

JEWELRY

Breitling heads to the ocean with surfing “squad”

August 28, 2018

□

The Superocean Hritage Chronograph. Image credit: Breitling

By SARAH RAMIREZ

Swiss watchmaker Breitling is hitting the waves with a group of professional athletes in its latest "squad" film.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

The Breitling Squad shorts rely on a cinematic approach to share the invaluable attributes that make the brand's timepieces unique. Each short film is in black-and-white, a stylistic choice that reflects the watches' timelessness and creates cohesion as they are shared on Breitling's social channels.

"This campaign does a brilliant job of reflecting the Breitling brand by marrying the most famous surfers wearing the brand's famous dive watches," said Marci Troutman, CEO of [SiteMinis](#), Atlanta. "This is sure to further ramp not only the views on Instagram and other social outlets, but also give a significant lift to their views on YouTube, [so] both the brand and the athletes win from this campaign."

Ms. Troutman is not affiliated with Breitling, but agreed to comment as an industry expert. [Breitling](#) was reached for comment.

Catch a wave

The "Surfer Squad" vignette begins with professional surfer Kelly Slater driving to the beach with a Breitling watch casually worn on his wrist. At the beach, he is joined by fellow professional surfers Sally Fitzgibbons and Stephanie Gilmore.

As the group prepares for their surf session, glimpses of the Superocean Hritage Chronograph flash onscreen. This film editing technique was also used to highlight the vintage-inspired Navitimer 8 watch in an earlier squad video.

Breitling's surf squad includes Kelly Slater, Sally Fitzgibbons and Stephanie Gilmore

The surfers hit the waves still wearing their Breitling watches, but the ocean is no match for the luxury timepieces. The watch is water resistant up to 200 meters and includes a rubber strap. The handset is also inspired by the shape of the 1957 original dive model.

If not for the dramatic waves and impressive surfing, the film would be understated. Instead, it is a daring and exciting look at surfing, an individual sport that seems more enjoyable alongside like-minded individuals.



Surfers Sally Fitzgibbons and Kelly Slater wearing Breitling watches. Image credit: Breitling

Surfer Squad is also notable because Mr. Slater is flanked by two women, Ms. Fitzgibbons and Ms. Gilmore. By featuring strong female role models, Breitling is expanding its audience while promoting the notion that women can be just as talented and adventurous as men.

"The story starts to unfold subtly by marrying a luxury brand that's retained a loyal base of customers since 1884 and three famous athletes that have their own brand, continuously growing to collide together a trusted message for fans and customers alike," Ms. Troutman said.

On social media, Breitling has also stated that it has a common goal with the surfers to preserve clean oceans and beaches.

The watchmaker supports Ocean Conservancy's efforts to make beaches and oceans healthier, taking on an active role in the fight against pollution. As part of its new partnership with the non-governmental organization, Breitling organizes beach cleanups, using these initiatives as a platform to educate children on the importance of preventing trash from reaching the water ([see story](#)).

Squad on a mission

#SquadOnAMission is Breitling's film series that focuses on the relationship different teams have with the brand's timepieces.

With its emphasis on teamwork and trust, this summer's video series is a notable departure from Breitling's previous advertising campaign, which drew criticism for its sexism.

The first short film in the Squad series starred Breitling's Jet Team, an elite civilian aerobatics team. Their impressive aerial feats are intercut with admiring closeups of the Navitimer 8 watch ([see story](#)).

Breitling also featured its own watchmakers to give viewers a look behind-the-scenes at the precision and craftsmanship that goes into its timepieces.

The Watchmaker Squad episode begins with intimate footage of hands at work on a new watch. Breitling then celebrates teamwork, discussing how multiple individuals are needed to expand the creativity of the project ([see story](#)).

More episodes are expected, including one featuring a "Cinema Squad."

"I believe Breitling customers and fans can expect to see a magical series unfold with this meeting of superb engineering in a luxury watch and athletes who trust the brand and wear them," Ms. Troutman said. "I, for one, will be following them to see what's next."