

## THE MOST PUNCTUAL CLOCK IN THE WORLD



Who else but a Swiss engineer would design an ingenious clock that ensured train punctuality would become a visible concept to everyone in Switzerland and abroad? A timepiece that ticks off a minute in only 58 seconds at first baffled people and continues to charm them today, but this unique feature of the Swiss Railway Clock has ensured smooth and absolutely precise departures of Swiss trains on the full minute for the last 60 years.

Realizing that electrically powered clocks could be unreliable, inventor and Swiss Federal Railways employee Hans Hilfiker perfected a trick to make certain that clocks in every station show exactly the same time. Hilfiker accelerated the railway clocks so that the second hand (a unique design visible from far away) comes up to the 12 o'clock position after 58 seconds. Here it stays awaiting release from an automatic electrical impulse sent through the electric power network that happens every full minute. First the black minute hand jumps to the next position and then the red second hand on all the clocks in the network begin a new rotation, ensuring synchronization of the entire rail system.

This exclusive attribute has fascinated travellers since the classic design was invented and the intellectual property protected in the 1940s – an era where electric and quartz movement as well as radio and satellite-based timekeeping did not exist. It is the only system of its kind in use and has furthered Switzerland's image as the most punctual country in the world.

Zurich watchmaker Mondaine has incorporated this highly individual motion within its Official Swiss Railway SBB Watch. The fascinating execution "Stop to Go", like on the original clock, features the famous red second hand that turns full circle in 58 seconds and then waits at 12 o'clock for the black minute hand to move on before starting its next rotation.