

# The Shaving Mirror

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## Global Village

One flew over the cuckoo's nest?



In their own wondrous way, the Ore Mountains prove that records are not always about speed. Yes, we can – fast, but also slowly and judiciously. This way of life has been experienced by over three million unhurried travellers who last year presented us with a tourism record. Good things come to those who wait: This applies to our baby record in particular. Last year at the Rabenstein Clinic in Chemnitz alone, 1,400 children entered the race – after a warm-up period lasting nine months.

We do not know how long it took the town of Neuhausen to make the world's largest nutcracker, which stands at over ten metres; a task requiring great diligence which resulted in an entry in the Guinness Book of Records. Outstanding achievements require perseverance and passion. Ulf Löscher's family have gathered up 5,150 of these little gnashers and opened Europe's first and only nutcracker museum. Another native of the Ore Mountains, Ulf Landwehr, must dispense with such honours for the time being. He shares his flat in Dresden with an impressive collection of 481 cups from all over the world.

Probably our most celebrated record holder is Jens Weißflog from Oberwiesenthal, who

won his first Four Hills Tournament at the tender age of 19. Not long afterwards, the man known as the "Fichtelberg Flea" because of his lightweight stature returned from Sarajevo with an Olympic gold medal. His considerable medal record is indicative of a passion for collecting. The fact is that the achievements of Germany's most successful ski jumper, who won two gold, four silver and five bronze medals at World Championships alone, were the result of tenacity and courage. Today he runs a hotel in Germany's highest spa resort. By settling in Oberwiesenthal he has remained true to his roots. And the house cocktail "Überflieger" (high flyer) is not the only thing reminiscent of sporting passions.

Michael Edwards, a high flyer with a difference, never considered himself to be a serious record candidate. While Weißflog's longest jump was 210 metres, Eddie the Eagle's best competitive result, achieved in Lake Placid, was just over half that distance – after 85,000 jumps. His somewhat insensitive critics commented that he flew like a brick, but he got top marks for popularity. So what links him to the German ski-jumping icon? "All I wanted was to do my best," he once said. With this attitude, the Brit would also be at home in the Ore Mountains.

## Editorial

We have no time, so let's take it. This sentence describes our situation to a tee. And it is not only the pre-Christmas period that makes demands on us. Throughout the year, things at MÜHLE have been even busier than usual. The new collections for 2013/14 have been received as well as we hoped for. Business development is also more than positive, with the result that our sales target of 8 million euros has been surpassed. In order to achieve this level of customer satisfaction we take our time – and not only for product development. Naturally, speed is also important to us, but never at the expense of precision. We focus on continuity, and this extends to our personnel. Our longest-serving employee is Dietmar Fuchs, who has been with the company since 1965. Some of our current staff are the grandchildren of members of our original workforce.

Speed – we are devoting the new issue of the SHAVING MIRROR to this phenomenon and presenting our new razor R89 JET in time for the festivities. Take some time to read the news from Stützengrün. We wish you an unhurried pre-Christmas season!



Andreas and Christian Müller, Managing Directors

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## Insight

R89 JET



Some people will already be waiting for this, because we often launch a special product as our annual highlight shortly before Christmas. With the new model R89 JET we are now presenting an exceptional gem for wet shavers. Shimmering mysteriously in matt black, the outer casing is sheathed in a DLC (diamond-like carbon) coating. The hardness of DLC layers is many times greater than that of, for example, stainless steel, which predestines it for use in the automotive industry and motor racing. Several exclusive brands use the coating in the design of valuable watches. The pioneering material is also to be found in jewellery collections. To increase ergonomic comfort, the new closed-comb safety razor has been fitted with an additional rubber strip at the gripping points; the look and feel produce a perfect combination. As a side benefit, DLC coatings are long-lasting and extremely easy to clean.

## Brush Up

Faster than the speed of sound?

It's simply got to work – as we say in the Ore Mountains. And what we mean by that is nothing more or less than an all-round successful result, even if there are obstacles along the way. One of these obstacles was the material masur birch, which we presented for the first time in our 2013/14 collection. Our experience of processing different woods – the long list includes pine, ash, birch and African blackwood – dates back to the foundation of the company.

Tuja wood, for example, is soaked in synthetic resin in order to seal the surfaces. We applied the same method when developing models for the vividly structured masur birch. Once, a second time, and then again. This highly porous type of wood is a tricky customer. It took quite a while to achieve the perfect seal. Processing is almost invariably about tenths of millimetres. The only way we could obtain the thickness required for this model was by altering the inner structure of the wood.

In terms of economics, this time-consuming procedure is something of a luxury; yet it is worthwhile for us because our customers' expectations are just as high as our own. The development periods of more than a year for our carbon series (MÜHLE EDITION No. 1) or the synthetic Silvertip Fibre might well have caused others to capitulate. But once we are committed to an idea we do not give it up lightly and we set about finding designers and engineers who are prepared to let themselves in for a venture of this nature.

Patience and perseverance flow into many of the details at MÜHLE. The chrome-plated lower sections of the shaving brushes bearing our company logo also have a long "trip to work". Before the meticulously finished brass section is galvanised following laser engraving it is ground, hand-polished several times and subsequently freed of paste residue and fingerprints. Using ultrasound! This is not so that the process is quicker, but to make it particularly thorough.



## Rituals Require Care

No time to shave?

Was it really a triumph of technology that led to the invention of the electric razor in the last century? Busily rotating shaving heads, the more the better apparently, but most importantly time saved – you could even shave while driving – were the hardest-hitting arguments. Only then did the time factor become a yardstick that some people were fond of applying. A surprising development, considering that from the Bronze Age

onwards, men had managed quite well without chronometers when ridding themselves of their facial or body hair.

Today, the male species is split into two camps: the dry and wet shavers, the time-driven and the stress-free. Measurable arguments suggest that brush and blade are not, in fact, the slower tools. A practised wet shaver completes

his task in a few minutes, thoroughly and free of residue, and with a long-lasting effect. But perhaps, unlike his speed-conscious fellow men, he does not want to be fast at all, at least not when it comes to shaving; maybe he prefers to save that for sports or work. In order to bring slow movement into their everyday lives, some men travel to visit gurus or to sojourn in a monastery. They might also give it a try at home in the bathroom ...

## Hall of Mirrors

Handbrake for the hamster wheel



Not long ago I read a study. Actually I don't like reading studies. As soon as you've finished one, another one comes along that proves the opposite. Is wine healthy after all? Shouldn't we drink so much water? How harmful is toast? But this one gave me a great gift. It gave me time – to the present day! But to start at the beginning: The study in question stressed that beard hairs are as stubborn as copper wire and that men display different types of shaving behaviour. Aha! While some toil away at their stubble for ten minutes, applying pressure of 50 grams, others finish the job in 30 seconds with one and half kilos pushing at their morning mug. While one tackles his beard with 25 strokes, the other hacks away at his bristles with no fewer than 700 scrapes. So then I started counting myself, totting up an impressive 75 strokes, with the clock showing that three minutes had passed. The best thing about this self-experiment? The realisation of how absurd it is to count blade strokes, how irrelevant the pressure applied. I discovered a ritual that would accompany me every morning from then on – up to the final flick of the razor. There's no football match, lad's outing or pub crawl to match it.

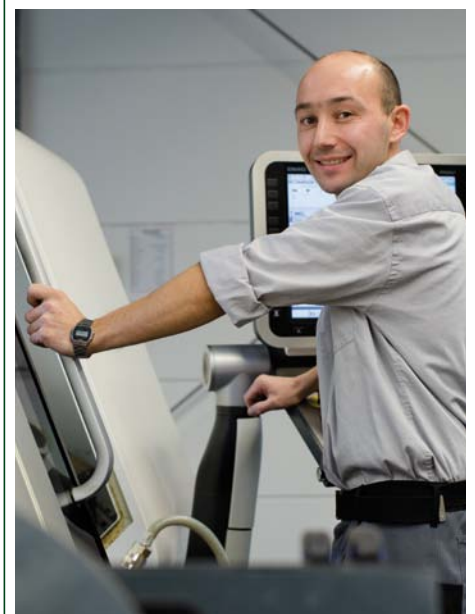
In short, this study enriched my life. Not with the knowledge about the shaving habits of somebody, somewhere. It gave me – quite unintentionally – time. It's not that it saved me a few extra minutes. On the contrary. But from that moment it allowed me to experience shaving, from lathering to applying the after shave, as something that is not subjected to the frowning dictate of the clock face. What a crucial insight! Shaving offers a wonderful opportunity to think. For example, does time really pass more slowly, the older you get? After all, our morning shave is the first reminder that we are once again one day older. Stroking away the lather is one of the few remaining activities that makes us look at our reflection rather than at our mobile phone. (A reflection which hopefully still asks: "How are you?") And another thing has changed, too. Coffee to go is gone. After shaving, before getting dressed, there's a coffee to stay, at least for ten minutes or so. It's time worth taking. – Right, that's enough. Let's go!

*You are sure to have noticed that our guest author Luis Bentele is a committed wet shaver.*

## Close Up

Ronald Klötzer

It is almost impossible to imagine this qualified carpenter with idle hands. He built his own house extension, he tinkers with the furniture or potters around in the garden and spends as much time as possible with the children. As a passionate biker, he also likes getting into gear – preferably in the Ore Mountains on his MTB or on his powerful Suzuki. But the 32-year-old native of Stützengrün has devoted his main occupation to MÜHLE, where he and his brother Mario are responsible for the CNC operations. He enjoys the fact that his job allows him a large measure of freedom: "Trust is motivating in itself, but it's also the variety of the tasks that provides me with new challenges every day." Depending on individual orders and series, in some cases the machines have to be reprogrammed and realigned for every shift so that the right configuration is created for a particular product from a large number of individual components (approx. 300 in total). After a quick breakfast at home, his working day begins at 6:15 a.m. and finishes at 3:30 p.m. "The first thing I do when I get home is sit down and have a coffee with my family," he says, "and we all talk about the day's events." These can also involve dealing with mechanical breakdowns: "Machines are only as good as how we operate them, while taking the properties of the materials into account." With new products, experimentation is sometimes necessary: "We're still going to need human engineering skills in the future." For a certain razor model, for example, it was decided to turn the usual set-up practically upside-down. "We're not finished until the product is perfect."



THE SHAVING MIRROR is published in two languages, three times a year. If you would like to receive THE SHAVING MIRROR regularly, please let us know, then we will gladly include you in our distribution list.



## Wing Mirror

DAPPER, Oslo

Our design is deliberately very clean, we concentrate on the aesthetics." With his commitment to the wet shave, Andrea Doppelmayr can be seen as something of a pioneer in Norway. It was with this intention that he not only set up a web shop with a select international product range in 2006, but also established DAPPER, an unusual little shopping paradise right in the capital, Oslo. In April this year he introduced a collection which makes men's hearts skip a beat: textiles, handmade shoes, bikes and saddles, fragrances and shaving accessories. The Austrian takes his time over the things he enjoys doing. Like travelling from North Cape to South Africa; for a year – on his bike. He believes that you have to have seen what you are talking about and what you decide on. A factor that prompted him to include MÜHLE in his collection. "In the interests of our customers we pay attention to quality and the ability to deliver fast. A brand's tradition and origin are perhaps even more important. Both enjoy a high status which we find embodied at MÜHLE." To be sure of gaining the enthusiasm of others he only stocks goods of which he himself is convinced. This commitment has convinced men all over Norway, not to mention the women. What they have in common is that they take their time when selecting. This means that DAPPER guests can test the various products and fragrances and find out for themselves what appeals to them most. "Norway has some catching up to do when it comes the wet shave," Doppelmayr sums up, "and the same applies to job training." With his kind of sporting spirit, this seems highly likely to change before very long.



[www.dapper.no](http://www.dapper.no)

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## Rear-View Mirror

Cruising at speed



240 km/h is the speed displayed on the monitor of the train which snakes through the countryside like an endless iron worm; that is how it would once have been worded. But these days nothing snakes at 240 km/h anymore – the high-tech train hurtles along the track like a bullet. At least when seen from the outside. If you flatten your nose against the ICE window, rivers, meadows, villages and fields roll by almost sedately. All a question of physics? Our perception of motion and momentum is not rational. No, the autobahn does not become narrower, not even if you're driving a Ferrari. Its width remains constant, whether you're sitting astride 600 prancing horses or in the cab of a truck. So why do we dash around so often and so much?

Speed saves time? It certainly produces adrenalin! There are historical and above all technical differences between Sebastian Vettel in his Formula 1 racing car and Ben Hur in his horse-drawn chariot, but the principle is the same. The list could go on at will: cycling races, hurdles, the America's Cup sailing regatta – all exciting sports, but also a little overdone. Cruising at speed no longer serves merely to cover distances; it's the thrill that counts.

There are perhaps healthier ways of taking care of your body than training for the next triathlon. But whether you are a bone fide or a would-be athlete, live in the arena or on the couch in front of the TV: it is the velocity, the maximum speed (and not only in competitions) that we find fascinating. A fast downhill race is simply more thrilling than an exchange of stamp collections, and a Formula 1 race releases more emotions than a walk at low tide. The myth of speed, change of locality and dynamisation is reflected in a special way by the Austrian artist Gottfried Bechtold with his Concrete Porsche. In 1972 he created a life-size cast of the iconic sports car, which can be seen today in Konstanz. The Porsche, the symbol par excellence of power and speed, has come to a standstill. A weighty symbol of calm, the reverse of dynamism, but without having altering its original design. A moment to reflect and linger before leaving the car park for the autobahn, whose lanes once again get narrower at 240 km/h. Or am I just imagining it?

*As a frequent traveller, our author Luis Bentele is out and about all over the world.*

## Speakers' Corner

What is the difference between your Black Fibres and Silvertip Fibres?

**Reiner M., Vienna**

Both are high-grade synthetic fibres developed for wet shaving. Silvertip Fibre is the manually pro-

cessed premium quality which is similar to silver-tip badger in terms of its performance characteristics and appearance. Black Fibres are processed mechanically and are similar in appearance to pure badger.