



Aquastar Sets Sail With the Flagship Benthos 500 Founder's Edition Chronograph

*The Swiss maker unveils its most ambitious dive watch to date,
built around a newly developed center-mounted 60-minute
chronograph calibre exclusive to Aquastar*

Maritime pioneers, global navies, and intrepid explorers like Jacques Mayol have long relied upon the Aquastar spirit of timekeeping innovation and utility which began in 1962. These traditions persist today with the launch of the Swiss maker's flagship diver: the Benthos 500 Founder's Edition Chronograph. This muscular new dive watch offers not only a striking visual tribute to the 1970 original, but a functional tribute as well, being powered by a brand new La Joux-Perret monopusher chronograph movement developed exclusively for Aquastar which reproduces the vintage Benthos' unique center-mounted 60 minute totalizer display.

For over fifty years, the Aquastar Benthos chronograph has remained the paragon of capability and dive watch collectability — a rarity in watchmaking both for its unique design and functionality, and its actual rarity as surviving examples remain scarce and highly collectable. However, since the brand's triumphant re-launch in 2020, the modern Aquastar catalog has been without this revered, and sought-after vintage icon, but it's not without good reason: there have been no modern center-mounted chronograph movements commercially available for watchmakers to utilize. So in collaboration with La Joux-Perret, Aquastar rebuilt this key functionality, exclusively for its debut in the Benthos 500 Founder's Edition.

"Like many of the innovations pioneered by Aquastar founder Frederic Robert, the Benthos chronograph from 1970 was light years ahead of its time," says Rick Marei, Aquastar's modern helmsman. "Its utility was unique in that it was built around a central-mounted chronograph which could present dive time information in a clear and highly legible way. Sadly, the most commonly used modern automatic chronograph movements have not kept up with the ability to present information in such a way, which is why we are so proud to work with our partners at La Joux-Perret to not only revive the Benthos 500, but preserve its unique and incredible chronograph functionality with a new movement that is exclusive to Aquastar," he continues.

While the 316L stainless steel case of the Founder's Edition retains the signature 42mm tonneau silhouette of the original 1970 Benthos 500, the ergonomics of the modern interpretation have been improved in three key areas to increase overall wearer comfort, starting with the overall thickness of the case, which has been reduced to 15.4mm. Furthermore, the lugs have been subtly re-shaped and gently turned downward to lower the center of gravity of the case head as it sits on the wrist. Finally, the chronograph pusher has been relocated to 2:00 — a more natural position for easy actuation (start/stop/reset) by the index finger when the watch is worn over the left wrist, even with neoprene diving gloves on. Of course, true to Aquastar form and function, this pusher may be activated even underwater — a signature utility of Aquastar's modern dive chronographs.

The Aquastar Benthos 500 Founder's Edition will be produced in a limited run of 300 pieces, and it has a suggested retail price of \$3,790 USD. However, it can be pre-ordered during its launch period for the special price of \$2,790 USD. This watch may be reserved exclusively from www.aquastar.ch.

BENTHOS 500 CHRONOGRAPH SPECIFICATIONS:

- **Case:** 42mm 316L Stainless steel (47mm lug-to-lug, 15.4mm thick), chronograph pusher at 2H, crown at 4H
- **Movement:** Swiss-made Calibre 1MPS Mono-pusher 60-minute center-mounted Chronograph, Top Grade (Aquastar exclusive, produced in collaboration with La Joux-Perret)
- **Time Display:** Central hours, minutes and seconds, central 60-minute timer (actuation from 2H)
- **Water resistance:** 200 meters, 660 feet
- **Crystal:** Flat, triple-coated AR sapphire
- **Dial:** Semi-gloss Black, applied hour markers with high-density SuperLuminova (ecru color)
- **Bezel:** Luminous, unidirectional rotating elapsed time ceramic bezel, fully graduated with 60 minute markings
- **Straps:** Includes genuine 22mm ISOfrane Rubber
- **Retail price:** \$2,790 (Pre-Order Price: \$3,790)
- **Limited Edition:** 300 pieces worldwide
- **Delivery:** May 2024



ABOUT AQUASTAR WATCHES

The Aquastar legacy began in 1962, as the brainchild of entrepreneurial diver & sailor named Frederic Robert who sought to develop watches and specialized instruments exclusively for oceanic activities, ranging from sailing and sport diving to professional scientific excursions and underwater exploration — all with the ultimate goal of making all aquatic exploits safer. A prolific diver, sportsman, aviator and innovator, every Aquastar watch designed and produced by Robert in the 1960s and 70s held groundbreaking patents not yet deployed in wristwatch applications. These patents included water-resistant crown designs, inner rotating bezels, and special “no decompression” calculation bezels that could be used for multiple dives — all unique functions tailored to a professional diver's exacting needs.

In continuing Aquastar's rich traditions of markedly functional, purpose-built dive watches, modern Aquastar name has been revived by another Swiss watch industry innovator and disruptor: Rick Marei, who helped bring global notoriety and widespread sales success for another legendary dive watch story: DOXA Watches®. The modern Aquastar catalog serves as

an extension of the brand's deep archives, with both faithful tribute references like the distinctive Deepstar Chronograph the pioneering Model 60 and the legendary Benthos 500 flagship, along with more interpretive editions like the Deepstar II. For more information, visit aquastar.ch