



SAWAVV-VRYSTAAT TAKNUUSBRIEF



OORLOGSPOORT- KOMMANDO

Blad van die Vrystaat-tak van die Suidelike Afrika Wapen- en Ammunisieversamelaarsvereniging
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JULIE—SEPTEMBER 2026

REDAKSIONEEL

Nog 'n jaar stap fluks aan en het reeds die kruin van die 2026 almanak oorgesteek. Nou is dit remaandraai teen die afdende af, sterk oppad na Kersfees.

As time flies by, don't forget to work on those activity points. Attending functions and contributing to the newsletter not only keeps you in good standing with the association, but also broadens your interest and knowledge.

Gepraat van skietdae, ons pas afgelope Opedag was weereens 'n groot sukses, met vele bekende gesigte van regoor die land wat weer daar was, asook heelwat nuwe besoekers.

In this edition we look at a rather interesting .22LR Mauser "mini-98" and its markings that tell its fascinating history.

- MC Heunis

PROGRAM VIR DIE KWARTAAL

25 Julie: Fynvat Ghongskiet. Enigiemand kan 'n gasdrom raakskiet, maar die ghongplate skei die manne van die muise! Bring enige geweer, .22 en/of handwapens. Leeuwberg, bring-en-braai. 9:00.

8 August: Rebelle Shoot and Mad Minute at Onze Rust, rifles and hand guns up to 1918. Remember 10 extra .303 rounds for the Mad Minute. Bring and braai. 9:00.

29 Augustus: Gentlemen's Tea by Onze Rust Restaurant. Kleiduijskiet met klassieke Britse haelgewere en kleredrag. Uitstallings, staljetjies, musiekvertoing en vingerete aangebied. Koop kaartjies vooraf.

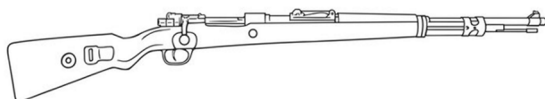
12 September: Bush War Shoot. Commemorate the Angolan and other Southern African Bush Wars. Rifles, self loading rifles/carbines and handguns till 1989/1994. Leeuwberg, bring and braai, 9:00.

Al bogemelde aktiwiteite word beskou as 'n geleentheid vir lede om hul militaria (vuurwapens, skerplemwapens, ammunisie en toebehore) vir doeleindes van uitstalling, ruil en handel ten toon te stel. Vir veiligheidsredes moet lede poog om betyds te wees vir die openings- en veiligheidspraatjie op skietdae.

THE HOEHNE MAUSER

Gun confiscations. The two words that make firearm collectors and owners shiver and reel. As anti-gun sentiment grows across the globe, fanned on by scheming politicians and one-eyed journalists, we all sleep a little less easy when we hear these words. But as the saying goes, there is nothing new in this world, so history should tell us about similar instances. And indeed, it does. To this day many South African families recall the "Jan Smuts" firearms confiscations of the Second World War where citizens were required to hand in their firearms at the local police station and receive a receipt. In some cases when the owners returned after the war to reclaim their prized possessions, the custom hunting rifle handed in during the war was replaced by a worn out old .303 service rifle as the expensive rifle had "gone missing". We today know the South African Union Defence Force (UDF) commandeered some of these pieces, both rifles, handguns and shotguns, for service during the war, but in some cases a policeman or army officer was suspected to have appropriated the missing piece for themselves. This is the story of one little .22LR Mauser DSM 34 that fortunately survived the confiscations and its markings tell an interesting story.

Original-
»MAUSER«-Sportwaffen Original
sind Meisterstücke deutscher Wertarbeit MAUSER



Deutsches Sportmodell DSM
Gesamtlänge 1280 mm
Laufstange 680 mm
Gewicht etwa 5,8 kg
Einzelader, in seiner äußeren Form u. Ausstattung dem Infanteriegewehr 98 angepasst. RM 49.00



The receiver of the particular little rifle is marked with the logo and makers name of **Mauser-Werke AG Oberndorf A.N.** Most firearm-minded people know this German arms manufacturer for their line of bolt action military and sporting rifles. These were produced from the early 1870s and the brand name is, to this day, associated with quality and German ingenuity. Mauser designed rifles were also license built by various companies world-wide and exported to many more countries where they were adopted as military battle rifles and much sought-after civilian sporting firearms. The Mauser Model 98, in particular, was widely adopted and copied in many calibers and is the foundation of many of today's sporting bolt action rifles.

This specific little rifle is further marked **KAL .22 Lang Fur Buchsen** (.22 Long for Rifle). By the outbreak of the First World War, small-bore military training and civilian rifle organizations were well established in many Western countries and various national and international matches were held. In Britain in particular these small-bore rifle associations had sprouted up like mushrooms after the shock of the Anglo-Boer War, where the inexperienced "Tommy Atkins", with only a few weeks of rifle training, had to face "Johnny Boer", who often literally grew up with a rifle in hand. Since Britain had very few full-size rifle ranges, a cheaper alternative had to be found and therefore small-bore rifle shooting was propagated by leading citizens to cultivate a rifle shooting culture in Britain. Of the many calibers that were introduced for this role, the .22 Long Rifle became the most popular and widely used; even becoming the Olympic caliber in later years. In Germany however, shooters considered .22 rimfire firearms as suitable only for children and poachers. Then, after the First World War, the Treaty of Versailles mostly prohibited the Germans from producing military arms, but the manufacture of .22 calibre sporting arms were not regulated. Mauser, who had been drastically affected by the outcome of the war, had to reinvent itself to survive and therefore diversified its range of products to include, for the first time ever, .22 rifles. These .22 rifles were made

in a separate part of the Obendorf factory. The first series of .22 rifles, offered by the company from 1923 on, were single shot models. The actions on these rifles were of very simple construction consisting of a two-piece bolt utilizing separated firing pin and hammer and a low-lift bolt handle that also acted as the locking lug. It had a simple extractor, no safety catch and very basic sights. As the popularity of .22 sport shooting rose during the 1920s and 1930s, shooters quickly demanded more substantial target-type rifles. This resulted in Mauser .22 rifles going through several transitions until 1933. Dimensions were increased to make the actions more robust, while sights were improved, safety catches were introduced and rifles with magazines were offered.

The inscription **Deutsches Sportmodell** on this little rifle tells us more of this specific rifle's origin. In 1933 the National Socialist Worker's Party, led by Adolph Hitler, seized power in Germany and denounced the crippling Treaty of Versailles. They immediately set to work to rebuild the German economy and army. The party's new youth organisation, the *Hitler Jugend*, required a military style .22 training rifle for its young recruits. In reply Mauser offered a single shot, down sized version of the standard German military K98k service rifle. This rifle was officially termed the "DSM 34" (short for "Deutsches Sportmodell" or German Sporting Model





of 1934) and the action was known as the B series action or more commonly the “miniature Model 98”. Around 50 000 of these little rifles were manufactured between 1934 and 1944. The demand was so great that other German firms also built them under license and it is estimated that around 1.5 million German boys completed marksmanship training courses using these little “mini-98” rifles.

The “mini-98” had many of the full-size Model 98 features, including the strong and reliable long non-rotating extractor claw, Model 98 type bolt stop, with external bolt release lever on the left side of the receiver, and a second locking lug at the rear of the bolt shaft (in addition to using the bolt handle as a locking lug). It also had the Model 98 style three-position flag safety. Instead of having a separate slanting firing pin or striker, the entire bolt was offset in relation to the axis of the bore. This made for a simple, reliable and very robust ignition system. The rifle had a 26 inch barrel, stacking rod and full-length walnut stock with cut-outs for a military carbine style leather sling. Mauser later also used the downsized Model 98 action of the DSM 34 for a range of impressive new sporting rifles. Due to their quality and excellent workmanship, these 1930s Mausers are today still considered to be some of the best .22 bolt action rifles ever made.

One would expect to find some form of German military marking on the rifle, but this one has South African markings! The barrel carries the inscription **E Hoehne & Co, Bloemfontein**, which would have been the South African retailer. Unfortunately, Allied bombing and post war arson by the French destroyed the Mauser factory records, thus making it difficult to determine exactly when this rifle was produced and who imported it to South Africa. However, we know in 1936 the B type action was improved and the position of the extractor and ejection port were altered. These rifles are sometimes referred to as the 2nd model DSM or DSM 36. This change happened around the 30000 serial number range, indicating that this specific rifle was probably manufactured after 1936 and imported into South Africa before 1940. Fortunately the retailer, Hoehne, was easier to research.

Gustav Emil Hoehne (22 Dec 1872 – 19 Nov 1933) was a German immigrant from Leipzig who settled in the Orange Free State around 1890. During the Anglo-Boer War he fought with the Boers as a *Burgher* of the republic. Like most Free Staters, after the war he became a British subject and he opened up a bicycle shop in Bloemfontein. Even though he had been a British subject for more than a decade, during the First World War Lusitania unrest, his shop was attacked by anti-German rioters and sustained severe damage during the night of 13 May 1915. A Bloemfontein newspaper of the time, *The Friend*, reported the next day: “Never in the history probably has Bloemfontein experienced an orgy of lawlessness such as was witnessed in the streets...” Hoehne rebuilt the business and stayed in charge until 1933 when he passed away. Since his son Sigi (Siegfried Gunter Hoehne, 13 Dec 1925 – 21 Feb 2014) was still small, an uncle ran the business until his retirement, and it was during this time that the firm sold Mauser .22 rifles. Sigi only took over the business in the 1940s after he had completed school training. The firm was closed in 1963 when his mother passed away, but re-opened the same year as S Hoehne (Pty) Ltd, after which it operated until 1984 when Sigi retired. Nowadays the Hoehne shop on Hoffman Square is only remembered by some of the older Bloemfontein inhabitants for its bicycles and motorcycles.



The morning after the riots. Bloemfontein businessmen salvage what is left of their shops (photo from Free State Archives).

Lastly, but certainly not least of all, the little rifle carries UDF ownership (U with arrow) and disposal (U with diamond) markings. This indicates that it was either purchased by the Union Government or confiscated/handed in during the Second World War. Since there are also a few .22 Mauser sporting rifles with these markings in circulation in South Africa, it would be safe to assume they could have been taken from stores and pressed into service for marksmanship training by the UDF during the war. The previous owner confirmed this assumption and noted that his father had bought the rifle from the army when he left service of the Special Service Battalion in Bloemfontein after the Second World War. The troops paid 2/6 for a draw to win a chance to buy the rifle and the lucky winner, his father, could buy it for the amount later equivalent to R17.

Collectors often say, if only this gun could talk, but sometimes if you look closely and scratch a little in history, they do talk. Today, more than 80 years after it was manufactured, this little rifle and its markings still tell the story of a well known German company, of the dark days of the Anglo-Boer and two World Wars and of an almost forgotten bicycle shop in Bloemfontein.

- MC Heunis

INTRODUCTION TO GERMAN HUNTING GUN IDENTIFICATION

It is not as easy to identify a German made gun as identifying a gun made in the USA, and this article will attempt to explain why. Even the most knowledgeable collectors and gun owners are often scratching their heads and sometimes give up and can only give you an educated guess. The following hints might be of help to you.

The inscriptions on the top rib or the barrels might confirm that the gun was made in Germany when the name of a town in Germany follows the first name. When in doubt, enter the town into a website search engine and you will usually find some information about the location of the town. The first and last names could be that of a maker, a dealer, a gun factory, a wholesaler, an importer or an exporter. The articles with the title "*Who made all those German Guns*" and a "*Gun maker -Gunsmith or Dealer?*" are well worth reading,

Proof marks are usually found on the underside of the barrels, and if a gun has German proof marks and was made in 1892 or later, you know that the gun was proof tested in Germany. This is no assurance however, that all components of the guns were made in Germany. The gun making center in Liege in Belgium was known for the good quality of their shotgun barrels that were used by gun makers in other countries.

With the exception of a few larger makers like J.P.Sauer, Merkel and Krieghoff, most records were lost during the wars and only the guns themselves

offer testimony to the history, workmanship and artistry of German gunsmiths. Fortunately, one source remains to us, and that is the marks on the guns themselves. Beginning with the first German proof law that came into effect in the early 1890s, all sporting firearms produced in Germany were required to pass rigorous strength and safety tests at a government regulated proof house. Over the years, German proof laws, like those of other European countries, were revised to cover changes in gunpowder, materials and design. Changes in proof law and the prescribed marks can be very helpful in establishing the date of manufacture, chambering and originality.

Guns and rifles built in Germany and before the 1890s typically did not carry proof marks, but the 1891 proof law "grandfathered" these arms by mandating that they be submitted to the proof house and marked with a crown-over-V, the V standing for *vorrat* or "on hand". Any German gun or rifle carrying a crown-over-V dates to 1891 or earlier. Marks showing crowns over the letters B, U, (proof approved); G (rifled barrel), S (smoothbore) and W (choked barrel) span the period from the first German proof law of 1891 until 1939, but there are usually other marks present that can greatly narrow the date range. See the accompanying tables.

Rifle barrels marked with only an indication of powder charge and bullet type in the style shown below date to 1912 or before: 2,67 g GBP / St m G. These marks show 2,67 grams of *Gewehr Blättchen Pulver* (rifle flake powder) and *Stahl-mantel Geschoss* (steel jacketed bullet). Other possible types are "K m G" for *Kupfer-mantel Geschoss* (copper jacket) and "Bl G" for *Blei Geschoss* (plain lead bullet). After 1912 marks were changed to show just bullet type and bullet weight as in: St mG /12 g, usually accompanied with a crown-over-N or the word Nitro, specifying smokeless powder.

Shotgun barrels of this era are sometimes marked with a powder charge over a shot weight, but the style of those marks didn't change markedly over time. Note, however, that some will be marked with the high-pressure proof load, while others will be marked with the standard service load. Shotgun barrels will also be marked with the gauge designation in a circle and, unless they are specifically stamped otherwise, will be chambered for 65mm (2-9/16 inch) long shells. Very often there will be a second gauge mark of the form 16/1 that indicates more closely the exact bore diameter. These marks follow the British system of gauge subdivision and can be useful in determining whether the bores have been honed since they were proof tested.

The most frustrating but perhaps the most useful marks of the 1891-1939 era are the various sets with just numbers present. The two most common sets of numbers applied were bore dimensions and actual proof dates. Rifles from later in this era are

sometimes stamped with a bore (not groove) diameter in millimeters, the most common being 8.8mm for one of the 9.3mm cartridges and 7.7mm for one of the many 8mm cartridges. Some rifles will also have chamber

length marked along with bore diameter.

Many earlier rifles will be found with numbers indicating the "gauge" (number of bore-sized round lead balls to the pound) diameter of the bore (not groove)

German Proof Marks 1891-1960

Marks shown for post-1950 used only in West Germany

	1912	1939*	1950
Mark for smokeless powder proof of rifled barrels after 1912 (from 1911 at Zella-Mehlis).			
Mark for steel-jacketed bullet proof after 1912.	$\frac{St, MG}{12g}$		Same as 1912
Mark for copper-jacketed bullet proof after 1912 (KMG = kupfermantelgeschoss).	$\frac{KMG}{12.7g}$		Same as 1912
Mark for lead bullet proof after 1912 (BIG = bleigeschoss).	$\frac{B1 G}{14g}$		Same as 1912
Stamp indicating caliber and length of shell, used after 1912, thus: 8mm by 57mm.	$\frac{8}{57}$		Same as 1912
Mark for voluntary proof of barrels not ordinarily subject to proof, used from 1939 on.			
Proof mark for smokeless proof of 22 rifles, from 1939.			
Mark if proved only for round bullet (BB) or on Flobert rifles (rimfire or special cartridge light arms).			

West German Proofhouse Marks

Kiel	Berlin	Munich	Ulm	Hanover
				

PROOF MARKS OF THE ULM PROOFHOUSE

In use since 1950

PROOF MARKS OF THE SUHL PROOFHOUSE

In use since 1950

Provisional proof with black powder for shotgun barrels		     Final proof group on Suhl guns
Provisional proof with black powder for rifled barrels		
Mark for choke bored barrels		
View or inspection mark		
Mark for smokeless powder	 M Nitro	
Mark of the Suhl proofhouse		
Date when proved	1254	

Provisional proof with black powder for single- and multi-barrel long guns	
Final proof with black powder	
Final proof with smokeless powder; shotguns, rifle, multi-barrel arms (handguns).	 
Voluntary proof	
Proof after repair, but without renewal of barrel and/or action	 
Proof after repair, including new barrel and/or action	  
Rimfire arms of parlor type, etc.	
Special arms: signal, flare, gas, other pistols.	 
Ulm house mark, formerly used by the Oberndorf proofhouse, now abolished	

(Note that the Ulm mark is required as a proof mark as well as a house mark)

would indicate a bore diameter near .360 inch and hence likely to be a 9.3mm chambering of some kind, while a number in the 170s would indicate an 8mm of some kind. I've even seen rifles marked with a pair of gauge marks that calculated so close to the actual bore and groove dimensions it was astonishing!

There were several commonly used rifle gauge marks such as 172.28, 156.14 and 141.95 that correspond to 0.010 inch increments starting at 0.300 inch and getting larger that followed British conventions. Very often this style gauge mark will be of the form 172/28 rather than with a decimal point or comma.

Unfortunately, with German rifle barrels of this vintage, it is nearly always necessary to make a chamber cast to determine the actual chambering and bore dimensions. Be safe by being certain!

The other set of numeric marks often found on both rifles and shotguns is the actual date of proof. The style of these numbers can easily be confused with the gauge markings described above, so be aware that both possibilities exist. Typical date codes will be three or four digits signifying month and year, as in 513 for May 1913, or 1127 for November of 1927. Sometimes there will be a dot or slash between the month and year, but most often they are just run together.

Often the date code is above a line, with another number below the line. The number below the line is that gun's actual entry number in the proof house records for that month and year.

All of the preceding notwithstanding, keep in mind that there is a great deal of variation in proof marks of German guns and entire books have been written on the subject of proofs. One of the best is Gerhard Wirnsberger's *The Standard Directory of Proof Marks*. With so little information yet discovered about so many German makers, a working knowledge of proof marks can be your guide to the hidden histories of German sporting arms.

- Dietrich Apel & Steve Meyer
(www.germanhuntingguns.com/about-the-guns/gun-identification/)

ONS ADRES

Die adres vir alle korrespondensie :
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kruppgun@yahoo.co.uk**

*Short informative articles or
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BELANGRIKE INLIGTING

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<http://www.sawavv-vrijstaat.co.za>.

► Bankbesonderhede:

Nedbank, takkode 198765. Rekeningnommer 1105009726, in die naam van SAWAVV-OVS. Verstrek u van, voorletters en lidnommer.

UIT DIE PERD SE BEK

1.) Onthou asb om u **Lidmaatskap Hernuwingsvorm** te teken en aan die bestuur te stuur .

2.) **Membership fees** were payable by 30 June 2019. See last month's newsletter for the amounts per class.

LAG 'n SLAG



YOUR
EDITOR



NEEDS
YOU!

