

# UhrKraft

Time for the Beautiful

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*Publisher:* HABRING Uhrentechnik OG  
 Hauptplatz 16, 9100 Völkermarkt, Austria  
 +43 (0)4232 513 00  
 www.habring2.com

*Editorial:* Michael Brückner, www.redaktion-brueckner.de

*Photos:* Olaf Köster, www.ok-photography.de

*Illustrations (Comic):* Tim Jost, www.comicfactory.at

*Design & Layout:* anders. büro für gestaltung, www.anders-bfg.at

*Proofreading:* Jaqueline Rauter, www.jaramedia.at

*Translation:* Romana Vlcek

*Responsible for content:* Maria Kristina Habring

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# quality time

## Dear Reader,

Admittedly, it is not easy to remain optimistic amid of the multiple crisis situation that has been going on for years. First the Corona pandemic with its far-reaching collateral damage, then the outbreak of war in the middle of Europe, something we would have thought impossible just a few years ago, the threat of stagflation in the major economies and, last but not least, of course, the consequences of the climate crisis: It sounds almost euphemistic to describe all these as mere “challenges”.

And yet we are challenged. Because most problems and crises, if not all, are man-made. It is therefore up to people to find solutions to these problems. A healthy dose of optimism – despite everything – can’t hurt. Or, to quote the first German President Theodor Heuss: “The pessimist is the only shit on which nothing grows.”

We at Habring² indeed have every reason to be satisfied with the business development of our family-owned company in 2023. We have

achieved our goal and made many customers happy again with our refined timepieces.

Fairness is a top priority for us. For us, this is not a marketing slogan, but a business philosophy. Thus, despite comparatively high inflation rates, we have refrained from raising the prices of our watches. For Habring², the principle of “take and give” applies.

We want to be fair not only to our customers, but of course also to our employees and suppliers. We are convinced that quality can only be achieved in a satisfied environment characterized by mutual respect.

What will the year 2024 bring? Many experts will comment on this again, but ultimately none of them has a crystal ball. “Black Swans” could come around the corner again

at any time. But you, dear reader, remain relaxed. Look at your Habring² wristwatch from time to time – not only to read off the time in a very mundane way, but perhaps also to pause for a few seconds or minutes and become aware again and again of how valuable time is. It is infinitely valuable because it is finite for us humans.

But one thing we know for sure: In 2024, Habring² will celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This is a success story thanks to you, our loyal customers, our employees and suppliers. We draw energy and creativity for the future from the success of two decades. We remain optimists.

**All the best and warmest regards,**  
 Maria & Richard Habring





# The long road to the finished manufacture movement

**Habring<sup>2</sup> has been manufacturing its own movements for ten years. What this means in concrete terms, you can read in the following article.**

en years ago, a new chapter was opened at

the Carinthian watch manufacturer Habring<sup>2</sup>; indeed, a new timescale began almost in the truest sense of the word. A small family business with a team of dedicated watch enthusiasts presented a movement made completely in-house, by themselves. Since then, even the key components - the escapement - have come from the company's own production. By producing their own movements, Maria and Richard Habring not only documented their mastery of a key technology, but their own escapement was also a lifeline in a competition fought by unequal means.

## Not an industrial manufacture

"Romantic enthusiasts versus big industry, family businesses versus corporations, personal diligence, creativity and social commitment versus pure capital accumulation", this is how Maria and Richard Habring not only sum up their corporate philosophy, but also set themselves apart from the so-called industrial manufactories.

Meanwhile, another decade has passed, and one of the insights gained over time is that even industry insiders don't really know what it means to professionally assemble a manufacture movement. Many

believe that you can buy the relevant parts ready-made. "In job interviews, we are always surprised to find that even trained (service) watchmakers completely misjudge the task of assembling a movement," says Richard Habring. They often make remarks like: "That can't be so difficult." Others describe this type of work as monotonous or even inferior.

## Know-how meets passion

They must be joking - inferior or monotonous? On the contrary: assembling a movement is a challenge that requires not only a lot of know-how and quality awareness, but also a lot of passion. "In reality, we see how difficult it is for trained (service)

watchmakers to assemble a new movement. Many even refuse to do this work over a longer period of time because it is too strenuous," Maria Habring reports.

In service, the quality of the movement is maintained. But it is during the initial assembly of a movement that this quality is first brought into the mechanism. The highest possible quality means that the individual components must be carefully assembled and perfectly matched. Minimum requirements are defined that must be indeed met as a minimum.

Strictly speaking, however, the quality of a product is already determined by the selection of specialized manufacturers. It is a matter of economic principle that good quality does not come cheaply. That is why Habring<sup>2</sup> agrees purchase prices with its manufacturers which are fair for both sides. "Haggling may be fine at the bazaar, but does not belong in a serious business relationship," says Maria Habring. All manufacturers with whom the Carinthian manufactory cooperates are based in Germany, Austria or Switzerland. They work according to Habring<sup>2</sup>'s drawings, which means that no standard parts are supplied out of the box, with the exception of standardized (NIHS) bearing jewels.





*We sow love for detail, dedication, and responsibility, fertilize with personality, and harvest honest products of the highest quality, made for generations.*

**Specialised manufacturers**

All manufacturers specialize in different tasks. Turners or décolleteurs, for example, take care of wheel and pinion combinations such as escape-ment wheels. Turning and milling are used, for example, to produce pallet blocks, balance cocks and the balance rim. The ratchet wheel, for example, comes from the gear cutter, while the ruby grinder produces anchor pallets and impulse pins. Milling cutters supply flat structural components such as plates and various bridges, while the laser cutters supply sheet metal parts such as levers, springs, and also wheel blanks for interlocking.

When all these individual components are available, pre-assembly (adjustment) begins. Now it is time to integrate jewels, pins and thread fluxes into plates and bridges, to rivet wheels onto pinions, and to adjust the vertical clearances or system clearances of all moving and rotating components within the movement frame (the vertical clearances of Habring<sup>2</sup> watches vary according to barrel width and/or pivot thicknesses). This is followed by the finishing or decoration of all components and their damage-free installation, as well as the assembly of the balance, pallet and escape wheel (practically no one in the industry does this because it has been outsourced to specialists for generations). For the escapement, this means: to insert the axle, pallets and safety cutter, as well as to preset (position) escapement pallets.

For the balance, this means: press the impulse pin (jewel) into the plateau (no one else does this by hand), rivet

the balance rim onto the shaft, press on the plateau, prepare the hairspring for counting and put it on provisionally. Then the hairspring is counted: The pre-shortened hairspring is shortened in the factory until the correct frequency is reached and the inner and outer pin/count points are in ideal proportion (+/- tolerance). The spiral is then bent. This means that after counting, the so-called regulating bend is bent (2 kinks and flattening of the regulating bend to a radius that perfectly matches the spine).

**Watches with chronometer performance**

All movements at Habring<sup>2</sup> are uniformly adjusted, set and regulated to pass the chronometer test, even if no certification is envisaged. "From our experience, we know that our movements would pass certification 100 percent on the first attempt," says Richard Habring.

The escapement is selectively adjusted at the factory for the best performance, which means that the lowest possible penetration of the escapement pallets with the escape wheel reduces the release resistance at each half oscillation of the balance.

Richard Habring: "We regulate our movements for the best possible performance during the first 24 hours after full winding. Winding the watch at the same time every day promotes accuracy. A maximum difference of 6 seconds is maintained in all positions in relation to each other. The chronometer test allows for a maximum difference of 12 seconds. Said that, the maximum difference may only be exhausted in designated positions. •



*Chrono-Felix*



# “Our customers are the actual jurors”

Maria and Richard Habring look back on the year 2023 in an interview with business journalist Michael Brückner – and look forward to 2024, when Habring<sup>2</sup> celebrates its 20th anniversary.

**Ms. Habring, Mr. Habring, before we look ahead to 2024, first a brief retrospective. How would you sum up 2023?**

*Richard Habring:* It was a very ambivalent year for us. We therefore look back on 2023 with mixed feelings. As far as our family business is concerned, it could hardly have gone better. Once again we made many customers happy, all of them having the finest taste in watches. It's not us saying this, that's what our customers say. And with the Chrono-Felix Top-Second, another contemporary from the Habring<sup>2</sup> family was successfully launched. But unfortunately, 2023 was also overshadowed by bereavements. My wife Maria lost very close family members; then, a little later, a mutual good friend of ours passed away. Such an event is a turning point, something drastic because it's final. And stereotype platitudes such as “life goes on” don't exactly prove comforting in such situations.

**Ms. Habring, those were indeed very hard strokes of fate. How do you deal with them? Some people throw themselves even harder into work in such phases in order to suppress, others need time out to grieve.**

*Maria Habring:* As Richard has just mentioned, 2023 was very successful for us economically and therefore also

*The time we take is time that gives us something back*

**Erich Ferstl**  
Poet and aphorist

labour-intensive. You can't just retreat in times of great emotional stress. My experience was that perspectives change in such situations. Life grounds you. Psychologists say that the mourning process also involves reflecting on one's own finiteness. Those who leave us just leave sooner. We will follow them one day. And then, with all the grief, there's the gratitude for the time spent together. “The time we take is time that gives us something back”, says the Austrian poet and aphorist Erich Ferstl, spot on.

**So time is something philosophical for you ...?**

*Maria Habring:* Not only that. Time has many faces. Economic ones, too. For example, where money and time meet, interest comes into play. And when we donate time to a loved one, we receive an emotional return. Time is something precious. We capture time, so to speak, giving it a sympa-

thetic face with our watches. And despite all the stress we have to deal with, we must handle our precious and scarce time in a sovereign way. We should take time for things that are important to us. But we should not let time be stolen from us for things that are superfluous.

**You say we should handle time in a sovereign way. Now there are people who say they do not wear a watch so as not to become “slaves to time”.**

*Richard Habring:* Whether someone wears a watch or not is their own individual decision. But the argument that having a watch on your wrist makes you a “slave to time” is pretty nonsensical. That's like taking the calendar off the wall and hoping not to age any further.

**In 2023, the Habring<sup>2</sup> family was joined by the Chrono-Felix Top-Second. What is so special about this timepiece?**

*Richard Habring:* One could indeed speak of a “lightning-quick addition”. Because the new Chrono-Felix Top-Second model flashes a signal every 2.5 seconds in a small window at 9 o'clock. It almost gives the impression of a flashing light, but of course everything inside the Chrono-Felix Top-Second runs exclusively mechanically.

**And how does this “lightning-quick complication” work?**

*Maria Habring:* A look inside the timepiece, where the manufactured movement A11FC ticks, reveals the mechanism. There is a small, rotating propeller with two blades. Every 5 seconds, the entire propeller rotates; however, because of the two blades, the seconds signal flashes every 2.5 seconds on the dial at 9 o'clock. The chronograph's 30-minute counter is located at 3 o'clock. This new member of the Felix family has several quite practical advantages: Thanks to the Top Second, there is no need for the running seconds at 9 o'clock. This

makes the dial look more harmonious, because not so many numerals are cut. Nevertheless, it is immediately apparent that the watch is running.

*Richard Habring:* You could also call the Chrono-Felix Top-Second a technically smaller brother of the Foudroyante Felix. This model by Habring<sup>2</sup> combines the flashing second – a hand that rotates once per second on a subdial and gives the watch lover an impression of mechanical dynamics – and the jumping second. The Chrono-Felix Top-Second is kind of a light version of the Foudroyante.

**“Lightning-quick” Felix and his “parents” may soon receive a great honour. What is this about?**

*Maria Habring:* Our Chrono-Felix Top Second has been nominated for the Grand Prix d'Horlogerie de Genève, GPHG for short, in the “Petit Aiguille” group. This prize is also known as the “Oscar for Watches”, which emphasizes the importance of this award. Our customers and many readers of our magazine know that we already have a little “Oscar” family. Timepieces made by Habring<sup>2</sup> have won awards time and again. We are proud of this, especially when you consider what great brands of Haute Horlogerie we regularly compete with at the GPHG. Every “Oscar” is a new incentive for us. But of course we also know that the actual jurors are the customers who choose a Habring<sup>2</sup> timepiece.

**And in 2024, although strictly speaking you will not be celebrating a jubilee, as such an event is only celebrated every 25 years, but your company will be celebrating a milestone birthday. What can we expect?**

*Richard Habring:* In fact, we will celebrate our 20th anniversary in 2024. You can be sure, we will continue to have a lot to offer to watch aficionados all over the world. And yes, of course, another “Oscar” would be a nice birthday present. •

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## Behind the Questions:

**Michael Brückner**, born in 1958, is a renowned economic journalist and book author specializing in tangible assets and investments. Based in Mainz, he has written bestsellers such as “Watches as an Investment” and “Megamarket Luxury”. As the former editor-in-chief of the business magazine “Europa”, he offers deep insights into the European economy.





Erwin Tuxedo or:

## Erwin in an evening suit, *the elegant conTemporary.*

What do you think of when you hear the English term “tuxedo”? For the vast majority, it’s probably the fine evening wear for the gentleman with style that comes to mind; in other words, above all, the tuxedo. A minority may think of the high-proof cocktail of the same name, which can be enjoyed at the world’s leading bars. This is not our topic at this point, but to satisfy any curiosity that may arise, we would like to reveal the ingredients for this Tuxedo: gin, white vermouth, Maraschino liqueur and Orange Bitter. No matter what associations the term “tuxedo” triggers, most people think of a grand hotel, a gala evening, and fine society. And to feel really comfortable in such an environment, you definitely need an adequate watch on your wrist. That’s why Erwin got dressed up. And the result is: The Erwin Tuxedo. Noblesse oblige. The elegant con-“temporary” companion.

Now let’s get to the ingredients of the Erwin Tuxedo, which are not high in alcohol content, but high in quality. First, for those who haven’t been introduced to “Erwin” yet: It is the brother of Felix, but with jumping seconds. Inside, the Habring<sup>2</sup> manufacture calibre A11S ticks at 28,800 vibrations per second. Similar to brother Felix, the Erwin movement features a tangential screw fine adjustment and an amagnetic escapement with a Carl Haas balance spring in chronometer quality.

The dial displays hours and minutes, and the jumping second is driven from the centre. The diameter of the case makes 38.5 millimetres and the height is 9.0 millimetres. In short: an absolutely smoking timepiece, which is available with a stainless steel bracelet and a folding clasp, as well as with a calfskin strap.



Erwin Tuxedo



Chrono-Felix *Salmon*:

Consistency in quality and watchmaking sophistication, and variance in appearance - that could be the motto of the Chrono Felix Salmon. Its dial is a real feast for the eyes of gourmets who, when reading the time, might even be encouraged to enjoy a delicious fish again soon. Perhaps a salmon. But even watch lovers who set other priorities when it comes to their diet are likely to click their tongues appreciatively at the sight of the Chrono Felix Salmon. Because the dial not only convinces with its subtle salmon colour, but also the numerals are something for connoisseurs. These are the classic Breguet numerals - a reverence to the old master of watchmaking Abraham-Louis Breguet (1747-1823), to whom fine watchmaking owes the tourbillon and the Breguet hairspring, among other things.

The “**lucky one**” is now available with a salmon-coloured dial and Breguet numerals

Apart from the dial, the “inner values” of the Chrono Felix Salmon remain the same. Inside the case, the Habring<sup>2</sup> manufacture movement A11C ticks at 28,800 vibrations per hour (4 Hz). The hand-wound movement with a 48-hour power reserve has a tangential screw fine adjustment and an amagnetic escapement with a Carl Haas balance spring in chronometer quality. The movement is elaborately hand-finished with polished edges, decorative cuts, perlage, etc.

As we have become accustomed to with the Chrono Felix, the “Salmon” variant also impresses with its elegant discreetness. This includes the dial with a moderate diameter of 38.5 millimetres and only two subdials at 9 o'clock (small second) and 3 o'clock (30-minute counter). And of course, the Chrono Felix Salmon also gets by with only one pusher. Felix is and remains the lucky one!

Chrono-Felix *Salmon*





Chrono-Felix Top-Second:

# Renaissance

of a complication

The successful Felix family of watches made by the Carinthian watch manufacturer Habring<sup>2</sup> has grown. And one could indeed speak of a "lightning-smart addition".

With the recently launched Top-Second chronograph, the Habring<sup>2</sup> manufacture is continuing its tradition of helping to revive complications that were sometimes thought to have been forgotten. In the past, this included, for example, the jumping second or the Foudroyante (the "flashing second"). Similarly, the Top Second complication has hardly been heard of for decades, unless you rummage through old manufacturers' catalogues. In fact, the Top Second was originally introduced in the 1960s by Swiss manufacturer Mondia. However, this company

was later acquired by Zenith, with the result that both the name of the manufacturer and the Top Second complication gradually disappeared from the market. Nevertheless, there are still old collector's pieces with this supposedly blinking second to buy today.

But how does the seconds display that flashes every 2.5 seconds work? A look inside the timepiece, where the manufacture calibre A11FC ticks, reveals the mechanism. There, you'll find a small, spinning propeller with two blades. Every 5 seconds, the entire propeller rotates; however, because of the two blades, the seconds signal flashes every 2.5 seconds on the dial at 9 o'clock. The chronograph's 30-minute counter is located at 3 o'clock. The new member of the Felix family has several very practical advantages: Thanks to the Top Second, the running second at 9 o'clock is unnecessary. This makes the dial look more harmonious, because not so many numerals are cut. Nevertheless, it is immediately recognizable that the watch is running.

You could also call the Chrono-Felix Top-Second a technically smaller brother of the Foudroyante Felix. This model by Habring<sup>2</sup> combines the flashing second (a hand rotating once per second on a subdial, giving the watch lover an impression of mechanical dynamics) and the jumping second. The Chrono-Felix Top-Second is thus a lighter version of the Foudroyante.

The exciting question remains, what the proud wearer of this model can do in 5 seconds ( $2 \times 2.5$  seconds) until the little propeller has turned in each case. Of course, the new Felix model measures the short time, as a chronograph should. But on top of that, the 5-second rhythm can help with time management. At least that's what motivational coach Mel Robbins says when she recommends an inner countdown if you just don't feel like doing some unpleasant task. This is what does the trick: For example, you decide to make an unpleasant phone call that you've been putting off again and again. Then you count backwards: 5,4,3,2,1 and dial the number on your smartphone. Supposedly, the 5-second countdown activates the so-called prefrontal cortex. This brain region is responsible for conscious decisions.

This way, the Chrono-Felix Top-Second could perhaps even become a ticking coach in the end.



Erwin Pilot & Chrono-Felix Top-Second



*Habring*



**HABRING UHRENTECHNIK OG**  
Hauptplatz 16, 9100 Völkermarkt, Austria

TEL. +43 4232 513 00  
info@habring.com  
www.habring2.com

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