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SCORPÈNE

Special report

The Tunku Abdul Rahman

Interview

Éric Lavo  e "A successful collaboration"



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6 SPECIAL REPORT

SCORPÈNE

Comex accompanies the first dives of the Tunku Abdul Rahman



10 INTERVIEW

ÉRIC LAVOLÉE

Executive Director of the SCORPÈNE MALAYSIA Project
“A successful collaboration”



12 TRAVEL

SOUTHERN CORSICA

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4 & 14 NEWS

Responsible Publisher: Michèle Fructus

Editor-in-Chief: Frédéric Gauch

Editor: Martin Greenfire

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Just as this third issue of Comex Magazine goes to press, an important matter is playing out near the Vieux-Port, in the waters of the Marseille Calanques, which Comex's vessels and divers know so well. For nearly 10 years now, a public interest group has been taking an in-depth look at the wildlife, flora, hills and depths of this vast coastal and maritime area covering 4,000 hectares. This is where, by 2010, the Calanques National Park should be established. And it will be the first nature park to be founded by the government in a very long



Henri Germain DELAUZE
CEO

time, as most French national parks were established in the 60's and 70's. More important still, it will be Europe's first nature park near a city, with this dual identity encompassing both land and sea. Its creation is a sure thing, as the Calanques National Park is covered by the French "Grenelle" environmental initiative. However, its exact perimeter still needs to be determined. More specifically, the "core zone" (where the level of protection will be the highest) and the "partnership zone" (where the protective measures may be reviewed periodically) need to be defined. This is a key issue for all the enthusiastic participants, including scientists, fishermen, residents, property owners, walkers, boaters and many others

who have contributed to this wonderful effort. But the marine and underwater boundaries of this superb project must not be forgotten. Because, if the Calanques Mountains do indeed deserve every consideration, from Marseille to the neighboring city of La Ciotat and from the islands of Maire to Riou, the seabed and waters also deserve a better fate than the one they have been subjected to for the past century. Like so many Marseille residents who love their city and its environment, Comex and its staff look forward eagerly to this outcome.

Henri G. Delauze



-3,900 m

Rolex forever

The iconic watches featuring the famous five-pointed crown progress imperceptibly towards evermore accuracy, reliability and performance. This is also the case for the dive watches made by the famous Geneva watchmaker, to which Comex has long contributed its experience of the sea's extreme depths, and with which Comex shares its taste for technical exploits.

A brief history

One hundred years ago this year, Wilsdorf & Davies filed the "Rolex" brand name, on July 2, 1908. With the impact of its three consonants and two vowels, the Rolex name perfectly meets all the criteria that still ensure the brand's success. The choice of the name given by Hans Wilsdorf was, indeed, a good one. It is short (just five letters long), easy to pronounce in every country and in every language, pleasing to the ear (like the tic-tock of the seconds hand), easy to remember and aesthetically pleasing when printed on a dial. Half a century later, in the speech he gave for the brand's fiftieth anniversary, Hans Wilsdorf told the true story. "It was one morning, when I was sitting on the upper level of a double-decker powered at that time by horses, driving along Cheapside, in London, that a good genie whispered to my ear: «Rolex». A few days after this fruitful journey, the Rolex brand was filed, and then officially registered in Switzerland by Wilsdorf & Davies". In 1913, the name was filed internationally and, today, the crown brand is known, renowned and duly registered around the world.

A WATCH CAPABLE OF SUBMERGING TO DEPTHS OF NEARLY 4,000 METERS

Thirty-seven years after the very first model was released, itself derived from the ultra-famous Submariner, the Rolex Sea Dweller has undergone new developments.

Its name: Oyster Perpetual Sea-Dweller DeepSea. Featuring a new case architecture, the Ring Lock System, it has pushed back the limits of waterproofing even further. It is capable of withstanding the extreme pressure of 390 atmospheres, the equivalent of what is found at 3,900 meters under the water's surface. Still equipped with the famous Gas Escape Valve, a device that lets internal overpressure escape, developed in partnership with Comex,

the Sea Dweller DeepSea is a genuine nugget of Rolex's know-how, capability for innovation and unrivalled mastery of watchmaking technology. Other new features were developed for this exceptional watch. These include a sapphire crystal that is slightly domed and considerably thicker than in previous models, a case-back in titanium alloy with very high mechanical strength and a redesigned clasp, the Glidelock, which enables divers wearing neoprene wetsuits to adjust the strap in a flash. As for the Ring Lock System, which is this watch's principal innovation, it is made of a high-performance stainless-steel ring alloyed with nitrogen. Placed inside the watchcase, between the sapphire crystal and the case-back, this ring withstands the phenomenal pressure to which the whole watch can safely be subjected.

“ The first Sea Dweller DeepSea watches were delivered in September 2008. ”

TELEX | PULLING OUT ALL THE STOPS TO TEST THE NEW WATCH. Rolex entrusted Comex with the task of designing and manufacturing the hyperbaric chamber that serves to test each Sea Dweller DeepSea to a depth of 480 atmospheres. Delivered recently to the prestigious watchmaker in Geneva, this chamber consists of a high-performance single-piece stainless-steel tank, capable of creating the ambient pressure that reigns at 4,875 meters, or a level 25% deeper than the new watch's rated capability. At this level, the water column exerts a pressure equivalent to a weight of 4 tons, bearing down on the crystal, the winder and the case-back. As they emerge from the workshop, batches of 10 Sea Dweller DeepSea watches are put through extremely stringent testing in this new, exclusive equipment. Each watch takes an hour and a half of testing to complete a full cycle.

deeper



The first flagship brands filed by Hans Wilsdorf

ROLEX	1908	EXPLORER	1953
OYSTER	1926	SUBMARINER	1954
OYSTER PERPETUAL	1939	MILGAUSS	1954
AIR KING	1943	GMT-MASTER	1955
DATEJUST	1944	DAY-DATE	1958
TURN-O-GRAPH	1953		

“ It took three years of research to develop the new Sea Dweller DeepSea. ”

ROLEX AND COMEX

Everybody appreciates the quality and robustness of Rolex watches. And then there are Rolex fans who absolutely worship their watches, and especially certain models, including the Submariner and the Sea Dweller, featuring Comex's white logo on their dials. These watches have another characteristic: a special Rolex Comex serial number engraved on the case-back. Initially designed for the company's divers, for whom they are a real tool, these watches very quickly interested the collectors and purists of the Swiss brand. As Henri-Germain Delauze remarked in the magazine published by Rolex - which just dedicated four pages to him -

“A hydrogen diver just can't survive without his Rolex”. Comex first began collaborating with the Geneva-based watchmaker at the very beginning of the 70's, on the initiative of André Heiniger. All the divers were equipped with the timepieces progressively, thanks to a successful cooperation between the two companies. Over the years, the watches engraved with the Comex name have fostered technological innovations, the most famous of which remains the gas escape valve that is such a crucial feature on the watches of divers doing saturation diving. These limited-series items have become an amazingly hot item amongst collectors.