

EVENTS/CAUSES

Breitling stays true to its roots with Naval Academy charity auction

February 17, 2012



By KAYLA HUTZLER

Swiss watchmaker Breitling is looking to increase the awareness of its Breitling Scholars program and raise funds for education through the auction of a collectible timepiece.

[Sign up now](#)

Luxury Daily

The watchmaker will be auctioning the first model of its limited-edition Naval Centennial Airwolf watch, of which only 500 will be produced. The Breitling Scholars funds will benefit the National Flight, which encourages science, math, engineering and technology education.

“Affluent consumers like charity-based auctions because it gives them a way to support one of their favorite charities,” said Ron Kurtz, president of the American Affluence Research Center, Atlanta.

“And it gives them the opportunity to make their contribution a 100 percent tax-deductible expense while receiving a valuable item,” he said.

Mr. Kurtz is not affiliated with Breitling, but agreed to comment as a third-party expert.

Breitling did not respond by press deadline.

Taking flight

Breitling has created and numbered 500 Naval Centennial Airwolf timepieces.

The No. 1 timepiece, which is the model featured in the auction, spent time travelling the world during 2011 with aviation experts, per Breitling.

In fact, the watch spent time on the wrists of Breitling Jet Team leader Jaques Bothelin, British pilots Charlie Brown and Lee Proudfoot and New Zealand pilot Keith Skilling last year.

The Naval Centennial Airwolf had also been found at one point on French aerobatic champion Oliver Masurel.

The watch's final flight took place on its journey in the United States with the #1 Blue Angel.

Additionally, the timepiece was worn on the wrist of Commander Mark Kelly on the space shuttle Endeavour's last flight into space in May.



The 500 Naval Centennial Airwolf timepieces feature a 1/100th of a second chronograph with split times as well as an alarm clock and countdown feature.

The model can also be set to a second timezone with an independent alarm, UTC and perpetual calendar.

Breitling has also made the watch readable during the night with a NVG-compatible

display backlighting system.

By making only 500 of these timepieces, and numbering each one, Breitling has made the Naval Centennial Airwolf timepieces coveted by affluent consumers and watch collectors alike.

“Affluent consumers are very interested, more so than the average consumer, in one-of-a-kind products because of the exclusivity associated with the product,” Mr. Kurtz said.

“It gives them a talking point with friends that creates a favorable impression and creates a degree of envy,” he said. “Average consumers are less interested in such things.”

Fueling education

The auction began online Feb. 15 at <http://auctions.readysetauction.com/breitling/> and will end Feb. 29.

Breitling is auctioning off a package that contains the No. 1 Naval Centennial Airwolf watch and the official aviators’ flight log book which accompanied every pilot that wore the watch.

Commander Mark Kelly will personally present the package to the winning bidder.

The minimum bid was \$15,000.

The highest bid at press deadline was \$25,000.



The screenshot shows the auction page for a Breitling Limited Edition Naval Centennial Airwolf watch. The page features a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Catalog', 'Favorites', and 'Contact'. The main content area displays the watch image, the title 'Breitling Limited Edition Naval Centennial Airwolf', and the following details: 'Leading Bid: \$25,500.00 (by Anonymous)', 'Bidding Ends: Wed Feb 29, 2012 - 2:00 PM US/Pacific', and 'Time Left: 13 days 6 hours 37 minutes'. A 'Click Here to Bid' button is visible. Below the watch image, there is a 'Tell your friends!' section with 'Tweet' and 'Like' buttons. A description at the bottom states: 'DESCRIPTION: This auction package includes the 1 of 500 numbered Breitling Naval Centennial Limited Edition Airwolf watches, worn by numerous aviators including Mark Kelly on the Space Shuttle Endeavour's last flight into space in May. Plus the official Aviator's Flight Log Book, which accompanied every pilot on each individual flight and a personal presentation of this package by Mark Kelly. The journey of 6.5 million plus miles could end with you!'

Breitling will be donating the proceeds to the National Flight Academy as part of its Breitling Scholars program.

The [National Flight Academy](#) uses aviation-inspired scenarios and simulation to encourage an interest and education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics amongst U.S. students.

This is not the first time that Breitling has worked to benefit the National Flight Academy.

The Breitling Scholars program also funds 100 student scholarships per year for the opportunity to attend camp at Ambition, a simulated training aircraft carrier located at the

academy in Pensacola, FL.

The two companies will continue to work together on additional educational competitions and initiatives, per Breitling.

Indeed, the partnership with the National Flight academy ties-in seamlessly with Breitling's history in the world of aviation.

Additionally, most affluent consumers look for brands that support causes that align with their personal values, and supporting education is likely high on the list for any consumer.

“Brands that support a charity or create their own foundation should be careful to associate with an organization of great integrity and one that is pursuing a good and non-controversial cause,” Mr. Kurtz said.

“Ideally, it would be a cause of interest to and supported by the affluent,” he said.

Final Take

Kayla Hutzler, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

© Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your **feedback** is welcome.