



LOUIS MOINET WINS A NEW GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS TITLE FOR THE FIRST HIGH-FREQUENCY STOPWATCH

This new Guinness World Records™ title is awarded to Louis Moinet, who revolutionised watchmaking in 1816. Not only did he invent the first chronograph (certified by Guinness World Records in 2016) but also high frequency, duly recognised by a new Guinness World Records title in 2020. This "first high-frequency stopwatch" award for his Compteur de Tierces made in 1816 definitively places Louis Moinet in the circle of the world's most avant-garde watchmakers.

"I encountered Louis Moinet more than 20 years ago. I am very happy that his work has been rewarded today. Obtaining two records from Guinness World Records is an exceptional accomplishment! His Compteur de Tierces reflects the genius of a man ahead of his time, who not only invented the chronograph but also high frequency", said Jean-Marie Schaller, CEO Ateliers Louis Moinet.



Jean-Marie Schaller, CEO Ateliers Louis Moinet



LOUIS MOINET
1806

First high-frequency stopwatch

The Compteur de Tierces, the first high-frequency stopwatch, was made by Louis Moinet between 1815 and 1816. This extraordinary instrument features an entirely original and innovative construction, with a chronograph mechanism beating at 216,000 vibrations per hour (30 Hz), a frequency absolutely unheard of at the time. To put things in perspective, the usual frequency of a modern watch is 28,800 vibrations per hour (4 Hz). Louis Moinet was thus a pioneer in both chronographs and high frequency, with a 100-year lead over later developments in the same fields.

So why was Louis Moinet looking for such a high frequency? Simply because, in addition to being a watchmaker, he was also an astronomer. While his telescope enabled him to follow the transit of an observed star with ease, he still needed to be able to measure sixtieths of a second.

This was due to the fact that the reticule lines (the distance between the crosshairs) on his telescope was in thirds, a unit of astronomical measurement equal to one-sixtieth of a second. That is why he designed an instrument capable of measuring sixtieths of a second, without him having to take his eyes off the telescope. A sixtieth of a second corresponds to a rate of 216,000 vibrations per hour, meaning high frequency.



Compteur de Tierces, 1816



LOUIS MOINET
1806

Astronomical observations

Louis Moinet devised the first chronograph in history so as to be able to accurately observe the movements of stars through a telescope. His invention enabled him to measure the exact distance of the reticule lines of his telescope.

Louis Moinet himself explains the details: *"This invention came to me during my observations in the following circumstances: I had acquired a small mobile quadrant from the famous Borda (maker of the repeating circle). This finely English-made instrument was balanced on a ruby, and its maker supposed that an ingenious system of counterweights would preserve it via its own inertia from the motion of the ship, thereby enabling observations at sea almost as exact as those made on land. But this project was not successful. Having thus acquired the instrument for another purpose, I added – for terrestrial observations – an azimuth circle with a graduated scale by the late Fortin two intersecting levels, a polished mobile axis and a threefooted stand with levelling screws and a scale, etc. Nonetheless, the telescope's narrow field of vision put the reticule lines very close together, and it was to remedy this inconvenience of failing to see a line of missing that I thought up the Compteur de Tierces, which worked very well by giving me a precise distance between the reticule lines."*(*)

(*) Extract from the *Traité d'Horlogerie* by Louis Moinet, 1848.



Astronomical observations



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The most accurate instrument of its time

Since the 19th century, watchmakers had been trying to improve the precision of their mechanisms. The quest for absolute precision was an integral part of the science of horology. In 1820, it was accepted that the most accurate measurement standard was the tenth of a second. That implied that the Compteur de Tierces was the most accurate instrument of its time, with an accuracy six times greater than the previously known benchmark. This sixtieth of a second measurement also establishes Louis Moinet's stature as one of the fathers of chronometry.

Guinness World Records

A worldwide authority based in London, Guinness World Records has maintained its universal appeal since its inception in 1955. The process of having a record recognised is extremely lengthy and standardised, involving detailed analysis and the provision of multiple forms of evidence. In order to be granted this new record, Louis Moinet went through more than a year-long procedure and a large number of exchanges were necessary to obtain the exclusive attribution of this title. The world-renowned organisation required technical drawings, historical evidence, multiple articles, photos and videos, and written testimony from independent experts. All of these elements were submitted to an independent, internal review panel.



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About Louis Moinet

*Jean-Marie Schaller created Les Ateliers Louis Moinet in St-Blaise (NE) in 2004. The fully independent firm was established to honour the memory of Louis Moinet (1768-1853): master watchmaker, inventor of the chronograph and high frequency (216,000 vibrations per hour) in 1816 (certifications by Guinness World Records™). Louis Moinet was a watchmaker, scholar, painter, sculptor, and teacher at the School of Fine Arts – as well as the author of the *Traité d'Horlogerie*, a watchmaking treatise published in 1848 that remained a definitive work of reference for a century.*

*Today, Ateliers Louis Moinet is perpetuating this legacy. The firm's mechanical timepieces are produced as one-of-a-kind models or limited editions only and comprise two categories: "Cosmic Art" and "Mechanical Wonders". Louis Moinet creations often make use of unusual and rare components, such as extraterrestrial meteorites or prehistorical materials. The brand's core values are creativity, exclusivity, art and design. This uniquely creative mechanical approach combined with bespoke fine watchmaking has enabled Louis Moinet to win some of the most coveted honours around the world, including a UNESCO Award of Merit, six Red Dot Design Awards (including one Best of the Best Award), a Horological Creativity Contribution Award, gold and bronze medals in the International Chronometry Competition, ten Good Design Awards, four Middle East Watch of the Year Awards, two Robb Report "Best of the Best" Awards, three German Design Awards, two MUSE Design Awards, a Moscow Grand Prix Award, and a "Chronograph of the year" distinction from *Begin Magazine*, Japan.*