

## **Ball Engineer Hydrocarbon**

If there are any watches more masculine and robust-looking than the Ball Engineer Hydrocarbon series then I haven't seen them. These are the kind of high-end watches that you feel would come out unscathed in a multiple train-wreck or some other calamitous disaster. And, with a 7,500 G-Force shock resistance, there's a good chance they would survive such an event.

It seems appropriate then that the Ball Watch Company actually came about due to a train wreck. In 1891 two trains collided in Ohio because an engineer's watch had stopped. As a result railroad officials commissioned Webb C Ball as their Chief Time Inspector. His mission: "to establish precision standards and a reliable timepiece inspection system for railroad chronometers." And that's precisely what he did - and in the process the Ball Watch Company was born. This railroad heritage is reflected on Ball watches with an "RR" on the crown and the second hand. You'd be forgiven for thinking that this might stand for "rugged reliability" but in actual fact it stands for "railroad".

There are a number of different models in the Ball Engineer Hydrocarbon series but the one that probably heads the masculinity stakes is the Ball Engineer Hydrocarbon Ceramic XV. As you would expect from a timepiece designed for reliability this watch is extremely practical in a number of different ways. For example, it has a very easy to read dial – day or night. Its night-time visibility is particularly impressive due to the 31 tritium gas tubes (which don't need exposure to light) on the numbers, markers and hands.

It is also water resistance to 300m which makes it a REAL dive watch! Another unique feature is its patented crown protection system which employs a protective plate around the crown to a) ensure that the crown has been screwed in fully and b) to protect the crown from damage due to shock. This mechanism gives the watch a very distinctive (and I think quite appealing) look.

Other practical features include the built-in bracelet expander which makes it very easy to adjust the bracelet to fit over a wetsuit, for example. The ratcheted bezel is easy to move and is made from durable, highly scratch-resistant ceramic.

As you would expect, the inside of the watch is just as reliable with a chronometer-certified ETA 2892 Swiss automatic movement.

So it's no wonder that many reviewers on the web rave about this watch – some even calling it "near perfect"! It is often the watch of choice for explorers and scientists who need an accurate timepiece that will perform in extreme conditions such as found in Antarctica. It is cold resistant to -40 degrees. It's probably fitting then that this watch has an engraving on the back of Jim Whittaker who was the first American to summit Everest.

The Ball Hydrocarbon Engineer Ceramic XV retails for around \$3 899.

For more information and to see the rest of the Ball Hydrocarbon Engineer collection go to:  
[http://www.ballwatch.com/html5/index.php?option=com\\_collections&task=11](http://www.ballwatch.com/html5/index.php?option=com_collections&task=11)