## Watch Journal

Featuring: The Hublot Big Bang Unico Perpetual Calendar Sapphire.

Also: A Tour de France-Worthy Timepiece Inspired by Formula One.

Get Schooled by Patek Philippe.

Top Ski Resorts Around the World. Ice Ice Baby.



How a former Formula One champ turned cyclist helped Richard Mille design his latest ne plus ultra watch.

By James Jung

Richard Mille may be one of the manifests itself. From aluminum- same roads behind the wheel of world's most preeminent watchmakers, but he's almost as famous for his obsession with race cars. Ever since bursting onto the scene in 2001 with his radical and highly technical take on the classic, barrel-shaped tonneau, the charismatic Frenchman has drawn inspiration from the high performance machines of Formula One.

In the stone-and-timber garage of his 18th-century château in Brittany, you'll find one of the world's most coveted vintage-car collections (replete with iconic openwheel McLarens and Ferraris), while his eponymous brand name can be spotted scrawled across racing grids the world over. But it's in Mille's unmistakable skeleton-dial watches that his obsession truly he's not bombing around those bikes that most intrigued Mille.

resistant movements as precise as a four-stroke turbocharged V6 engine, the similarities between Mille's sleek, ultra-luxe watches and the world's most bleeding-edge racing cars are striking.

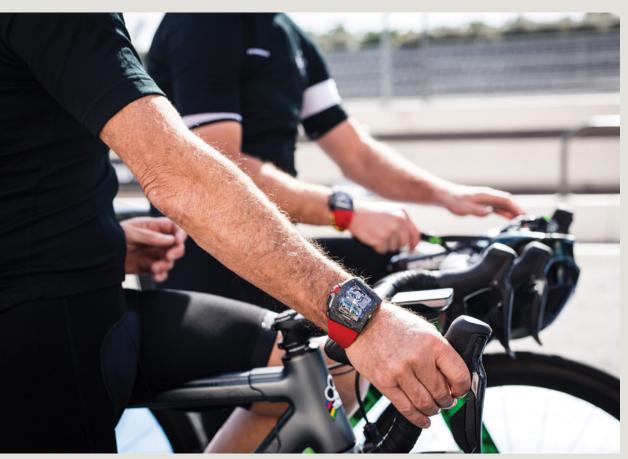
And yet, for his latest limited edition timepiece, the bearded, to an unexpected inspiration: cycling. It's a sport that Mille—like any self-respecting Frenchman grew up with, and one that has re- on his wrist. cently joined his ever-growing list of passions.

clists churn out," says Mille, who can be found logging serious miles on his local country lanes when nical innovations of modern racing

and-carbon fiber casings to shock- his Lancia Stratos rally car. He has also been following the Tour de France in person, often in the backseat of a commissioner's car embedded in the fast-moving peloton. In 2016, after Mille struck up a friendship with professional cyclist Mark Cavendish, he gifted the Welshman his personal Felipe rakishly stylish 66-year-old turned Massa Flyback Chronograph. The decorated sprinter won his 29th Tour de France stage the following day, the timepiece strapped firmly

Such are the fortunes of a man who has built a business based as "I am stunned by the power cy-much on spontaneity as on rigorous devotion to detail. But, as befitting any true gear head, it was the tech-





104 105



OPENING: Formula One legend Alain Prost with British pro cyclist Mark Cavendish. THIS SPREAD: Worn on the right wrist, the RM 70-01 is designed for ultimate legibility while cycling.

mance gains in gear assemblies, these were revolutionary," Mille ate the many subtleties involved."

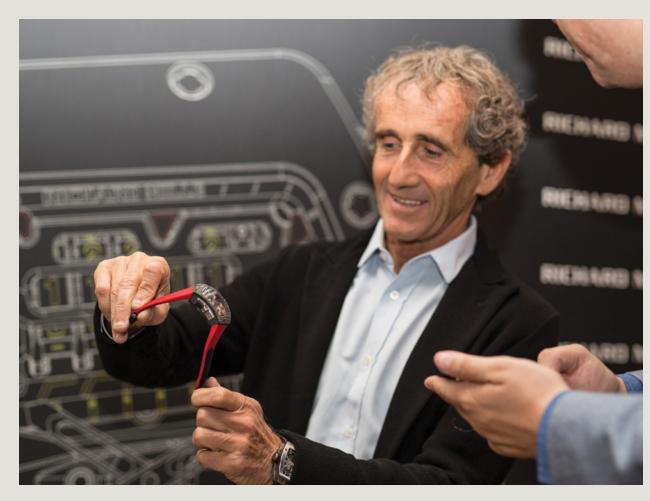
To create a Tour de Franceworthy timepiece, Mille knew he needed a collaborator. But rather than looking toward any number of world-class cycling companies for this venture, the watchmaker returned to his first love—Formula One. As it turned out, Mille's longtime friend, four-time F1 champ Alain Prost, had been bitten by the biking bug as well.

idea for this watch," recalls Prost, who at the height of his career was known as "The Professor," due to his cerebral approach to car racing.

"The introduction of composites, and bicycles." Prost himself began the lighter materials, the perfor- cycling at the behest of his trainer more than two decades ago. (The idea was that the sport would help says. "As a tech fanatic, I appreci- better condition him for the demands of F1 driving—a sport where heart rates consistently exceed 160 bpm.) Today, Prost rides upwards of 200 kilometers a week, and regularly competes in races like the vertiginous L'Étape du Tour and the prestigious Masters World Cycling Championships.

The RM 70-01 Tourbillon Alain Prost—which is limited to 30 collectors' pieces—is the result of Mille and Prost's three-year collab-"Richard is the one who had the oration. On it, you'll find numerous nods to cycling. Take, for instance, aesthetic details such as a barrel ratchet resembling a spoked wheel and a dynamometric crown evoking "He wanted to blend automobiles a pedal. For those more concerned

106 107



the cobblestones of Paris-Roubaix.

Of course, this being a Richard Mille creation, form always follows nis star Rafael Nadal, golfer Bubba solves that problem. By pressing spirit of Formula One. Watson and Jamaican runner the pusher at 2 o'clock, a cyclist Yohan Blake, he's created a watch perfectly optimized for the day-to- five rollers, while the pusher at 10 day demands of sport. Nowhere is o'clock allows the rider to increase this more apparent than in the ton- the number by increments of one. neau's rectangular and asymmetri- And there's no danger of slipping cal carbon cage, which molds to the wrist without ever digging into the skin no matter where you grip the cidentally moving the wrong roller. drop bars on a road bike.

belongs to the titanium odometer, matically calculates total miles—at

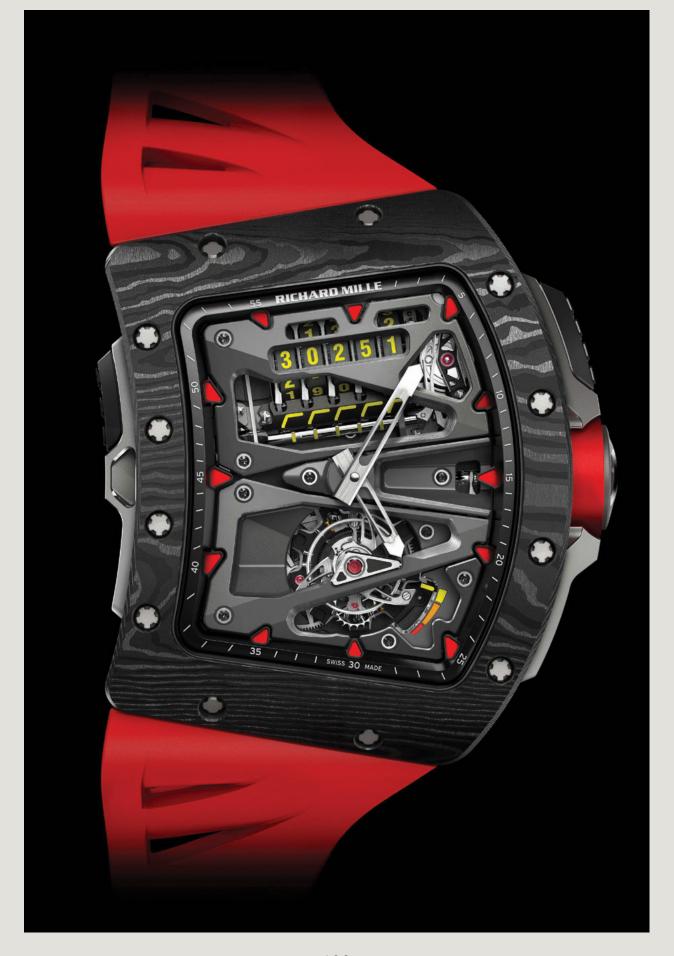
plate and the Allen screws, which distance to their ongoing tally. provides a stiffness capable of with- Cyclists live and die by their met- Richard Mille demographic. standing the roughest of road con-rics. But while most will rattle off watts they can generate in an hour, Prost found that few can recall the can activate any of the odometer's up, thanks to a spring-lock neutral position that protects you from ac-

Sure, most cycling computers The biggest innovation, however, offer an odometer—one that auto-

with engineering, there's the Grade a five-digit roller readout that alten-thousandths of the cost, but 5 titanium used for both the base- lows riders to easily add the day's anyone who's resorting to basic bean counting clearly isn't in the

For those who are, the RM 70-01, ditions, whether the local tarmac or figures like their maximum heart which is priced at a cool \$815,000, rate or the average amount of comes with an added bonus: a hand-built Colnago carbon racing bike with an electronic Campagfunction. So, much like he's done total mileage they've logged at the nolo drive train and thoroughbred before for athletes including ten- end of the season. The RM 70-01 Italian pedigree that evokes the

> ABOVE : Four time Formula One World Champ Alan Prost, admiring the finished product.
> OPPOSITE: The Richard Mille RM 70-01.



108