
IWC SCHAFFHAUSEN PRESENTS RE-EDITION OF THE LEGENDARY “MARKUS BÜHLER” BIG PILOT’S WATCH

Schaffhausen, 2nd October 2023: IWC Schaffhausen unveils the Big Pilot’s Watch 43 Tourbillon Markus Bühler. The timepiece is the long-awaited successor to the Big Pilot’s Watch Edition Markus Bühler from 2008. This time, the characteristic aircraft turbine is integrated into a flying minute tourbillon at 6 o’clock, which proved a challenge for design and manufacturing. Limited to 51 pieces, this new interpretation of the “Markus Bühler” watch impresses with its polished platinum case, a glossy black dial and a black Cordovan leather strap. The IWC-manufactured 82905 calibre with blackened components is visible through the sapphire glass back.

Probably no other timepiece from IWC Schaffhausen’s Pilot’s Watches collection has achieved such a cult status among collectors as the Big Pilot’s Watch Edition Markus Bühler from 2008. It was inspired by a unique piece Markus Bühler had created for a competition in the final year of his watchmaker apprenticeship at IWC. Its most striking visual feature was the aircraft turbine on the small seconds. Fifteen years later, IWC presents an exclusive new interpretation. Like its predecessor, the **Big Pilot’s Watch 43 Tourbillon Markus Bühler** (Ref. IW329901) features a small turbine on the dial. However, the characteristic aircraft engine has been integrated into a flying minute tourbillon at 6 o’clock this time.

“When I created my Big Pilot’s Watch with a turbine as an apprentice watchmaker, I would never have imagined I would lead the development of a second edition 15 years later – let alone that I would be responsible for all assembly processes at IWC. To meet the high expectations of our collectors, we decided to create something truly exclusive and integrate the signature turbine into a tourbillon. This new edition perfectly embodies IWC’s engineering spirit while showcasing highest levels of detail and craftsmanship”, explains Markus Bühler, Associate Director of Watch and Movement Assembly at IWC Schaffhausen.

SMALL TURBINE, BIG CHALLENGE

In a tourbillon, the balance and escapement are housed in a small cage that rotates around its axis once per minute. The higher its mass and inertia, the more energy it takes to keep the mechanism in motion. Weight reduction is, therefore, the primary focus in any tourbillon construction. For this reason, the turbine was machined from a lightweight titanium alloy. Due to the complex geometry and the small dimensions, the milling process alone took several hours. After machining, each of the twelve minuscule blades was polished by hand and finished to an incredibly high level of detail and aesthetic perfection. To avoid the turbine adding additional weight to the mechanism, Bühler used it as the upper part of the tourbillon cage, replacing the regulator. As a result, the eye-catcher on the dial also has a technical function: the hairspring attaches to the underside of one of its blades, and the watchmaker can adjust the zero crossing of the balance by turning the turbine. The state-of-the-art tourbillon consists of 56 parts and weighs only 0.663 grams. The pallet lever and the escape wheel were treated with Diamond Shell® technology, a special coating that reduces friction and improves the energy flow in the movement.

**PRECIOUS PLATINUM CASE
AND DETAILED FINISHING**

The 43-millimetre case and the crown are crafted from platinum. Platinum is amongst the rarest, purest and most precious metal used for watches and jewellery. The case has been elaborately finished by hand with polished surfaces around the bezel and the horns. Thanks to this finishing, the whitish shimmer of the platinum is accentuated beautifully, giving the timepiece a refined, sophisticated appearance. The black lacquered, glossy dial has been imprinted with white numerals and features applied indices filled with Super-LumiNova®. A black Cordovan leather strap with Markus Bühler's signature printed on the inner side complements the design. Powering this Big Pilot's Watch 43 is the IWC-manufactured 82905 calibre. Its Pellaton winding system has been reinforced with ceramic components and builds up a power reserve of 80 hours in the mainspring. The plates, bridges and the rotor, visible through the sapphire case back, were blackened with a PVD coating, then laser-engraved and finally rhodium-plated in the engraved areas.

**FROM APPRENTICE WATCHMAKER
TO ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR**

The story of the Big Pilot's Watch Edition Markus Bühler and its re-edition is also a testament to the strength of IWC's apprentice programme. The first edition from 2008 was initially created as an entry for a competition organised by the "Institut de Formation à la Haute Horlogerie," in which Markus Bühler won first prize. To this day, apprentices' competitions and events like innovation challenges are a fundamental pillar of IWC's strategy to foster the development of young talent, create new ideas and engineer cutting-edge watchmaking solutions. After finishing his apprenticeship as a watchmaker, Bühler remained loyal to IWC. Among other positions, he has been Department Manager of Industrialization and Head of Movement Assembly & Industrialization. Since 2020, he has been responsible for the entire spectrum of IWC's assembly processes at the new Manufakturzentrum as Associate Director of Watch & Movement Assembly.

BIG PILOT'S WATCH 43 TOURBILLON MARKUS BÜHLER

REF. IW329901

FEATURES

Mechanical movement – Pellaton automatic winding system – Flying minute tourbillon at 6 o'clock with integrated aircraft turbine – See-through sapphire glass back – Glass secured against displacement caused by drops in air pressure – Limited to 51 pieces

MOVEMENT

IWC-manufactured calibre	82905
Frequency	28,800 vph / 4 Hz
Jewels	25
Power reserve	80 h
Winding	Automatic

WATCH

Materials	Platinum case and crown, black dial, rhodium-plated hands, black Cordovan leather strap with special print on the inner side
Glass	Sapphire, convex, antireflective coating on both sides
Water-resistant	10 bar
Diameter	43 mm
Height	14.6 mm

IWC SCHAFFHAUSEN

IWC Schaffhausen is a leading Swiss luxury watch manufacturer based in Schaffhausen in the north-eastern part of Switzerland. With collections like the Portugieser and the Pilot's Watches, the brand covers the whole spectrum from elegant to sports watches. Founded in 1868 by the American watchmaker and engineer Florentine Ariosto Jones, IWC is known for its unique engineering approach to watchmaking, combining the best of human craftsmanship and creativity with cutting-edge technology and processes.

Over its more than 150-year history, IWC has earned a reputation for creating professional instrument watches and functional complications, especially chronographs and calendars, which are ingenious, robust, and easy for customers to use. A pioneer in the use of titanium and ceramics, IWC today specializes in highly engineered watch cases manufactured from advanced materials, such as colored ceramics, Ceratanium®, and titanium aluminide.

A leader in sustainable luxury watchmaking, IWC sources materials responsibly and takes action to minimize its impact on the environment. Along the pillars of transparency, circularity, and responsibility, the brand crafts timepieces built to last for generations and continuously improves every element of how it manufactures, distributes, and services its products in the most responsible way. IWC also partners with organizations that work globally to support children and young people.

DOWNLOADS

Images of the Big Pilot's Watch 43 Tourbillon Markus Bühler can be downloaded free of charge from press.iwc.com

FURTHER INFORMATION

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