

Schwarz Etienne: heading toward a second centenary

The company based in La Chaux-de-Fonds was revived in 2007 on a new footing, grounded in particular on independence and respect for an ethical and environment-friendly philosophy. This ambitious strategy has given rise to the conception, development and production of a proprietary movement.



*The Barcelona
WBA14ASo1SSo1AA Model.*

Schwarz Etienne was founded in 1902, and the fact that it is still little known to the public at large is because before being a full-fledged brand in its own right, it was first a manufacturer of watches and movements for other firms. Things began to change at the dawn of the 21st century, and the dynamism of the rejuvenated company is extremely refreshing, while its production strategy is both consistent and convincing. All this was made possible by the investments made by a local real estate developer and the work of a youthful and highly motivated team.

When the new management team took the reins, they had to adopt a decidedly different strategy. As one member explains, "The first issue we addressed was what exactly we were going to do. We had certain strengths and other weaknesses. We were unknown and we were doing more or less the same thing as everyone else. In other words, we were entirely com-

parable to a great many others. So we had to decide how we could stand out from the crowd, and that is where we soon began to discuss achieving autonomy and starting work on developing our own movement."

So they immediately set to work and within 17 months, Schwarz Etienne had managed to develop and produce in-house an original calibre, one of the famous "tractor" movements that all brands dream of. This speaks volumes for the determination of the small team, especially since the brand kept things low-key without making any unrealistic promises.

Schwarz Etienne has also focused on nurturing its relations with all its industrial partners, including by defining with them a genuine ethical charter undergirding the entire production process and obliging all signatories to commit to respect for local workers and for customers. Maintaining pleasant and fruitful human relations with wonderful partners is quite simply priceless, as Schwarz Etienne eagerly proclaims. "As we see it, Swiss Made tends not to mean very much. In our case, apart from the crocodile leather straps, everything is made in La Chaux-de-Fonds, or in Canton Neuchâtel, and in some instances somewhere else in the country", says a company spokesperson "We have chosen to remain simple and authentic, as well as highlighting the values of our watchmaking forefathers."

CHOOSING TO BE INDEPENDENT

The famous proprietary calibre was first presented at Baselworld 2009. It's a self-winding movement code-named BSE1325-A (standing for Base Schwarz Etienne 13 $\frac{1}{4}$ A series»). It will progressively equip all the brand's collections, and possibly in due course certain models by other brands. It has thus been designed to accommodate various modules. In addition to its pleasing aesthetics, this "tractor" features obvious technical value, starting with its off-centred microrotor which, thanks to its 25 jewels and its ball-bearing mechanism that reduces friction, guarantees an approximately 80-hour power reserve. One also notes the absence of a regulating index, since regulation is done by four diametrically opposite screws on the balance. The Staumann type balance-spring features a Breguet overcoil and a triangular stud. The various movement finishing operations are all performed by hand.



The New York WNY10AKo1SSo1WH Model.

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SCHWARZ ETIENNE
EN MOUVEMENT DEPUIS 1902