



RACING TRIBUTE

Peter Ratcliffe's New Brand Honors Legends of Motor Sport and Beyond

By Jan Tegler

Three point six seconds separated Sir Stirling Moss from the competition on May 14, 1961, as he flashed by the checkered flag to win the 19th edition of the Monaco Grand Prix. It was the third triumph at the storied race through the streets of the Principality for the legendary English racing driver who was one of the brightest stars from the golden era of Formula One, international sports car and rally racing.

Piloting a Lotus 18 for Rob Walker Racing, Moss held off the heavily favored "shark nose" Ferrari 156s of Americans Richie Ginther and Phil Hill, making the most of the Lotus' nimble chassis to pass and gap the more powerful Italian thoroughbreds.

That moment in time is now commemorated in a new watch from a new brand. The "Moss Monaco 1961" is the product of Legends In Time (LIT), founded by vintage racer Peter Ratcliffe. Signed on its Rob Walker Racing-blue dial by Sir Stirling himself, the limited edition chronograph (161 pieces) represents a thematic and design direction you can expect to see much more of from LIT.

That's because every model from LIT will pay tribute to a legend. Legendary figures from racing will predominate, but the maker plans to honor legends from other walks of life as well. And, as with the Moss Monaco 1961, every watch will bear the signature of the legend it celebrates.

THE JOURNEY

The brand and the idea behind it emanate from Peter Ratcliffe and his many passions. Legends In Time actually launched in 1988 when Ratcliffe, a serious auto racing fan and vintage racer himself, struggled to get an autographed print from the co-drivers (Jan Lammers, Johnny Dumfries, Andy Wallace) of the renowned Jaguar XJR-9LM that won the 24 Hours of Le Mans that year.

"Really it began twenty-three years ago when I was struggling to get a picture signed by the Jaguar drivers who won Le Mans," Ratcliffe recalls. "I ended up producing one myself and that was the beginning of the journey."

In fact, the enthusiastic Englishman

“ I LIKE CLASSIC, SIMPLE, EASY TO READ, FUNCTIONAL WATCHES ”

Moss chronographs come with three different leather straps and a watch box hand signed and numbered by Moss.



sought out an artist to pen an original print. That's when he met well-known motor sports artist Alan Stammers. Stammers produced a terrific image which Ratcliffe put out as a first edition of prints in 1989. They sold like hotcakes at a classic car show in Wembley.

Ratcliffe then realized he was onto something.

Particularly fascinated with Formula One, Ratcliffe further recognized that F1 fans had little access to their favorite drivers. Legends In Time was created to bring F1 memorabilia to fans like him.

“I commissioned a couple of artists to do art work and sort of hooked up with all of the F1 drivers and teams,” Ratcliffe explains. “We began to put a





Each Moss Monaco 1961 is signed by Stirling Moss and its sapphire caseback engraved with the race date, Moss' finishing position and edition number.



huge collection of signed pictures and prints together. Along the way I became friendly with many people in Formula One. I ended up buying and selling a lot of the F1 drivers' crash helmets for them, like those from Michael Schumacher and Nigel Mansell. I also became the sponsor/manager of Damon Hill."

In just a couple of years Ratcliffe had amassed a significant collection of historic and contemporary F1 memorabilia. So impressive was the selection that he partnered with auctioneers Sotheby's to stage a large and successful auction in Chelsea in 1992

"That got me more and more into memorabilia and the company grew from there," Ratcliffe says. "We had two nice galleries in Windsor (London) and I started buying and selling Formula One cars. I ended up with Ayrton Senna's John Player Lotus-Renault."

NEXT STEP

Legends In Time grew steadily but as the first decade of the new millennium wore on, Peter Ratcliffe began to get restless.

"At the age of 56 I thought, 'What two things have you always wanted to do that you've never done?' One was to become an actor. The other was to have my own watch company. I was given a Timex watch for my eighth birthday and I overwound it like all kids do. When I was nine years old I disassembled it and was fascinated by all the bits and pieces. I never managed to put it together again, but my love of watches started then. At one time, I had a big collection of Rolex Daytona [Cosmographs] and Submariners."

MEETING MOSS

With his thinking cap on, Ratcliffe thought it would be "cool to do a watch with Stirling to celebrate his 80th year and get him to sign the face of every watch."

The relationship between LIT's founder and the racing legend goes all the way back to 1960 when the six-year-old Ratcliffe first met Moss following a race at Goodwood Circuit in southern England.

"I remember he was surrounded by fans after winning a race and I was impressed by his coolness and politeness,"

Ratcliffe says "He immediately became my boyhood hero along with Graham Hill whose son Damon became a driver and who received his first F1 sponsorship from me at the British GP in 1992."

Moss also signed the first autograph Ratcliffe ever sought that day. And when the aforementioned auction took place in 1992, Moss was one of several celebrities on hand. Their relationship strengthened over the years and as Moss' 80th birthday approached in 2009, Ratcliffe made the occasion the inspiration for his first watch, the Moss 80.

THE WATCH

Available as a limited edition in black and silver dials (eighty pieces of each), each signed by Sir Stirling and offered with three optional straps, the first Moss 80 sold at the Goodwood Festival of Speed last July. Since then, more than 100 more have sold.

The new Moss Monaco 61 is the second model from LIT. Designed by Ratcliffe to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Moss' third win at Monaco, the



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chronograph is powered by the reliable ETA 7750 movement, a caliber Ratcliffe likens to iconic engines such as Chevy's small block, Jaguar's 4.2 liter engine or Mercedes classic 3.0 liter.

"Classic" also describes the dial design. Housed in a 40 mm highly polished German stainless steel case, the Moss Monaco 1961 features the Scottish national colors (blue/white) of the Rob Walker Racing team. The look is appropriate to the legend it celebrates, the era and Ratcliffe's personal aesthetic.

"The watch world has been cluttered with some very gregarious watches," Ratcliffe contends. "A lot of designers seem to be trying to outdo each other and the watches are getting so complicated to look at now. I like classic, simple, easy to read, functional watches. All along I've thought, 'What would I want out of a watch? How would I want it to look? How would I want it to feel? What would I want it to do?' I've focused on simplicity with a bit of style."

Each Moss Monaco 1961 is signed by Stirling Moss, its sapphire caseback engraved with the race date, Moss' finishing position and edition number. As with the Moss 80, the chronograph comes complete with three different leather straps and a watch box individually hand signed and numbered by Moss.

Six more new LIT models will debut at the end of May. Ratcliffe tells us that by 2012 more models will be added including those honoring legends from other realms.

"As far back as 1989 I thought maybe one day we could do a watch," he reveals. "I've always kept the Legends In Time name in mind for a timepiece. I think by the end of this year we'll have eight or nine models out and they will all be signed by truly legendary people." C

