



# Wings

by Simon de Burton

There has always been a striking similarity between the winged 'B' logo of Breitling watches and that of Bentley motor cars, so it is perhaps a little surprising that it has taken this long for the two firms to enter into a collaboration.

When Bentley's new Continental GT supercar was originally unveiled at the Paris motor show in September last year, it was equipped with the type of anonymous-looking dashboard clock seen in vehicles the world over. However, it has since been revealed that all production models will be fitted with timepieces made by Breitling. It is the first time that a Bentley has carried a clock bearing the signature of another brand, and the design is said to be based on the appearance of the aviation instruments with which Breitling first made its name. For the sake of simplicity, reliability and convenience, a straightforward quartz movement powers the clock.

Furthermore, the partnership between the two firms is being carried onto the racetrack, where the Breitling name and logo will be prominently displayed across both front wings and side panels of the Team Bentley car. Breitling is Bentley's main sponsor at this year's "24 Heures du Mans" in June.

From a wristwatch point of view, the Bentley-Breitling alliance means that a whole new range of sports chronographs will undoubtedly be in the pipeline. The first of these was due to emerge at the Geneva motor show in March, but has now been held back for unveiling at Basel.

Designed to reflect the distinct style of the Continental GT, the watch mirrors the sporting, knurled finishes that have been found in Bentley cockpits since the glory days of Tim Birkin, Woolf Barnato and the dash-

ing 'Bentley Boys' of the 1920s and '30s. Carrying the Bentley logo, it has a self-winding movement and a tachymeter ring, which allows for accurate speed calculation. It will be available in a choice of metals and finishes, with the standard steel model being priced at around £3,400.

### The attraction

With its combined appeal of good looks and practical functionality, this watch seems likely to prove a draw both for owners of Bentley motor cars and avid followers of endurance racing. The price, too, is a drop in the ocean compared with the cost of the Continental GT, which is a car aimed at attracting younger drivers to the marque – the firm anticipates that most purchasers will be aged "just under 50" rather than "just over".

However, money does play an important part in reinforcing the appeal of the car to this new audience, so it has been priced at £110,000, almost £50,000 less than the Arnage, the next car up in the range, and £150,000 less than the top-of-the-line Azure.

For their money, Continental GT buyers get an innovative 6 L, twin-turbocharged, W12 configuration engine manufactured by Bentley's parent company Volkswagen, making the Continental GT the fastest 'genuine' four-seat car in the world, with a top speed in excess of 180 mph and a 0-60 mph time of less than 5 s. The 500+ bhp drives all four wheels via a paddle-operated, 6-speed automatic gearbox, and the squat, aggressive styling of the car is redolent of the original Bentley Continental of the 1950s. ◉

