an in-house Caliber 9300 chronograph movement with the Co-Axial escapement invention, two-register dial layout with a date at 6 o'clock and of course a 44.25-mm case made from one ceramic block. The dial is also ceramic, of course.

That is the Omega Speedmaster Dark Side of the Moon Vintage Black in a nutshell, but we want to know how it compares to the original Dark Side of the Moon of course, and perhaps to some other brands that are on the market with similar appearance and use of materials and colors.

### #VINTAGE SUPER-LUMINOVA

The most important aspect that makes this Speedmaster Dark Side of the Moon Vintage Black different from the other ceramic variations is that Omega used their own "Vintage" Super-LumiNova on the dial, date disc and hands. This gives the effect of a vintage dial or vintage watch and together with the use of brown indexes and hands it looks quite stunning. Where an old hand-wound Moonwatch would need 20 years or more to discolor (if this happens at all, depending on the production year due to the paint used and dial supplier), Omega made an "instant" vintage watch with this Speedmaster Dark Side of the Moon Vintage Black.

You can debate how "real" this is, but you can also ask yourself whether it needs to be real anyway, as this watch surely isn't primarily addressed to vintage watch collectors. It looks great though. As I wore it I received a lot of comments on this timepiece and the comments on our Instagram feed were nice as well.

The central hands on the black dial are also blackened but due to the "Vintage" Super-LumiNova they give enough contrast with the matte black dial. As written above, the small hands on the two subdials have this brown finish and look very nice with the luminous material used.

The date aperture at 6 o'clock is a topic of discussion sometimes. Personally, I think it gives a nice balance to the two-register layout and the majority of consumers buying a modern watch want to have a date function on their timepiece.

On the one hand Omega seems to use their production process regarding ceramic cases and to produce more variations on the Dark Side of the Moon theme, but on the other hand they also do seem to listen to the market. There are now four variations of the original Dark Side of the Moon model, so five in total.

With this new Omega Speedmaster Dark Side of the Moon Vintage Black, Omega also introduced the new ceramic folding clasp. Ceramic and titanium I have to add, as the long ends of the clasp need to 'move' of course in order to open and close (click).

The side of the ceramic is nicely brushed and the winding crown has been engraved with the Omega logo and received a bit of a varnished brown filling as well. Also, the ceramic bezel has a "Vintage" Super-LumiNova tachymeter scale and has this matte brush finish while the original Dark Side of the Moon model has a polished finish.



## “VINTAGE” SUPER-LUMINOVA

*The most important aspect that makes this Speedmaster Dark Side of the Moon Vintage Black different is that Omega used their own “Vintage” Super-LumiNova for the dial, date disc and hands.*

### #CALIBER 9300

We have written quite a bit about this in-house manufactured movement with silicon hairspring. It keeps perfect time and operating the column-wheel chronograph movement feels like silk.

I’ve made this comment often, but I do not fancy a sapphire caseback on all of the watches out there with a mechanical movement. Sometimes I just feel it is nicer to have a neat engraving or bas-relief logo than to look at a movement that is not that special. A chronograph movement is already different of course, as you can witness some of the action when pushing the buttons of the watch.

However, viewing this in-house Caliber 9300 is different from looking at a rather common off-the-shelf chronograph movement, of course. Omega did a very nice job in industrializing the production process of the Caliber 8xxx and 930x movements – great movements in terms of specifications but also visually very pleasing to the eye. There is a bit much text engraved on the movement, but at least it gives you some useful information. The domed sapphire crystal on the caseback is something I love and makes me prefer the Caliber 9300 Speedmaster series over a Caliber 9300 Seamaster Planet Ocean for example, as the Speedmaster case doesn’t look as thick as the PO case.

The leather strap on the Speedmaster Dark Side of the Moon Vintage Black has this worn look to stress the vintage appeal a bit I guess. Although Omega made the right pick with regards to the color and rugged finish, in my opinion the padding of the strap near the lugs is a bit too much.

However, the strap does feel very comfortable and doesn’t need any break-in period. The folding clasp is something that was called for by a lot of fans, but personally I am more a buckle kinda guy. A lot of the folding buckles wear a bit too thick on the inside of your wrist. This single folding buckle is fine though, but I wouldn’t mind having a ceramic buckle instead. It is a personal preference and I guess I am in the minority with this liking anyway.

### #VERDICT

The Omega Speedmaster Dark Side of the Moon Vintage Black is an awesome watch without a doubt. People who admire the aesthetics of the original Speedmaster Professional ‘Moonwatch’ but rather prefer some modern features (sapphire, large diameter, date window, self-winding movement) will love it for sure. I believe this is also the target audience for this watch although some hard-core Speedmaster Professional collectors might want to add it to their collection for the sake of having an everyday timepiece and keeping their plastic crystals safe. I am playing with similar thoughts but think I’d prefer the initial Dark Side of the Moon instead as I love the brightness of that watch a bit better than the “new” patina on this particular model.

The new line-up of ceramic Speedmaster watches is meant to provide a couple of choices, so everyone can pick a watch that suits his preferences best and still enjoy the Caliber 9300, Moonwatch aesthetics and ceramic case and dial.

The photos on the opposite page show the details of the ceramic Speedmaster Dark Side of the Moon Vintage Black. A brown suede leather strap strengthens the ‘vintage’ look and feel and goes well with the patina on the dial and hands.







SPEEDMASTER '57 CO-AXIAL CHRONOMETER

# HOW GOOD IS THE CALIBER 9300 SPEEDMASTER '57?

TEXT: ROBERT-JAN BROER  
PHOTOS: BERT BUIJSROGGE

OMEGA CAME UP with quite a few additional Speedmaster models in 2015. Not only did they introduce a new range of ceramic Speedmaster Dark Side of the Moon models, a White Side of the Moon and the Speedmaster Professional Silver Snoopy Award, they also released a new Speedmaster '57 Caliber 9300 model. It is a slight update of a model from 2013, including the famous broad arrow hands.

## #COMPARING THE OMEGA SPEEDMASTER '57

I own a Speedmaster '57 Re-Edition from 1998 and find myself wearing it quite a bit. The stainless-steel bezel and broad arrow hands make it a watch that has a

*In 2015, Omega introduced **a new range** of Speedmaster '57 Caliber 9300 models, with typical broad-arrow hands and metal bezel. They are clearly inspired by the first Speedmaster CK2915 reference, but with lots of modern ingredients.*

slightly different appeal than the regular 'Moonwatch' with its white baton hands and black tachymeter-scale bezel. The same goes for this Omega Speedmaster '57 Reference 331.10.42.51.01.002 (and 331.12.42.51.01.002 for the version on a tan leather strap).

However, I should stop comparing the Omega Speedmaster '57 to the original CK2915 or the Moonwatch in general, as it is simply not even part of the Moonwatch collection. Omega decided to design and produce a number of Speedmaster watches that are clearly inspired by the original Moonwatch but put them in the market as a more modern timepiece. No hand-wound movement, no Hesalite (plexi) crystal and so on.

I sometimes wonder how often the managing board discussed the possibility of discontinuing this Speed-





Above: The original Speedmaster CK2915 from 1957. Right: The Speedmaster '57 with in-house Caliber 9300



master Pro in its current form during the last 10 years as it is a watch that doesn't have all the innovations other Omega models do have. It is basically still the design of 1968, except for the bracelet. Not only that, but its suggested retail price is also lower than most of their new watch collections. On the other hand, it is probably a great seller year-after-year and probably one of the coolest "entry-level" watches a brand can wish for. Even if you have a somewhat limited budget for watches, it is a timepiece that someone can save-up for in their life and buy (and wear) it.

Anyway, the urge to compare the Omega Speedmaster '57 to the Moonwatch (or the CK2915 reference) is perhaps also a logical one, as Omega uses a lot of design aspects from those watches for their new Speedmaster family members.

When I laid my eyes on the Speedmaster '57 References 331.10.42.51.01.002 and 331.12.42.51.01.002 for the

first time, I was enthusiastic straight away. The extensive line-up of ceramic Speedmaster Dark Side of the Moon models I understood from a commercial perspective, but these new Speedmaster '57 additions are something 'refreshing' even though they are heavily inspired by the CK2915. Somehow they sparked my interest more than the first Caliber 9300 Speedmaster '57 with leaf-shaped hands did.

**#VINTAGE PATINA AND BROAD ARROW HANDS**

The Omega Speedmaster '57 is an attractive watch for a number of reasons. The case has a very nice size of 41.5 mm (yes, even smaller than the Speedmaster Professional), which seems to be an accepted size for a men's watch by many. The ceramic models and stainless-steel Speedmaster Caliber 9300 models are all

## ENTHUSIASM

*When I laid my eyes on the new Speedmaster '57, I was enthusiastic straight away.*

44.25 mm, which is still considered to be a large watch and not for everyone. The Omega Speedmaster '57 has a modest diameter and looks sleek anyway because of the lack of crown guards, like the original straight-lug Speedmaster watches. Another aspect that makes this watch attractive is the use of the in-house developed Caliber 9300.

This column-wheel chronograph with Co-Axial escapement is the result of years of development. Omega industrialized the production process of this movement (and that of the Caliber 8500 family) to be able to provide the high number of watches they produce every year with one of these in-house movements. It is not only the finish of the movement that is so beautiful – also the fact that it uses a column-wheel mechanism for the chronograph, a Co-Axial escapement and silicon parts make this a very interesting movement. Operating this chronograph movement by using the start/stop and reset pushers does feel very solid and 'precise.' The Caliber 9300 also has been chronometer certified.

Although I am not particularly a fan of using 'vintage' patina, it does suit this Omega Speedmaster '57 and also seems to make sense because it references the original Speedmaster CK2915 that was in production from 1957 to 1959. As you can see in the image on the left, the original CK2915 models often show discolored hour markers and luminous material in the hands. Besides the yellowish patina on the dial (and date disc!), the Omega Speedmaster '57 also features the famous broad arrow hands – something Omega has been reviving for the Speedmaster every once in a while since 1997 and even named an entire (now discontinued) Speedmaster collection 'Broad Arrow,' using the F. Piguet-based chronograph movement.

The yellowish patina is being referred to by Omega as 'Vintage Super-LumiNova' and as you can see on the previous page, the hour markers are etched in the dial and filled with this luminous material. It is not a sandwich dial. Omega uses the same technique for their Seamaster 300 range. As mentioned above, even the

numerals on the date disc are in the same 'vintage' color as the hour markers, minute markers and other printing on the dial. There is little to criticize on the dial for that matter, but perhaps I would have preferred an applied metal Omega logo. I am not bothered by the typical two-register layout of the dial due to the use of their Caliber 9300.

**#DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THE SPEEDMASTER '57 BRACELET**

Bracelets are tricky things to get 'right' and only a few watch brands succeed in doing so. The Speedmaster bracelets have been a topic of discussion many times among Speedmaster fans, especially the later (post mid-1990s) and current ones used on the Speedmaster Pro are not favored by everyone. However, these are certainly more comfortable than the previously used references (1479, 1450, 1171 and so on) as they don't pull your hairs and have a nicer clasp. For the Omega Speedmaster '57 collection, Omega studied the original bracelets that were used on the Speedmasters of the 1950s and 1960s. We are talking about the References 7077, 7912, 1039, etc., with the flat links and little springs to make them capable of stretching a bit.

As you can see, the new Omega Speedmaster '57 bracelet is heavily inspired by the appearance of the original (References 7077 to 1039) bracelets. The new bracelet is a bit thicker though – which is a good thing, as the original thickness would have been too flimsy for a watch like this – and has a modern clasp. The center links are brushed and the outer ones are nicely polished. I prefer it over the other modern Omega Speedmaster bracelet types. In the Speedmaster community, there is some complaining about the polished parts though. To be honest I am not entirely sure what the critics of this bracelet are looking for instead. Perhaps an all-brushed bracelet, but that does not correspond to the original Speedmaster CK2915 bracelet. Anyway, the Omega Speedmaster '57 is also available with a beautiful tan leather strap.





The Speedmaster Professional Apollo 11 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in detail: Sedna gold bezel, hands and hour markers and a titanium case

SPEEDMASTER PROFESSIONAL APOLLO 11 45<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

# SEDNA GOLD AND TITANIUM

TEXT: ROBERT-JAN BROER PHOTOS: BERT BUIJSROGGE

*Omega has a tradition of introducing commemorative editions of the Speedmaster Professional. The **Apollo 11 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** edition from 2014 was very different from its predecessors. Here's why.*

IN 2009, THE 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY Apollo 11 edition of the Speedmaster Professional was a slightly modified version of the standard model: a beautiful silver medal patch on the subdial at 9 o'clock and a big eagle on the caseback. Of course, there was also the platinum version with yellow-gold medal on the subdial.

As a tradition you could say, Omega introduced the 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition of the Speedmaster Professional Apollo 11 in 2014. However, I guess that no one expected the watch to be like this: a titanium case, PVD dial, a Sedna gold bezel with matte black ce-

ramic tachymeter ring and a NATO strap. One of the first things to notice is the dial. The logo and wording have not been printed like we are used to, but it is all made of one piece and treated with black PVD.

The dial was created using a special laser, which created the nice-looking dial by removing all material surrounding the logo, model name, subdial numerals, minute and hour markers. This results in a dial that has a greyish look, which appears to be a grained structure. The use of 18 karat red gold for the indexes and hands (one exception – the chronograph second hand is red-gold plated)



For the first time, the Speedmaster Professional 'Moonwatch' is available in titanium with Sedna gold. The Apollo 11 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Limited Edition came with the Omega NATO strap that was introduced in 2014 as well.



is well-chosen by Omega as it provides a great contrast with the black PVD dial.

The use of Sedna gold was quite a surprise as well. The Sedna gold alloy blends in gold, copper and palladium and has a minimum gold content of 75%. The result is a unique rose color mainly due to the right amount of copper. Palladium ensures the long-lasting effect of the reddish hue on the Sedna gold.

### #TITANIUM CASE

The case of this Speedmaster Professional is made of titanium. Although titanium has been used before on a Speedmaster, it wasn't done before on this typical asymmetrical Speedmaster (Professional) case. Omega decided to use grade-2 titanium and give it a brushed finish. Normally, brands tend to use the grade-5 titanium type, which almost looks like stainless steel when it has been given a polish treatment. The grade-2 titanium is bound to become darker over time, which will give the watch its own unique look. The rose Sedna gold bezel contrasts nicely with the case and dial.

The dimensions of the case are equal to those of the stainless-steel 'Moonwatch' model, 42 mm in diameter. Omega decided to put a sapphire crystal on this watch instead of the plexi Hesalite crystal, which makes sense in a way, since it was designed to be a sturdy watch (hence the titanium case). The caseback has the typical inscription used by Omega to show this watch as part of the Moonwatch family. On top of that, it has the Apollo 11 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Limited Edition engraving and an individual number (of 1969 pieces in total).

## GRADE-2 TITANIUM

*The grade-2 titanium is bound to become darker over time, which will give the watch its own unique look. The rose Sedna gold bezel contrasts nicely with the case and dial.*

Underneath the caseback is the good old hand-wound Lemania based Caliber 1861 movement. Although I like the in-house-developed Co-Axial chronograph movements from Omega a lot, I don't think they should ever change this winning combination of the Speedmaster Professional and the hand-wound movement – unless they come up with a way to use the Lemania 2310 (Omega's Caliber 321) column-wheel movement again, which is now at Breguet. Collectors of the Speedmaster might be able to forgive Omega if they'd put a Co-Axial escapement in a new version of the caliber 321. On the other hand, perhaps they should keep it affordable. I think it is very cool that one of the most iconic watches in the world is accessible to almost everyone.

### #NATO STRAP

One of Omega's novelties in 2014 was their offering of NATO straps. Beautiful finished NATO straps that really stand out compared to the cheap \$20 straps you can order online almost everywhere; thick NATO's that will not scratch the caseback of your watch and with a nice Omega clasp as well. The Apollo 11 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Limited Edition Speedmaster comes with such a NATO strap, in brown. A wonderful combination.

We've heard that the titanium Speedmaster Professional X-33 bracelet will fit this watch as well. So if you really want to wear it on a metal (titanium) bracelet that matches, you might want to order one separately.







## SILVER SNOOPY AWARD REVIEW

# A TRIBUTE TO APOLLO 13

TEXT: ROBERT-JAN BROER PHOTOS: BERT BUIJSROGGE (2) OMEGA (3)

*The Speedmaster Silver Snoopy Award was sold out on the first day of its introduction in 2015. This watch was an **instant hit** and you had to be lucky to get one, as only 1,970 pieces were available worldwide. I was one of those lucky guys, and managed to order one as soon as the news dropped.*

WHEN THE OMEGA SPEEDMASTER Pro Apollo XI 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with the titanium case and Sedna gold bezel came out, I didn't order it straight-away. A huge mistake. What followed, was a search for a decent priced (which means not over list price) Apollo XI watch. In the end I was offered a couple of them, but all way over the initial list price in euro currency. So, I decided to prevent that from happening again and I ordered the new Omega Speedmaster Professional Apollo 13 Silver Snoopy Award on the first day in Basel at the annual Baselworld exhibition.

My luck was that I was superfast with my order, so I could pick an individual number that has a special meaning to me – like most people have when requesting a specific number. However, it was up to Omega whether to grant this number to me, of course.

It would be my first Speedmaster Professional with a white dial: not something I've specifically been looking for, but it is a nice variation. Also, it would make a nice addition to my other 'Apollo 13' related Speedmasters, the 1995 Apollo 13 Limited Edition and the 2003 Snoopy Limited Edition.

So after waiting patiently for seven months, I received an email that my watch was on its way to the Tourbillon Boutique in Amsterdam. The special caseback of the Silver Snoopy Award was a difficult job and word is that they could not even produce a handful of these per day.

I thought it would be interesting to do a more hands-on review based on some everyday wearing. As I've experienced over time, that watch wears a bit differently than the regular Moonwatch.

### #OMEGA SPEEDMASTER APOLLO 13 SILVER SNOOPY AWARD

I won't go into detail about the Snoopy and the relationship with the Speedmaster. We've covered that in another article in this magazine.

One of the things that worried me a bit about this Silver Snoopy Award watch was the printing on the dial. There is a lot going on there. "What could you do in 14 seconds?" is printed together with 14 small comic frames in the minute track on the dial. That refers to the exact timing of 14 crucial seconds during the return of

the Apollo 13 command module in 1970. Then, there is our favorite beagle in the subdial at 9 o'clock with a little text balloon above the center pinion saying "Failure is not an option!" – words that were spoken in the 1995 *Apollo 13* movie by the actor in the role of Flight Director Gene Kranz (he never used this line during the actual mission, but later used similar words during an interview with the script-writers. After the sentence was used in the 1995 movie, Gene Kranz used 'Failure is Not an Option' as the title for his autobiography that appeared in 2000.

### #DETAILS ON THE DIAL

Then there are some details that I didn't really notice during our one-hour Baselworld appointment with Omega, but during the following couple of weeks while wearing the watch.

One of those details is that the hand on the 9 o'clock subdial (for the regular seconds) is all-white, while the other hands are black. I needed to check our own photos from Baselworld to see if that was the case with the prototypes of the watch (0000/1970 numbers) that we saw, and they were white. A bit silly perhaps that I didn't notice it back then, but the minute I put it on my wrist it just seemed to "pop." I imagined how a small black second hand would look on the dial, but I think they made the right decision by using a white hand. Another detail is that the numerals on the three subdials look a bit different compared to the regular black dial Moonwatch: they aren't filled.

The hands, hour markers and the Snoopy at 9 o'clock are painted with Super-LumiNova. Besides the fact that it enables you to read the time under low-light conditions, it also looks very nice, especially the glowing beagle at 9 o'clock.

I've had two Speedmaster Professional watches with a sapphire crystal, but I always liked the look and feel of the sapphire. I write 'feel,' as the watch will gain some weight due to the sapphire crystal. The downside of the sapphire crystal – versus the Hesalite plexi crystal – is that it doesn't give the watch the effect of a magnified dial. This effect is a result of the domed plexi crystal.



#THE CASE AND BEZEL

The case has the same dimensions as the normal Omega Speedmaster Pro Moonwatch, which is 42 mm. However, the watch has different proportions and therefore a slightly different appearance on the wrist from the normal Moonwatch, in my opinion. This has to do with the thickness of the case band, which is slightly thicker than the normal version. That, combined with the ceramic bezel, makes the watch look a bit different when worn on the wrist than the Moonwatch. Perhaps the sapphire crystal also plays a role in this slight difference in appearance. The ceramic bezel has a tachymeter scale that has been filled with Super-LumiNova.

However, the most important aspect of the case of the Speedmaster Professional Apollo 13 Silver Snoopy Award is, of course, the caseback.

The snap caseback (not screw-down) features a silver Snoopy medallion mounted on a silver plate and filled with blue enamel. Silver powder is sprinkled by hand on the enamel, giving each watch a unique look. Of course, the silver Snoopy resembles the official Snoopy lapel pin that was given by NASA to Omega for the role of the Speedmaster during Apollo 13. On the stainless-steel caseback, you'll also find the number of the watch engraved (of 1970 pieces, the year of the Apollo 13 mission), as well as "Apollo XIII 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary" and the "Eyes on the Stars" line.

#MOVEMENT

Just like the regular Omega Speedmaster Professional 'Moonwatch,' the Apollo 13 Silver Snoopy Award has the hand-wound Lemania-based Caliber 1861 inside. This movement is a successor of the Caliber 861 that was introduced in 1968 in the Speedmaster Professional 145.022 and used until 1996. It has a rhodium plated finish and a power reserve of 48 hours. The chronograph uses a shuttle cam mechanism instead of a column wheel. That solution is perhaps less 'haute horlogerie,' but it has a solid track record since 1968 and works flawlessly.

#STRAP AND FOLDING CLASP

The strap is coated nylon and has a leather lining. It is remarkably comfortable and the stainless-steel folding clasp makes it easy to adjust to the right size. I guess I could put a stainless-steel bracelet on this watch, any of the modern 20-mm Speedmaster bracelets would

3 APOLLO 13 SPEEDMASTERS

*The Silver Snoopy Award is the third Speedmaster that commemorates the Apollo 13 Mission.*

do, but actually prefer wearing it on the soft strap. The strap tapers from 20 mm between the lugs to 18 mm at the folding clasp. The strap is a bit padded near the case, but gets flat towards the two ends. As I said, a very comfortable combination.

#PACKAGING

The Speedmaster Apollo 13 Silver Snoopy Award comes in a nice wooden black box: not the same one as the regular Moonwatch, but a bit smaller and higher. You will find a special newspaper concerning the Apollo 13 mission in the package, as well as a polishing cloth, traveling pouch, leather card holder for the two credit card-sized cards and a silver Snoopy lapel pin.

#PRICE, AVAILABILITY AND VERDICT

The Omega Speedmaster Professional Silver Snoopy Award is limited to 1970 pieces and all of these have been long sold.

I am a Speedmaster guy so it is difficult to give an unbiased verdict on the watch. However, from a Speedmaster collector's perspective I have to say that – together with the Apollo 11 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary model of the year before – the Apollo 13 Silver Snoopy Award watch Reference 311.32.42.30.04.003 is a wonderful limited edition. Although the dial had me a bit worried in advance and made me prefer the old 2004 Snoopy Award dial, I have to review my opinion on that. The new white dial is brilliant and all the writing and images on the dial do not distract. Would I buy it as my only Speedmaster watch? Probably not, as I feel you need to go proper 'Moonwatch' (new or vintage) if you only want to have one Speedmaster. If you are a collector or already have the 2003 Snoopy (and Apollo XIII Mission patch model), you want this one as well, at some point.



Above: These three watches, including the 1995 mission patch model (left), commemorate the Apollo 13 mission.



Left: the casebacks of the Silver Snoopy Award (left) and the previous Snoopy of 2003 (right)



SPEEDMASTER APOLLO XVII 45<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

## TRIBUTE TO GENE CERNAN

TEXT: ROBERT-JAN BROER  
PHOTOS: BERT BUIJSROGGE

Eugene 'Gene' Cernan, the **Last Man on the Moon**, passed away on January 16, 2017. He had been in space three times, with Gemini 9A, Apollo 10 and Apollo 17 – Apollo 17 being the last Apollo mission in 1972. Omega pays tribute to the man and his 1972 mission.







Top: The gold Speedmaster Apollo XVII edition, limited to 272 pieces. Left: The stainless-steel Speedmaster Apollo XVII, limited to 1972 pieces

BEFORE I HEAD OVER to the Speedmaster Professional Apollo XVII 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition, let's not forget what this Speedmaster commemorates. NASA's Apollo 17 was the last (manned) mission to the Moon. It was the sixth lunar landing and on board were astronauts Cernan, Schmitt and Evans. Only Cernan and Schmitt set foot on the Moon; Evans stayed behind in the command module.

Although initially there were also Apollo 18, 19 and 20 missions scheduled, these were cancelled for various reasons. Therefore, Gene Cernan is known to be the last man on the Moon. He even wrote a book with this title in 1999 and a beautiful video documentary in 2014. To my best knowledge, the 1999 book was given by some Omega retailers to buyers of the first Apollo 17 commemorative watch in 2002 (30<sup>th</sup> anniversary). The 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary Apollo 17 Speedmaster was very close to a regular Speedmaster Professional Moonwatch, but with a special engraving in the caseback. In 2012, another limited edition was introduced to commemorate the Apollo 17 mission. This time, the dial was made of a silver medallion with the Apollo 17 mission patch.

#### #45<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

In 2017, Omega introduced the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of the Speedmaster Professional Apollo XVII and it comes in stainless steel or in 18-karat gold. Both are limited editions: the stainless-steel version is limited to 1,972 pieces, referring to the year of the Apollo 17 mission, and the gold version is limited to 272 pieces.

Let's start with the Speedmaster Professional Apollo XVII in stainless steel, Reference 311.30.42.30.03.001. Based on the regular Moonwatch, the Apollo XVII edition has a 42-mm case made of stainless steel and features the Lemania-based Caliber 1861. The Speedmaster Apollo 17 is being delivered with a sapphire crystal, just like some of the previous limited editions (the Silver Snoopy Award, for example).

### 05:34 GMT

*Gene Cernan was the astronaut to set the last foot on the Moon, which was exactly at 05:34 GMT.*

#### #BLUE CERAMIC

Omega is keen on using ceramics for most of their new sports watches. The original Moonwatch is one of the few models without ceramics. This Speedmaster Apollo XVII, though, uses blue ceramic for its dial and bezel. The blue bezel uses Ceragold for its tachymeter scale, which is a patented process to create a seamless integration of ceramics and gold. The blue dial of the watch combines nicely with the gold applied hour markers and subdial rims. The hands that indicate the time are also made of gold while the chronograph hands are white baton hands. The Omega logo and writing are also in gold, to match the other gold accents.

On the 9 o'clock subdial you'll find the Apollo 17 patch. On the dial, you also see 05:34 GMT, just below the 'Speedmaster Professional' writing. Gene Cernan was the astronaut to set the last foot on the Moon, which was exactly at 05:34 GMT. The caseback shows that this watch is commemorating the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the "Last Man on the Moon" mission and that it is a tribute to Gene Cernan. The unique number of each watch is engraved here as well. In the center you'll find the mission patch, embossed in steel.

#### #GOLD SPEEDMASTER APOLLO XVII

It was a pleasant surprise to see that Omega introduced a gold version of the Speedmaster Professional again – be it this limited edition of only 272 pieces. The watch is also much better than the preview images I had seen prior to its introduction at Baselworld. The gold model is simply stunning in the flesh. This Speedmaster Professional, Reference 311.63.42.30.03.001, comes on a beautiful brown leather strap with a gold folding clasp.

The gold edition has similar design and specifications as the stainless-steel version, but with a couple of different accents. The Apollo 17 mission patch on the subdial at 9 o'clock is in gold, as well as the medallion on the caseback. The bezel and dial are also made of blue ceramics. Of course, the gold edition is also equipped with the hand-wound Caliber 1861.

Both watches are very attractive, especially due to the combination of gold and the blue ceramics. The only somewhat strange thing is the racing-like minute track on the watch. I am not sure why this was done on this Moonwatch variation but it does look nice.





BUYING THE RIGHT WATCH

# SPEEDMASTER BUYER'S GUIDE

*Buying a Speedmaster is not that difficult. Visit the nearest Omega Boutique and have a look at which watch speaks the most to you. **Buying a vintage Speedmaster** is different though. In this article, I zoom in on buying vintage (or at least pre-owned) Speedmaster watches.*

TEXT: ROBERT-JAN BROER PHOTOS: BERT BUIJSROGGE

AN INTRODUCTION to the Omega Speedmaster isn't necessary, I think. We all know about this iconic timepiece, so let us give an introduction on how to use this Speedmaster buyer's guide instead. Some Speedmaster history will be covered when discussing some of the models (reference numbers) out there.

I will focus on the various steps to take when you are in the process of buying – or collecting – Speedmaster watches. I will give some hints regarding Speedmaster prices, but as this may vary depending on the part of the world you are living in (taxes, currencies), I won't emphasize this too much. For now, much more important are the details you should look for when you've found a Speedmaster of your choice.

## #OMEGA SPEEDMASTER MODELS

One of the requests I often receive is to give some guidance in all the different models out there. If you are new to Speedmaster watches, it might seem like a bit of a horological wilderness. If you're looking for the actual Moonwatch model (the reference that went to the Moon), please read the other article in this maga-

zine first. We also included an article in this Speedy Tuesday magazine about the current Moonwatch that is closest to the actual one that landed on the Moon.

I will not go into detail about each model or reference number, as we probably did so in one of our Speedy Tuesday articles. Go online to [www.fratellowatches.com](http://www.fratellowatches.com) and use the search function on our website. I will make a distinction between the following models for this Speedmaster buyer's guide:

- Speedmaster (Professional) 'Moonwatch'
- Speedmaster (Professional) Mark Series
- Various other vintage Speedmaster models

## #SPEEDMASTER (PROFESSIONAL) 'MOONWATCH'

Although not all of these Speedmaster models in this section are considered a 'Moonwatch' – as they were introduced way before NASA chose Omega to become the official timepiece for their astronauts – I will still use this category for them in this Speedmaster buyer's guide. These early models are considered to be the ancestor of the Moonwatch.





#SPEEDMASTER CK2915

The very first Speedmaster that Omega introduced in 1957 is the Reference CK2915. Together with the Seamaster 300 (CK2913) and Railmaster (CK2914), this model had a sporty look with its straight lugs, black dial and broad arrow hands. Initially it was meant as a sports chronograph, for race car drivers for example.

The CK2915 has multiple versions (you will find a -1, -2, or -3 added to the reference number) that could be considered more or less as small updates if you want. If you are looking for a CK2915, expect to pay a fortune though. More important: Try to find an original one that has not been tampered with. There is so much money involved in these very first models, that they also attract crooks that are after your money. In a bad way – newly made cases, movements from other watches, refitted bezels from a later period and so on. Be very cautious in any case.

The CK2915 houses the Omega Caliber 321, with a column-wheel chronograph. This Lemania-based (Caliber 2310) movement went out of production in 1968 when Omega introduced the Speedmaster Professional 145.022.



#SPEEDMASTER CK2998 & 105.002

This watch is often considered to be the second best thing when it comes to vintage Speedmasters, but a small confession has to be made here. I love this version actually a bit better than its predecessor. This particular reference already looks a bit like the ‘Moonwatch’ with its black bezel (although the CK2915-3 also came with a black bezel) and Alpha hands. Where the first Speedmaster had a bit of a military look in my opinion, this watch is a more subtle sports chronograph.

There are quite a few variations in the CK2998, where the different styles of hands are the most important identifier. One of the most sought-after CK2998 models is the one with the ‘lollipop’ chronograph second hand.

The 105.002 needs to be mentioned as well. There is actually no real difference between the last variation CK2998(-62) and the 105.002 except for the reference number. Omega changed the reference number syntax, which means getting rid of the CK identifier and four-digit numbers. The 105.002 was made for a very small period of time (1962), before its successor was introduced (105.003). This makes the 105.002 perhaps even more collectible than some of the CK2998 models.

Oddly enough, I’ve been offered a 105.002 for quite a bit less money than a CK2998. The CK2998 is fetching high prices nowadays as well though, they have increased in demand very rapidly over the last few years. When there is a box or/and papers as well, the price will be influenced. You will also find models with a brown dial, referred to as ‘tropical dial’ models. You will also find CK2998 watches that were made for the Peruvian Air Forces (FAP), where it has a special engraving on the case. Most of these FAP editions are documented by the Omega Museum in Bienne, so always make sure to request an extract of the archives.



#SPEEDMASTER 105.003

The 105.003 reference already looks a bit more like the Speedmaster Professional ‘Moonwatch’ with its white baton hands. This Speedmaster is actually the most affordable pre-Professional model out there. The Speedmaster 105.003 was introduced right after the ‘transitional’ 105.002, in 1963.

The Speedmaster 105.003 was actually the watch that was tested by NASA and qualified as official watch for extra-vehicular activities (EVA). It is a common misunderstanding that the use of ‘Professional’ on the dial only goes back to 1965, and that the qualification for NASA did make Omega decide to label the later 105.012 and 145.012 references as ‘Professional.’ NASA Astronaut Ed White is known to have been wearing this Speedmaster 105.003 model, so it is also known as the ‘Ed White’ Speedmaster. This reference has also been used by Apollo astronauts as a secondary timepiece during their missions. This is the outcome of recent research done on the subject. The reference 105.003 is a highly sought-after watch by collectors.



#SPEEDMASTER PROFESSIONAL 105.012 & 145.012

The 105.012 and 145.012 are actually the references used by the Apollo 11 astronauts. It is also the model that has the asymmetrical case due to the use of crown guards. The 105.012 and 145.012 are considered to be the qualified models and used ‘Professional’ on the dials since 1966.

Before that, as you could read above, the ‘Professional’ wording was used as well on the 105.003 in small quantities only. It is verified that Buzz Aldrin wore a 105.012 when he set foot on the Moon while Michael Collins wore his 145.012 when waiting in the capsule for Aldrin and Armstrong to get back.

The strange thing is – although it is common to accept that the 105.012 and 145.012 are the true Moonwatch models – that these references are the least expensive Caliber 321 Speedmaster Professional watches you can buy. The 145.012 is a bit more common and was the last Caliber 321 in production, until October 1968. The 105.012 is considered to be a bit more valuable.





### #SPEEDMASTER PROFESSIONAL 145.022

In 1968 Omega decided to update the Speedmaster a bit. The dial doesn't feature the applied Omega logo anymore (although you will find the occasional 'transitional' model where Omega used a dial with applied logo) and the movement has been changed to the Lemania based Omega Caliber 861. This movement does not have a column-wheel mechanism but a cam lever. The 145.022 has been in the collection until around 1983.

In those early years, the dial was 'stepped' like the previous Caliber 321 dials. These are a bit more sought after than the late 1970s and 1980s models. Also, later 145.022 models should be easy to find with box and paper work. The stepped dial was used in the 145.022-68, 145.022-69 and 145.022-71 references. The last two digits are not specifically indicating the exact year of production, you can only determine that based on the serial number engraved on the movement. For example, the 145.022-69 was made from 1969 till the third quarter in 1971.

There are also a few different case backs for the 145.022, from the similar 145.012 caseback to the current case back with the 'First Watch Worn on the Moon' engraved case back. Most sought after are the



ones with horizontal inscription (which also comes in two flavours, the most sought after version is where it has Apollo XI 1969 engraved below the 'First Watch Worn on the Moon' inscription).

The 145.022 is also the reference number for a gold model from 1969, the Apollo XI 1969 commemorative edition with burgundy bezel. One with a burgundy bezel as a commemorative edition for the President of the USA, other members of the White House and Apollo astronauts. This reference number has a BA prefix, which means it is made of yellow gold. Only 1014 pieces have been produced of that watch and they are highly sought-after.

### #SPEEDMASTER PROFESSIONAL 145.0022 AND LATER REFERENCES

Since 1983 Omega has used the 145.0022 coding for the Speedmaster Professional – until the late 1980s, when they changed to their production system. In 1989, the 3592.50 was the Speedmaster Professional reference. Actually, it was only the reference coding that changed in 1983. In the late 1980's, other things such as the bracelet also changed. In 1997, the movement was upgraded the Omega Caliber 1861 (small modification in construction) and the dial and hands were applied with Luminova instead of Tritium. This update was done with the reference 3570.50 (although the few very first of these reference still had a tritium dial and hands). The current reference number of the original Moonwatch is 311.30.42.30.01.005.



### #SPEEDMASTER (PROFESSIONAL) MARK SERIES

The Mark series is often being covered in our online Speedy Tuesday features. If we do not consider the Speedmaster Professional (145.012/145.022) as a Mark I, there are four official Speedmaster Mark serieses. The first one was the Mark II (introduced in 1969), followed by the Mark III, Mark IV and Mark V.

Even though some of them were also considered a Speedmaster Professional, none of them were flight qualified for manned space missions by NASA. Only the Mark II and Mark V feature the same hand-wound movement as the Speedmaster Pro 145.022. The others have different automatic (Lemania based) Caliber 1040 chronograph movements. The last Mark, the V, was introduced in 1984 and is the last one of this series.

These Mark series watches are not as popular among the majority as the Speedmaster Professional models, which is reflected in their pricing. Some models tend to fetch more though, also depending on condition and whether they are complete with box and papers.



### #VARIOUS OTHER VINTAGE SPEEDMASTER MODELS

Another Speedmaster that should be mentioned here is the Speedmaster 125. It marked the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Omega company in 1973 and has this big clunky case and features Omega Caliber 1041. This is basically the same movement as Caliber 1040, but with a chronometer certification. In fact, it was the first automatic chronograph movement with chronometer certificate ever. There were only 2000 made of this watch, but due to its awkward size and appearance it is quite easy to find one.

Other collectible Speedmaster models worth mentioning in this Speedmaster Buyer's Guide are the early Speedmaster Professional Moonphase watches (1985). Only 1300 were made of this model and highly sought-after. Omega did a re-release of this particular model in 2003, but it has been discontinued in the meantime.

Another highly-sought after Omega Speedmaster is the one with the 'Professional' case and with Lemania 5100 based Omega Caliber 1045. This Speedmaster Automatic reference 376.0822 has also been nicknamed the 'Holy Grail'. Only 2,000 pieces have been made in 1987.

The Omega Speedmaster Professional Quartz LCD models are also interesting for those who are into buying Speedmaster watches. Perhaps not an everyday wearable piece, but certainly interesting to own.

Although there are a couple more Speedmaster watches that are probably worth mentioning here, these are the models that fetch most requests per email.



EXTRACT OF THE ARCHIVES – HOW IT WORKS

# INFORMATION ON YOUR VINTAGE OMEGA WATCH



You bought a **vintage Speedmaster** and you want to know exactly when it was produced and to which country it was initially shipped? You can request an extract of the archives. In this article we explain how it works.

TEXT AND PHOTOS: ROBERT-JAN BROER

WHEN I BOUGHT my first vintage Speedmaster, I wanted to know more about this specific watch. I found information on the Speedmaster online or in magazines, but I was curious to learn about the history of my own Speedmaster. For this, Omega – and a number of other brands – are able to provide you with an extract from the archives.

### #OMEGA’S MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES

I ordered quite a few of these documents over the years as I feel they do add value to the (vintage) watch. It also gives you a production and shipping date, as well as the country to which it was originally shipped. But what exactly are these archives, and why is Omega charging you 120 Swiss francs for it?

Not too long ago, I visited the Omega Museum in Bienne and spoke to Omega’s International Brand Heritage Manager Petros Protopapas and his team. They are not only responsible for the museum, its watches and worldwide travels to exhibitions and events, but also for the archives.

### #WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

I proposed to do a little test case, on my own Speedmaster watch. I already knew it was shipped to Finland on October 22, 1968, but that was it. This information was printed on one of the old extracts of the archives I had from years ago. I handed over my Speedmaster

Professional 145.012 to one of Omega’s watchmakers in Bienne to write down the serial number. In the meantime, I was shown around the archives.

The archive is a large room and looks like a library. There are countless books on shelves, perfectly organized. Not only bound books, but many books of hand written notes. Near the entrance to this room was a machine to read microfilm (microfiches); a Kodak Image-link workstation, that looks like the machines that I used to find in our local library when I was a kid. You could read old newspapers on those, if my memory serves me correctly.

You can already get an idea of why Omega is charging a fee for this. There is nothing digital about these archives and every single request is being done manually. So, let’s have a look at our test case.

### #SERIAL NUMBER

The starting point for an extract of the archives is the serial number of your watch that can be found on the movement. With modern watches, the serial number is also engraved on the caseback. Of course, you will also find the serial number on the warranty card that came with your watch. For vintage watches however, it isn’t always evident that the original papers are still there. My Speedmaster has a couple of numbers. On the inside of the caseback there is 145.012-67. This is the reference number of the watch. Some vintage watches also have a separate case number, but only very old watches use



this. Then, on the movement, we find two more numbers. A short number, in this case 321, refers to the caliber number of the movement. Another number, much longer, is the serial number. In my case, the serial number is 25,006,242. Now, according to some sources on the Internet, this number dates the watch to 1967. However, is this correct?

#GOING INTO THE ARCHIVES

With this serial number, we go into the archives. Based on the number, the guys from Omega know that the information is on microfilm. The Kodak machine is where we need to spend some time. First, the correct cassette or film needs to be picked from the archives. There are big steel drawers that contain dozens of these cassettes. They are all organized by sequence, so it is quickly found.

#MICROFILM

On the screen of the Kodak Imagewriter we have to search for the right serial number. It needs some practice, as we can't just enter a keyword. We need to 'scroll' through the microfilm until we see the correct serial number. You have to know that these serial numbers refer to the movement (also called movement number, not to be confused with caliber number) and are ordered or sorted by 10s. We need to find 25,006,240 as my serial number is 25,006,242. The next batch would therefore start with 25,006,250.

On the microfilm, you will find detailed information on the delivery dates of the movement and the assembly of the watch. In the case of my watch, the movement was delivered on February 14, 1968, and assembled on February 26. Bingo, now we have the production date and the year of the watch. This is the date that will be mentioned on the extract of the archives.

However, if such a date is not available, Omega will use the shipping date instead (and print that on the extract). In this case, I was lucky, and Omega had the actual production details.

#BOOKS IN THE ARCHIVES

We walk towards the other end of the department. Here, we find books that are sorted by numbers as well. We find the correct book and have to look up the serial number range again. As you can see, it is like a manual administration book. We find the batch number of 25,006,240. Next to it, we read 22.10.68 as well as 1191. Both are hand-written. Now we know the shipping date, which indeed was October 22, 1968. But also a number that refers to the destination. The 1191 is a number that can be looked up digitally. It refers to the country of destination and, in some cases, to a distributor that Omega used in the past. 1191 refers to, in my case, Finland. This country of destination is also printed on the extract of the archives.

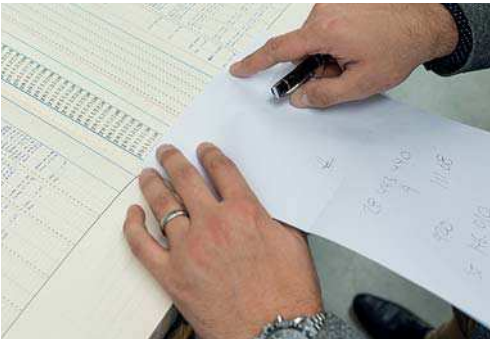
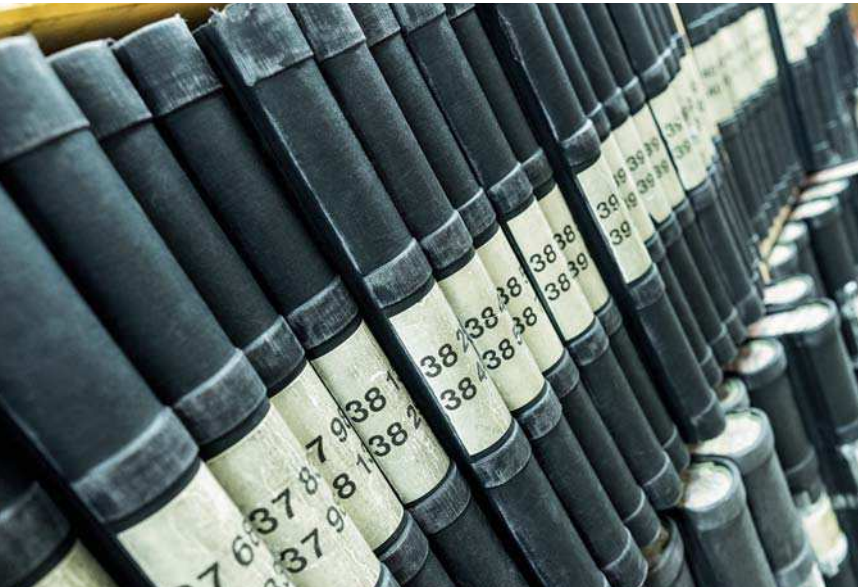
#EXTRACT OF THE ARCHIVES - PRINTING AND SIGNING

One of the last steps in this process is creating the actual extract document and having it signed – signed by the president of the company, that is. The document is being created by one of the employees of the Omega Museum, in our case the same person who looked up all the information. The extract of the archives needs some variables, like the type of watch, exact model name, caliber number and so on. These can be filled in by using a drop down list with all sorts of options. The movement number (25,006,242 in my case), watch reference (ST145.012), production date (February 26, 1968) and country of destination (Finland) are filled in manually. The document also leaves some room for additional notes or remarks. Let's say if your watch was originally delivered to NASA or to the Peruvian Airforce, this will be written down there.

Once ready and checked, the document is being printed on thick grainy paper with silver lettering for "Extract of the Archives" and a beautiful layout. Now, all it needs is a signature by the President and CEO of Omega.



Left: the signed extract of the archives and the watch it belongs to. Below: the archives are part of the Omega Museum. Bottom: information is saved on cassettes and in books.





WHAT'S ALASKA GOT TO DO WITH SPEEDMASTERS?

# ALASKA PROJECT

TEXT: ROBERT-JAN BROER PHOTOS: BERT BUIJSROGGE

*Omega secretly worked with NASA engineer Jim Ragan from the 1960s onwards. Each of these confidential projects received the code word **"Alaska."***



An early model from the Alaska Project with special shaped case made of titanium. The watch is inside a red anodized aluminum heat shield.



THE PROJECT NAME “ALASKA” has little to do with the state, besides its name. Omega used code words for a lot of their projects. This was done to minimize the risk of industrial espionage. Omega often used city, country or state names for secret projects.

#ALASKA PROJECT

The Alaska Project actually begins with NASA engineer Jim Ragan. We already mentioned Mr. Ragan in our story on how the Speedmaster became the Moonwatch, but it doesn’t end there. It was an ongoing process. He had to make sure all the equipment was up to the task. You have to know that temperatures on the Moon can go up to 120 degrees Celsius in the Sun (no atmosphere of course), the watch had to be shock proof (use on the Lunar Rover) and so on. The first Alaska Project watch that Omega developed was this crazy big titanium watch.

As you can see, the design served as an inspiration for the Speedmaster Professional Mark II watch. This titanium watch had the trustworthy Caliber 861 inside, but adjusted for use in extreme temperatures by using special alloys and oil. The dial, as you can see, is silver white. This was done to have a better reflection of heat (of the Sun). There is no mention of Speedmaster on this dial, or Swiss Made. The racing dial pattern was used for the minute track. The rocket shaped hands are also quite interesting. All hands for chronograph functions were in red. This particular prototype also had the red anodized aluminum protective outer case.

The production costs of this watch were very high though, so other prototypes were produced as well. One of the prototypes of the first Speedmaster Alaska Project watch, that can be clearly identified as a Speedmaster Professional, is known as the Speedmaster Alaska II watch. This piece, made of stainless steel instead of titanium, was the basis for the later (2008) introduced Speedmaster Alaska Project re-edition model.

For this article, I take a look at both the Alaska II watch and the Speedmaster Alaska Project re-edition watch.

#1970 SPEEDMASTER ALASKA II PROJECT

The Speedmaster Alaska II watch was developed right after the first one of 1969. This piece is almost identical to the Speedmaster ‘Moonwatch’ of that time. In fact, it uses the same case reference (145.022-69). Inside is Omega’s Caliber 861, the hand-wound Lemania based chronograph movement. It isn’t clear to us why the first prototype in titanium had this weird case shape. Whether it was done for a specific reason regarding shocks or other technical requirements or that it was purely functional, we don’t know. What stayed was the red anodized aluminum outer case to protect the watch from the high temperatures (up to 120 degrees Celsius in direct sunlight).

The red anodized aluminum case has a 60-minute scale and the tachymeter scale basically became unusable. That said, the tachymeter scale is of no real use in space anyway (correct me if I’m wrong). A 60-minute scale makes more sense, using it to mark a certain time by using the minute hand. The later prototype of Alaska had a 0–60 bezel instead of the tachymeter-scale bezel.

An interesting fact is that the 1970 Speedmaster Alaska II also uses the rare ‘220’ tachymeter bezel. This is, in fact, a bezel with an error. There should be a ‘200’ where it says ‘220.’ Regular Speedmaster 145.022-69 references (of 1970) with this specific faulty bezel fetch a bit more than correct ones, needless to say. It is rather interesting that Omega decided to use this bezel for one of their prototype watches.

The dial of the watch – although its color is similar to the first prototype – is a bit different as the first model was not marked as Speedmaster, had a different dial shape and applied markers instead of printed. The hands remained similar: rocket-style subdial chronograph hands, red chronograph seconds hand, and black hour and minute hands. The rocket hands changed from red to black, as you can see. The common belief is that there are only very few of these Alaska II watches, and that this is just one of the three existing pieces.



This Alaska Project watch in titanium had no ‘Speedmaster Professional’ wording on the dial, only ‘Omega’ and an applied logo. The red rocket hands and black hour and minute hands were also used in later versions.



ALASKA PROJECT

*The first Alaska Project pieces looked very futuristic and were housed in a red outer case.*

#SPEEDMASTER PROFESSIONAL ALASKA PROJECT 2008

In 2008, Omega introduced their Speedmaster Alaska Project 2008 watch. Omega seems to be mastering the art of doing retro models in the last couple of years (think of the Seamaster PloProf 1200M or the Speedmaster 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary). A re-edition of a prototype is something interesting in my opinion, as not many other brands have done this.

The case of the original Speedmaster Alaska II was based on the regular 145.022-69. The new model has the regular Speedmaster case, 145.0022 (case reference, not watch reference!) which was similar to the (at that time) Speedmaster Reference 3570.50. What was different, was the dial of course and the caseback. The caseback had the “Flight-qualified by NASA for all manned space missions” engraving, but also an additional engraving of “Alaska Project Limited Series” with the unique number engraved. Only 1,970 pieces were made.

Where the original 1970 Speedmaster Alaska II has the Caliber 861, the 2008 limited edition features the Caliber 1861. This movement, based on the same Lemania chronograph base movement, is still being used in today’s ‘Moonwatch.’ Omega changed from 861 to 1861 in 1997. The Caliber 1861 has a rhodium finish, while the earlier 861 movements had a copper color. The 861 movement in the 1970 Speedmaster probably still has the steel chronograph brake, while the 1861 uses the Delrin brake. The Caliber 861 also has 18 jewels instead of 17. Only small upgrades to the hand-wound Moonwatch movements were made between 1970 and 2008, but to the untrained eye, only the color of the movement will be different.

The 2008 limited edition of the Speedmaster Alaska Project has a white dial as well as the black rocket hands for the chronograph subdials and a red chronograph hand. What changed, of course, is the use of Super-LumiNova instead of tritium, hence the yellowish hour markers on the 1970 model. The bezel on the 2008 edition we feature in our article isn’t the original tachy-





The original 1970 Speedmaster Alaska II (left) compared to the 2008 re-edition (limited to 1,970 pieces). The 2008 re-edition also came with a red anodized aluminum heat shield.

meter. Instead, there's a telemeter bezel installed. As you can see on the images, the new red outer case is a bit different from the original one. Specifications tell us that it is also resistant to temperatures from -148 to +260 degrees Celsius, and it looks a bit different from the 1970 Alaska II red outer case. There is some text on the case, saying it is the "Alaska Project" watch and that it is an "Outer space extreme temperature instrument," but also the scale is done in a different way. On the back side, it is different as well, as the original one is just in aluminum color and the new one is all red.

The new case is also a bit thicker than the original red anodized aluminum case and the pushers have a different shape.

#OTHER ALASKA WATCHES

As written above, "Alaska" was a code name for everything NASA at Omega. Remember the Alaska Project III of 1978, made for the Space Shuttle missions? It had the radial dial and caseback with NASA serial and product numbers. This Alaska III project was from the 1970s for re-qualification as an EVA watch for the Space Shuttle program. In 1978 the Speedmaster got re-qualified once more and Omega sent 56 pieces to NASA for use during the Space Shuttle program.

Later on, beginning in 1979, Omega created a new prototype for NASA purposes: Alaska IV was born. It was based on the Speedmaster LCD models from 1977. However, a modification was done to these watches, to also have a lit display for the chronograph. Omega sent a couple of these digital versions to NASA for testing.

After the Alaska IV it didn't end, but Alaska wasn't used anymore as a code word. In the mid-1990s it was decided by astronauts they needed a new watch with some useful functions during space travel. Omega came up with the Speedmaster X-33, tested by pilots, astronauts and cosmonauts. However, the Speedmaster Professional remains the only watch qualified for EVA (extra vehicular activity) by NASA.

This article does not only show you the uniqueness of the Alaska II or the comparison of that specific watch and the 2008 re-edition. No, it also shows that today, the Speedmaster is highly sought after by collectors and that the price of these particular timepieces has significantly increased over the past years.



Here you can see the similarities of Omega's re-edition (bottom) with the Alaska I and II watches (top and middle).





SPEEDMASTER DARK SIDE OF THE MOON

# SPEEDMASTER REVOLUTION

TEXT: ROBERT-JAN BROER PHOTOS: OMEGA

*Omega Speedmaster Dark Side of the Moon: a long-awaited **black version** of the famous Speedmaster watch was introduced during the Baselworld 2013 exhibition. Since then, Omega has created a number of ceramic Speedmasters. Let's take a look at the initial version of the Dark Side of the Moon.*

WHEN I FIRST LAID MY EYES on the Omega Speedmaster Dark Side of the Moon I was very excited. There has long been wish for an all-black Speedmaster. Although there had been a couple of PVD-coated Speedmasters and the occasional customized DLC Speedmaster, there was no official black version of the Speedmaster Professional. I know that Omega tested and tried some black versions as prototypes, but it didn't make it to a production version.

Instead, Omega decided to use the 2011 Omega Speedmaster Caliber 9300 Co-Axial chronograph as a basis and to use a ceramic case and dial instead of stainless steel (or titanium).

The Speedmaster Dark Side of the Moon is crafted from a single block of black zirconium oxide ceramic. The dial and pushers are also made of this material. Omega decided to put a soft nylon strap on the Dark Side of the Moon, initially with a simple but elegant black ceramic buckle, later with a deployant clasp as well. The fact that Omega used the Speedmaster Co-Axial 9300 as a basis means that the case is 44.25 mm and indeed uses their in-house developed Co-Axial

## DARK SIDE OF THE MOON

*The Apollo 8 astronauts were the first people to see the dark side of the moon with their own eyes.*

chronograph movement, Caliber 9300. This movement is being used in the Seamaster Planet Ocean Chronograph as well.

The two-register chronograph dial layout is not to everyone's liking; purists especially still seem to prefer the classic tricompax layout from the Omega Speedmaster Professional. Although I consider myself a Speedmaster purist, I must say that the dial of the Dark Side of the Moon is quite easy to get used to. The date aperture at 6 o'clock makes it a well-balanced dial without getting too cluttered. The glossy dial matches the polished ceramic bezel.



The Speedmaster Dark Side of the Moon with its black ceramic case from several angles. The movement is visible through the display back with boxed sapphire crystal. The watch is attached to this highly comfortable and high quality fabric strap.



Regarding the 44.25-mm size, it is larger to wear than the classic 42-mm Speedmaster Professional 'Moonwatch.' However, it doesn't seem to me as being oversized on the wrist. There seems to be a trend towards smaller watches again, but this doesn't mean that 44 or 45mm is something that will disappear anytime soon. I guess 42mm was quite oversized in the 1960s as well and now it is an 'average' size while the 34-mm watches of those days (considered to be normal) are small today. In other words, a 44.25-mm diameter is here to stay and I am confident that it won't look silly in a few decades from now.

**#CALIBER 9300 FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A BLACK CERAMIC CASE**

The same goes for black watches. Where it was a bit of a hype to have a PVD or DLC watch a few years ago – and later the ceramic and carbon forged watches –, they belong to regular collections these days. There will always be a demand for black watches, be it perhaps a bit less than currently. The fact that after the introduction of this first Speedmaster Dark Side of the Moon a number of additional models have been introduced is probably based on the high demand for such a watch. In past years, Omega has been experimenting with black materials for its Speedmaster watches. In the end, they decided to use black ceramic, which is, in my opinion, an excellent choice. It is more exclusive than PVD or DLC and gives the watch a certain presence on the wrist.

The use of the "ZrO2" (the formula for black zirconium oxide ceramic) on the dial doesn't disturb me as much as some people told me it would. I would rather see the dial without this text, but since it is just a slight engraving above the center pinion it doesn't draw much attention. The red written "Speedmaster" and the red tip of the chronograph second hand are very welcome accents on the dial and make the watch come alive.

Caliber 9300 was already available on the market before the Speedmaster Dark Side of the Moon was introduced, but I haven't yet learned about real issues with this movement. Omega showed that they can develop

and produce solid in-house movements that can compete with some of the other big brands and movement names out there. The recent METAS certification is just another bit of proof that Omega has a lot of trust in their movements. Although the Caliber 9300 in the Dark Side of the Moon has not been certified as 'Master Chronometer' yet, this is something we can expect in the future.

The large domed crystal on the caseback is awesome – both on the wrist and when you take it off to see the Omega Caliber 9300. It is a column-wheel chronograph and uses the Si14 balance spring (which also means it is covered by a full four-year warranty).

When the watch sits on your wrist while driving your car, for example, sometimes the light will catch the domed crystal and you can see this when your hands are on the steering wheel. The caseback almost has no metal (or ceramic) part, so the large sapphire crystal takes up the most space. It gives you an amazing wide-angle view of the chronograph movement. Although I think there is a bit too much explanation and text on some parts of the movement, it is nicely done in the red color that matches the other red accents on the watch.

Even after a few years since the introduction of the Omega Speedmaster Dark Side of the Moon, the watch hasn't ceased to amaze me and makes me want to add it to my modest collection of Speedmaster watches.

When the watch was introduced, the relatively high price was a topic of discussion for many enthusiasts. However, you can't compare this watch to the Speedmaster Professional hand-wound Caliber 1861 models. There is a lot of innovation in the new Caliber 9300 range of Speedmasters that makes it an entirely different timepiece from those Moonwatch models.

Meanwhile Omega showed with their Speedmaster Dark Side of the Moon that this is a new era with their in-house developed movements and use of innovative materials while still keeping in touch with their heritage. It's interesting to add that some of my friends who were never much into Omega or watches in general, suddenly started to be so because of this Speedmaster Dark Side of the Moon. It seems to have been an eye-opener for people who were, let's say, on the dark side.







SPEEDMASTER ULTRAMAN REF.145.012-67

# THE LEGACY OF EIJI TSUBURAYA

TEXT: ROBERT-JAN BROER PHOTOS: BERT BUIJSROGGE

*Only a few of them have been made in Bienne, but (official) numbers aren't known. The watch was only made in 1968 and featured in **The Return of Ultraman** in 1971, which gives it its nickname 'Speedmaster Ultraman.'*



FOR A LONG TIME, the Speedmaster Ultraman remained a mystery and, to a certain extent, it still is. We don't know why Omega produced the Speedmaster 145.012-67 with an orange hand, and only a few pieces of them. People made assumptions and estimates, but according to research from the Omega Museum, this timepiece was indeed produced and delivered in this specification from Bienne.

#TOHO STUDIOS

The brain behind the Ultraman series, Eiji Tsuburaya, was probably a watch collector himself as many of his creations starred a lot of different interesting watches. More interesting, the Ultraman series was preceded by the Ultra Q series (1966). The Ultra Q series was in black and white and featured a Speedmaster as well, a Reference 105.003.

The series "The Return of Ultraman" (also known as "Ultraman Has Returned") was the sequel to the Ultraman series and appeared in 1971 and 1972. It was directed by Eiji's son Hajime Tsuburaya. Being a series shot in color, it is interesting to note that the series has this orange touch. Hence the orange-hand Speedmaster doesn't sound to us like a total coincidence.

However, the Speedmaster Ultraman is a watch that was produced in 1968, long before its appearance in "Ultraman Has Returned."

#SPEEDMASTER 145.012-67

In the serial number range of roughly 3,000 watches (26.076.xxx and 26.079.xxx, which corresponds to a production in 1968), an unknown number of watches were assembled with an orange hand. The reason why this seconds hand is orange remains a mystery, but af-

ter it had become clear that these watches played a role in Ultraman, they were nicknamed 'Speedmaster Ultraman' or the 'Ultraman Speedmaster.'

Now, it isn't clear how many of them are around but once in a while someone claims to have an all-original Speedmaster Ultraman in his possession. Omega documented some of them as a Speedmaster that left the factory with an orange hand, as can be seen on the extract from the archives shown at right. It is clear and confirmed that at least not all of these roughly 3,000 pieces have an orange hand. These watches were shipped to different markets, not only to Japan.

Besides the orange hand, it is a pretty normal Speedmaster 145.012-67 with all characteristics of that reference: Caliber 321, DO90 bezel, 1039 bracelet, etc. Those who are after making some quick bucks and not afraid of using some fraudulent tactics probably already thought about adding a Mark II orange hand, Soccer timer or Chronostop model and offer it as a Speedmaster Ultraman.

However, it seems that the orange hand of this particular timepiece is unique and has not been seen on other Omega watches. That's why a validation from Omega's official archives is an important asset.

#PROVENANCE

I've seen a couple of Speedmaster Ultraman watches over the years, from clearly frankenwatch models to the real deal like we have here. I remember lively discussions on Omega forums of people who were very certain that they bought the watch as-is new back in the 1960s, or that their father did.

It is very difficult to prove this to others, as I can imagine. Only with the extract from the Omega archives would I dare to buy a Speedmaster Ultraman myself (and pay a premium for it).

IDENTIFICATION

Identification will be tough, as some 145.012-67 references within the same serial number range have been tampered with afterwards.



The Speedmaster Ultraman, with correct bracelet, bezel and orange second hand, as confirmed by the Omega Museum in Bienne





STRAPS FOR THE SPEEDMASTER

# A VARIETY OF STRAPS

TEXT: ROBERT-JAN BROER PHOTOS: BERT BUIJSROGGE

When you buy a new Omega Speedmaster (Professional), you can choose between a stainless-steel bracelet or a leather strap. However, there are **many ways** to give your Speedmaster a cool look, from simple NATO straps to high-end alligator straps or even a NASA-like velcro strap.



#OMEGA ALLIGATOR STRAP

Besides calf straps, Omega also has several alligator straps for their Speedmaster watches. The Speedmaster Pro Moonphase watch, left, based on the '57 re-edition 'Broad Arrow' as you can see, came either on a stainless-steel bracelet or an alligator strap with a deployant buckle. Although the watch is now out of production, similar straps can still be ordered at your Omega boutique or retailer.



#STAINLESS-STEEL MESH BRACELET

Certainly not for everyone, this bracelet gives the watch a cool 1960s' look and feel. This soft and fine woven mesh reminds us of the bracelets used by astronauts. However, those were made by JB Champion and although you can still get them occasionally via auction or online marketplaces, keep in mind that the reason why astronauts used them is that they easily snapped when they got stuck on something. You could say that they were being used because of their flimsy quality. The one shown here, the 'Milanaise' mesh bracelet on the Speedmaster Pro 'Racing,' is a rather generic bracelet and can be bought via various third parties online.



#OMEGA CALF STRAP

This strap (Reference 98000195) is also issued with the chocolate brown Speedmaster Professional (Reference 311.32.42.30.13. 001) and can be ordered as a spare strap of course. Here it is shown on the Speedmaster Pro '57 'Broad Arrow' replica Reference 3594.50. Your authorized Omega dealer or Omega boutique can help you with a selection of Omega calf straps for your watch.



#NATO STRAPS

I once visited a small workshop in Paris called ABP or Atelier du Bracelet Parisien. You could (and still can) order your custom-made strap there. You can choose from dozens of skin types, colors and styles. They also have a standard stock of straps that you can either buy in the shop or online. Here you see their alligator leather NATO strap on one of our Speedmaster watches. It is a very soft and comfortable NATO strap. Of course, ABP is not the only one who sells (custom-made) NATO straps. You will find many offers out there. If you are looking for fabric NATO straps, consider one from Omega (see next page).





**#OMEGA NATO STRAPS**

Omega recently introduced its own range of NATO straps. Some of the watches even come with an additional NATO strap, such as the Speedmaster Speedy Tuesday limited edition. Available in fabric and leather, all high-quality straps for your Speedmaster give it that casual – or sometimes vintage – look. These NATO straps come of course with an Omega signed buckle.



**#OMEGA VINTAGE RACING STRAP**

This strap is a bit of a teaser, as I got it through my watchmaker who was able to source a few of these vintage beauties. It is probably a 1970s strap and I recall seeing it on a Seamaster watch in the Omega museum in Bienne. It is not in the picture, but it also has the original Omega clasp of that era, with an applied Omega logo. Another option is to source a Rallye strap from Di-Modell. They have similarly designed racing straps.



**#OMEGA RIDGED ALLIGATOR STRAP**

This ridged Omega OEM alligator strap was used for the Speedmaster Professional in the 1990s. It was an option to choose from, at least for the Omega Speedmaster Pro with the sapphire caseback and Caliber 861. It is only usable on an Omega deployant clasp of that time. Although straps with these ridges are not being used anymore, or at least not very often, I think they still look cool. However, this strap cannot be ordered from Omega anymore so you have to source it elsewhere.



**#OMEGA ALLIGATOR STRAP  
DARK BROWN**

Not sure if dark brown is the perfect color for an alligator strap on a Speedmaster Pro with a black dial, but we tried anyway. It actually belongs to a cream-dialed Speedmaster Automatic Broad Arrow, but I've put it on a Speedmaster Professional, as you can see. This alligator strap has the reference number 98000216 in case you want to order one and it needs to be worn with a deployant clasp.



**#A TAN CALF LEATHER STRAP**

A light tan calf strap works perfectly on a Speedmaster Professional. The color is a bit more yellowish than the original strap that came on this Speedmaster Pro '57 replica in the late 1990s and early 2000s, but it does the job very nicely. It is just an example of what is possible on your Omega Speedmaster watch. The choices and options are endless and you will find a wide selection of offers online and in watch shops selling accessories for your Speedmaster. Just make sure you know the size between the lugs of your watch and, if you want to use an original Omega buckle or deployant, the size of the other end of the strap. If you don't have the proper tools, patience or neither of those, have your strap changed by your watchmaker or dealer.



**#VELCRO STRAPS**

Velcro straps were used by the NASA astronauts to wear their Speedmaster watches over their spacesuits. There are a number of suppliers of velcro straps on the market that make 'replica' straps based on the original NASA specifications. Today, you will find them available in several lengths (in case you don't have a spacesuit) and colors.





BLUE DIAL SPEEDMASTER PROFESSIONAL REF. 145.012-68

# WHEN THE MOONWATCH LOOKED BLUE

TEXT: ROBERT-JAN BROER PHOTOS: BERT BUIJSROGGE

*Although the reference number does not give it away, this is a Speedmaster with a **blue dial**. It's very difficult to capture in a photo, especially with artificial lights, but it is an all-original Speedmaster Professional with blue dial.*





## ORIGINAL BLUE DIAL

*These watches are hard to come by and very little is known about them except that they did leave the factory with a blue dial.*

IN 1968, TWO GENERATIONS of Omega Speedmaster Professional models co-existed: the Reference 145.012 and its successor, the 145.022. In this year, the Omega Speedmaster Professional received a new Lemania-based movement (Caliber 861) and the dial and hands changed as well.

It was of course still a year before Buzz Aldrin and Neil Armstrong would set a foot on the Moon, so the casebacks had the Seahorse logo with 'Speedmaster' writing engraved instead of the 'Flight Qualified By NASA For All Manned Space Missions' inscription or similar writing.

The movement changed from the Lemania-based column-wheel chronograph Caliber 321 to the shuttle-cam chronograph Caliber 861. Not only the chronograph construction was different but also the frequency, which went from 18,000 to 21,600 vph.

### #DIAL DISCOLORATION

1968 was a transitional period for the famous Speedmaster, which also explains the various executions of the Speedmaster Professional in that year. There are early 145.022 models that have the dial with applied Omega logo. However, this dial is not identical to the 145.012 dials as the dimensions of the pins that connect the dial to the movement are different. The final 145.022 models came of course with the printed Omega logo.

From the 145.022 and older models, you might know already that some of them have a discolored (or aged) dial and bezel. Dials that turned into a chocolate brown color are very

sought-after and seem to fetch significantly higher prices than those that kept their original color. Some bezels have turned greyish at some point as well, but this does not influence the price as much as a discolored dial would.

### #FACTORY ORIGINAL BLUE

A chocolate brown (or tropical) dial is something you will come across if you are looking for a nice vintage Speedmaster. But a blue dial Speedmaster Professional is something completely different. These watches were delivered from the factory in Bienne this way, not because of a hard life in the burning sun or something. They were produced in this nice blue color that also seemed to have a trace of grey in it. The production numbers are unknown (as with most of these odd Speedmaster variations) but they are very rare.

The blue dial Speedmaster shown here was produced in 1968 and could have been shipped to a retailer or distributor up to 1969. Whether the flat counter-weight second hand is original is unknown. Normally the 145.012 was delivered with the drop counter-weight second hand.

Worth mentioning is that the Speedmaster Professional 145.012-68 is quite rare in general. Most of the 145.012 models have the -67 indicator (however, these could have been produced in 1968 as well). We now know that Apollo 11 astronaut Michael Collins wore the Reference 145.012-68, and Aldrin and Armstrong were equipped with the 105.012.



This Speedmaster Professional 145.012-68 is a rare reference combined with a very rare factory-original blue dial. Except for the dial, it is a very 'standard' Speedmaster Professional from the pre-Moon era with its Seahorse caseback and Reference 1039 bracelet.





A VERY RARE SPEEDMASTER FOR THE ITALIAN MARKET

## APOLLO-SOYUZ

*Two super powers forgot about the Cold War for just a moment by docking the **Apollo and Soyuz spacecrafts** at an altitude of 138 miles. On their wrists: the Omega Speedmaster.*

TEXT: ROBERT-JAN BROER PHOTOS: BERT BUIJSROGGE

LAUNCHED ON JULY 15, 1975, the docking took place on July 17 and lasted for 44 hours. After the docking, the American crew transferred from the Apollo to the Soyuz spacecraft.

All men in this mission, astronauts and cosmonauts, wore Omega Speedmaster watches. Interestingly, Commander Thomas P. Stafford was spotted wearing his gold Speedmaster Professional Apollo XI in addition to the officially issued watch. The other NASA crew members wore the issued Caliber 321 Speedmaster Professional watches. All cosmonauts wore the later Speedmaster Professional 145.022 with Caliber 861.

### #ITALIAN MARKET

Italy, one year later, in 1976. To commemorate the successful Apollo-Soyuz mission, Italian Omega distributor De Marchi requested a special Speedmaster for their market. For a long time, it was assumed that this batch of Speedmasters consisted of 500 watches. However, recent research indicates that the original invoice had a quantity of 400 timepieces. There are some assumptions being made regarding the other possible 100 pieces (assembled by the distributor himself, for example), but there is no evidence of this. See the copy of the Extract of Records of 2008.





The Speedmaster Professional Apollo-Soyuz on the Reference 1168 bracelet and with the original box. The Omega logo and Speedmaster wording were replaced by the Apollo-Soyuz mission logo: a very rare watch that was only delivered to Italy in 1977

## SPEEDMASTER APOLLO-SOYUZ

*It is very unlikely you will come across one of these watches. Ever.*

### #SPEEDMASTER APOLLO-SOYUZ

So, here we have the Speedmaster Apollo-Soyuz watch. This exact watch was also featured in the 'Ultimate Speedmaster Exhibition' book by Roy and Sacha Davidoff. The watch is based on the regular Speedmaster Professional 145.022 model with Caliber 861. There are a couple of noteworthy changes though, that I will touch on later.

This Speedmaster Professional has the Apollo-Soyuz mission patch at 12 o'clock. Normally, the Speedmaster has the Omega logo there. Where normally 'Speedmaster Professional' is printed is now 'Omega.' No mention of Speedmaster on the dial. We've come across a Speedmaster Apollo-Soyuz before, but that one had a strange set of hands. This model has the regular white baton Speedmaster hands, filled with tritium.

The case of the Speedmaster Apollo-Soyuz is also a bit different from the regular 145.022 models. The chronograph pushers have a larger diameter than the normal pushers (5.5 mm instead of 5 mm). This means that the case band also needed to be modified in order to make the pushers fit.

The caseback of the watch is special as well. Instead of the usual markings and 'Flight Qualified...' engraving, this one shows the Gemini \* Apollo \* Soyuz (in Russian) and a bas-relief medallion of the Saturn 1B rocket. Closer inspection also shows an individual number, 006, and an Omega logo. Also the end-pieces of the bracelet are numbered 633.

The bracelet Reference 1168 of the Speedmaster Apollo-Soyuz was also different from the regular Reference 1171 at the time. It uses the same end-links as the 1171 bracelet, Reference 633, as shown above. It actually looks good in my opinion.

The Omega Speedmaster Apollo-Soyuz was delivered in a box as shown: a small and simple box compared to the large boxes of today's limited editions that often come with a number of accessories. The papers show the sales date of Augst 24, 1981. It is almost unbelievable that this watch sat in a shop for about five years. However, I am not sure how big the demand was for mechanical watches in those years. With the quartz crisis and so on, I can imagine that the demand was very low and the collecting community was small. Much smaller than today's.

In my early years of collecting, late 1990s, I can only recall having seen one Speedmaster Apollo-Soyuz for sale. The chance is very small that you will find one for sale other than on auctions or specialist websites. These watches tend to stay in the inner circles of Speedmaster collectors. It is quite difficult to put a price on these watches. It is up to the buyer and seller to come to an agreement, but I expect high prices to be fetched, especially when complete with box and papers.

It makes me wonder where all 400 pieces went and if they all are still 'alive.' Perhaps some of them ended up in drawers and haven't been moved for the last three decades. With the Internet, the market has become quite transparent and people who bought one back then or inherited it later on, can easily access information about its value.

Other Apollo-Soyuz commemorative Speedmasters are the one with the meteorite dial (2009) and the gold version from 1995. All the astronauts and former NASA people I've seen at Omega events were wearing these meteorite Apollo-Soyuz watches at some point. Quite amazing.





SPEEDMASTER MOONPHASE CO-AXIAL MASTER CHRONOMETER

# A NEW CHAPTER IN THE SPEEDMASTER MOONPHASE STORY

*As detailed as a NASA photograph, the moonphase indication of the Speedmaster Moonphase Master Chronometer even shows **a famous astronaut's footprint**. But this is only one highlight of this new timepiece.*

TEXT: ROBERT-JAN BROER PHOTOS: BERT BUIJSROGGE

BESIDES THE EXISTING Speedmaster Professional Moonwatch with a Moonphase indicator, Omega recently added the Moonphase complication to their new range of 44.25-mm automatic Co-Axial Master Chronometer watches.

The Speedmaster Moonphase isn't a new phenomenon. In 1985 there was the Speedmaster Professional Moonphase (Reference ST345.0809) with the Lemania-based Caliber 866 (and two Teutonic Speedmaster versions for the German market). Since 2003, the Speedmaster Professional Moonphase is constantly present in the collection, with the Lemania-based Caliber 1866.

But that's a Lemania-based movement – actually a Caliber 1861 chronograph movement with an add-on

moonphase module. This time, Omega uses their in-house-manufactured Caliber 9300 as a basis and created this new moonphase movement, Caliber 9904. The moonphases need to be set by the crown; the date is being corrected by the independently moving hour hand. Omega's Caliber 9904 is of course a Master Chronometer certified by COSC and METAS (the Swiss Federal Institute of Metrology). This column-wheel chronograph movement is therefore antimagnetic up to 15,000 gauss and runs well within chronometer specification. It has a power reserve of 60 hours due to the two barrels and a silicon (Si14) balance spring. Caliber 9904 consists of 368 parts.

The movement has a beautiful finish on the rotor and the bridges, including the Geneva waves in arabesque.





Facing page: An overview of some Speedmaster Moonphase Co-Axial Master Chronometer variations – platinum, Sedna gold, stainless steel and bi-color. On the official Omega website you will find even more variations.

## SPEEDMASTER MOONPHASES

*These Speedmaster Moonphase Co-Axial Master Chronometer watches are very different from the first Speedmaster Moonphase from 1985, but unmistakably related.*



Screws, barrels and the balance wheel have been blackened. Caliber 9905 is used for the gold and platinum models and has a gold rotor.

Whichever version you choose of the Omega Speedmaster Moonphase Co-Axial Master Chronometer, they all come with the ceramic (ZrO<sub>2</sub>) bezel. The dials have a sun-brushed finish and the indexes are either in 18-karat yellow gold, Sedna gold or rhodium plated.

### #MANY SPEEDMASTER MOONPHASE WATCHES TO CHOOSE FROM

Most interesting is the moonphase disc of course. It is a metallic crystal disc (no sapphire) that is micro-structured to obtain the super high resolution image of the moon. To make it even cooler, Omega decided to put the image of Neil Armstrong's footprint on the moon. The gold-cased models don't have this feature though, they have a gold textured moon on the disc.

Omega's Speedmaster Moonphase Co-Axial Master Chronometer comes in the 'regular' Caliber 9xxx Speedmaster case, which has a 44.25-mm diameter. For some that might be on the large side, also for me, but I have to say that it is very wearable due to the shape of the case.

There are some differences with the Speedmaster Professional Moonphase, of course, as that one has the moonphase indicator at 12 o'clock instead of 6 o'clock and has a total of four sub-registers instead of the three of the Speedmaster Moonphase Co-Axial Master Chronometer. The three sub-registers of Omega's Caliber 9903 make the dial of the Speedmaster Moonphase Co-Axial Master Chronometer a well-balanced one. Although I don't mind the bi-compax layout of the Caliber 9300 Speedmaster watches, this one does resemble the original Speedmaster Professional a bit better of course, although the functions of the sub-registers are different.

The date is shown in the sub-register at 9 o'clock and indicates the normal seconds as well. The date hand has a red tip for easier recognition and read-out.

Besides the stainless-steel versions, there is also a model in full gold, gold and stainless steel and platinum. The gold and stainless-steel version has an interesting appearance. The use of gold for the bezel, crown and pushers adds a bit of warmth to the stainless-steel case. A very nice combination.

The platinum version is something else. It is a limited edition of 57 pieces only (referring to 1957, the founding year of the Speedmaster collection), with a case made of platinum, using red liquidmetal for its bezel. It has a platinum dial. You can question whether a Speedmaster should be in a 44.25-mm diameter case of platinum, being a sports watch and all, but it really suits the Speedmaster Moonphase Co-Axial quite well. The watch can be seen as a more dressy watch than the regular Speedmaster (Professional and Caliber 9300) models, with its red bezel and alligator strap.

Where the stainless-steel and bi-color Speedmaster Moonphase Co-Axial models use Caliber 9904, the gold and platinum versions are equipped with Caliber 9905. They are similar in their specifications, but the use of materials for the rotor and balance bridge are different (Sedna gold). The moonphase is applied to a burgundy red disc that matches the liquidmetal bezel and red alligator strap. According to Omega, the moonphase disc (that runs from 0 to 29.5 days, the cycle of the Moon) is accurate up to 10 years – that is if you don't take the watch off your wrist and decide not to use a winder to store it. The date window, located in the left subdial, has a little hand indicating the current date, using a small loupe (also with a red accent on the moon-shaped indicator).

All Omega Speedmaster Moonphase Co-Axial Master Chronometer watches come on an alligator strap with a folding clasp.





SPEEDMASTER X-33 SKYWALKER AND EARLIER GENERATIONS

# DIGITAL REVOLUTION

TEXT: PAUL DEZENTJÉ PHOTOS: BERT BUIJSROGGE AND ROBERT-JAN BROER

*The current Speedmaster Professional X-33 Skywalker distinguishes itself from its predecessors by two **useful functions** for space exploration: mission elapsed time (MET) and phase elapsed time (PET). It also has an extra time zone compared to the first two generations. PET is based on a patented design by ESA astronaut Jean-François Clervoy and addresses a true astronaut's timing needs, making the watch an interesting tool for those who work in space exploration.*





THE SPEEDMASTER PROFESSIONAL X-33 Skywalker (Reference 318.90.45.79.01.001) has a large titanium case in the same interesting design as the former Speedmaster X-33 models, featuring the typical Speedmaster lugs. The case diameter is 45 mm and the case and bracelet have been crafted out of grade-2 titanium, like the older models. Grade-2 titanium tends to become darker over time, which will give it an interesting look.

The bezel of this watch has a ceramic ring with a chromium-nitride scale, coated with white Super-LumiNova. The bracelet is a combination of grade-2 and grade-5 titanium. Grade-5 titanium has a high polished finish.

The caseback is engraved with ‘Tested and qualified by ESA,’ hence the collaboration with ESA astronaut Clervoy. (The case of the first generation 3290.50 had only the Seahorse logo, second generation 3291.50 had ‘Flight-qualified by NASA for Space Missions,’ the same inscription as the normal Speedmaster Professional 311.30.42.30.01.005).

#NEW FACE

The most striking change in the third generation is the completely new look: a more ‘cut-out’ dial in black that exactly fits the horizontal digital printing and information lines. Its looks have become a bit more standard in ways of aesthetics (previous generations had a large aperture for the round digital display, in which digital information was provided in round shapes), but the more horizontal information concept connects better to human reading.

The X-33 Skywalker provides a complete set of functions: hours, minutes and seconds up to three different time zones; three alarms with different sounds; chronograph and countdown functions and a perpetual calendar with day, date, month, year and week number indications.

The digital information is displayed brightly and beautifully illuminated, while the first two generations had a classical LCD with the possibility of backlight. The duration of the lighting is a point of attention, since it is too short to operate the watch under dark circumstances.

The length of illumination cannot be set and it would be better to have another pusher to switch the lights on in order not to interfere with certain actions (as if the car cabin light switch were in the same button as turning on the radio – with the radio turned on, you cannot put on the lights: it will turn off the radio instead).

SPEEDMASTER  
PROFESSIONAL  
X-33 – A BRIEF  
HISTORY

The first Speedmaster Professional X-33 (reference 3290.50) was launched on March 25, 1998 at the Houston Space Center as ‘Marswatch.’ It was a giant leap in design and functions, from the classic Moonwatch to the Marswatch, the latter being the second Speedmaster version approved by NASA for Shuttle missions. It had a titanium case and provided analog as well as digital information (local time, perpetual calendar, programmable alarm, mission timer, mission alarm, universal time (GMT), universal alarm, countdown timer with alarm and a chronograph).

At the time, the X-33 was embedded in military storytelling: It had been developed and tested with ESA and NASA astronauts and elite fighter pilots from the Blue Angels and Thunderbirds. Early prototypes from about 1995 had titanium Seamaster Professional 300M Chronograph cases with four pushers and a large digital display. Some of the early prototype dials showed the name ‘Flightmaster.’

#GLOVES

The Omega X-33 had to be operable with gloves. Therefore, the crown had become a pusher, instead of turning. Pushing it allowed browsing through the several functions, while the other buttons stop, start and correct, activate the light of the display (8 lux) or swap between the current function of the dial (for example date or chronograph) and the mission timer. One of the most remarkable novelties was the very loud alarm (80 dB!), in order to be perceivable in noisy circumstances such as in jet cockpits and space modules. X-33 also had an interesting low-battery indicator: ‘Cancing hands’ indicated an almost empty battery. The commercial watch had a red or black Kevlar strap.

During the 2000s, Omega released a modified version (3291.50) with a brushed finished bezel (with Luminova dot), satin-finished pushers instead of shiny ones, and a new crown design. A titanium bracelet was available and the case back had the “Qualified by NASA ...” inscription. The watch was discontinued in the early 2000s until Omega introduced the third generation in 2014.

Note that the X-33 was not the first digital-screen Speedmaster. There had been digital quartz watches in the late 1970s: a Speedmaster Professional (ST 1860004) and a non-professional Speedmaster (ST 3860809). Today, these watches have become collectable with prices creeping up a bit.



Left: Speedmaster X-33 Skywalker.  
Below: Speedmaster X-33 first generation  
and third generation side-by-side. Far below:  
The reverse side of the X-33 Skywalker indi-  
cates it was tested and qualified by ESA.





### #WHAT DOES PET MEAN?

The most important difference between generation 2 and 3 is a function called PET: phased elapsed time. PET combines the traditional function of the timer and alarms and makes it much easier to set them (without troublesome calculations) in different time scales. PET enables automatic initiation of timer (countdown function) and chronograph (elapsed time function). Without PET, all timers and chronographs are manually triggered. That is a problem if you want a countdown to end at a specified future point in time.

PET has an alarm with a built-in countdown function with elapsed time going forward. The benefit of PET may be unclear for the commuting civilian or even a frequent flyer, but then imagine the pilot of a spaceship who has to deal with a series of minutely timed and controlled events. For orbital corrections, interplanetary insertions or vehicle rendezvous – timing is of essence. PET can set an accurate time or date for such events, counting down the remaining time to, or recording the elapsed time from that point.

### #PET MEETS MET

Another use of PET is combining it with Mission Elapsed Time (MET) to calculate the setting of an alarm. This can be very useful in the stressful circumstances of an astronaut, because it replaces thorough calculations. For example: You want to set an alarm for a future point in time. You know the duration, but you don't know the end point. If the start point is or was at 09:29 and the duration is 1 day, 5 hours and 17 minutes, you can calculate the alarm timer, but under stressful circumstances – tired, in a hurry, overloaded with other tasks and aware of serious consequences of miscalculation – you



This Speedmaster X-33 prototype was used and tested by NASA. The case is similar to that of the Seamaster Professional 300M Chronograph.

might prefer PET to set it, using only two settings that need to be done for the alarm to be set at precisely the right time: mission elapsed time (MET) to the start point and PET as duration required.

### #DOWN-TO-EARTH

Most Speedmaster X-33 owners will never make it into space, so this spaceman's instrument, with its PET and MET, may seem useless for the common man. If that were the case, any smartwatch would be useless, too. The personal profit is in applying their functionality. And while timing and planning are crucial in our daily lives, full of demanding schedules and events, the X-33 Skywalker can be a very helpful instrument in navigating our distinctive travels through daily life.

Naturally, being a second too late in orbit has other consequences than being too late to the barber shop, but as a wise man once said: Timing is everything. Within the 24-hour global business activity, operating sometimes in several time zones, the X-33 keeps us right on time – and down-to-earth.

## FRATELLOWATCHES #SPEEDYTUESDAY SPECIAL

#### Fratellowatches

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**Production:** Dr. Cantz'sche Druckerei Medien GmbH, Ostfildern-Kemnat

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**Thanks to:** Stéphane Schenk and Petros Protopapas from Omega, as well as Roy and Sacha Davidoff for providing their watches for photography.

This special issue was produced with the kind support of Omega.

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