



#3 in a series

TOM'S TIPS



WHAT IS DELTA AND WHAT DOES IT REALLY MEAN?

Delta is the maximum deviation in rates in either full-wind, half-wind, or both.

Depending on the watch manufacturer, the delta value given can be derived from three different sets of criteria. Rolex, for example, uses both "less 24 hours" rates (basically half-wind) and "full-wind rates" in order to determine what they call their first criterion (the delta). This value establishes at least two goals of which I am aware. First, it gives us a standard in order to determine if the watch is functioning correctly within the allowable tolerances. If it is, we are only then permitted to move on to the average rate adjustment, which is the second criterion. These checks and balances are put into place in order to provide the quality outcome that a Rolex is easily capable of, and it prevents us from continuing to try to adjust a watch that has some other problem(s) that may have been overlooked.

The second reality associated with delta is this: If you have a very low delta value, your customer satisfaction will be very high. What delta really means to your customer is this: It doesn't matter if they wear their watch on the right wrist or the left, if they sleep in it or not, or if they lay it down the "wrong way" at night. It doesn't matter, because the watch will only vary in

timekeeping as much as the delta value (and often even less). So knowing the delta and having a low delta is a very desirably thing.

How about Omega? Omega uses a predetermined value for half-wind (Delta 24h) and a separate value for full-wind (Delta 0 h). These exact numbers are located in their Working Instructions #5. This allows the watchmaker to test the quality of the repair before it is finished and sent out to the customer. The same applies as above; a very low delta often keeps even the pickiest customer satisfied.

How about ETA products? Most of the time you will find the value tolerances in the factory information guides and not the standard tech guides as in the other two mentioned brands. They usually have a full-wind delta (Delta 0 h) value only.

Keep in mind that some of these values can easily be obtained with proper service and adjustment, but with the larger delta values, we must consider the possibility that something has been overlooked.

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Summary Results Graph
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Delta: Rate & Amplitude

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