

WEAPONS FROM THE ASHTON ARMOURY MUSEUM

The Schmeisser MP

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The Schmeisser MP 40 machine pistol or sub-machine gun was one of the outstanding German weapons of WWII. A development from early German sub-machine guns, it was one of the first to employ extensive sheet metal stampings, ridiculed at first by other countries, it proved its' worth in the beginning of WWII and led to the adoption in other countries of similar guns, such as the British Sten and the U. S. N 3.

The Schmeisser NP 40 saw extensive distribution in all branches and services of the German forces and SS and was utilized as captured material during WWII by the Russians and Yugoslavians. Following WWII, the Chinese, other Oriental countries, South American, and Central American Services and Police forces were issued with this weapon.

The NP 40 was designed by Hugo Schmeisser whose earlier designs were the MP 18, MP 28, MK 36, and the MP 38, forerunners of the MP 40.

In 1917, the German Army realized the necessity for a rapid firing, light weight arm for close quarter use. The 8" barreled P 08 (Luger) pistol, with a 32 round snail drum magazine and detachable stock did not prove satisfactory as a fully automatic weapon. At the Suhl plant of Bergmann, a clumsy but efficient weapon was developed from the designs of Hugo Schmeisser.

Utilizing the snail drum and 9MM cartridge of the Luger pistol, its' main features were composed of a perforated barrel jacket, blow back bolt, and a wooden stock. It was designated the NP 18 and by late 1918 was being issued to German troops.

Following WWII, Hugo Schmeisser now at the Haenel plant in Suhl, modified the NP 18 to take a box magazine and to fire selectively, this model is known as the NP 28 II.

The MK 36 was an experimental weapon which had many features of the NP 40, although it followed the lines of the K 98 rifle and was full wood stocked.

The requirements for a new sub-machine gun originated in the late 1930's to meet the needs of the German Armoured and Paratroop forces. The earliest form of the NP 38 is reported to have had a wooden stock, however, the Germans adopted the MP 38 in August 1938 in its' well known form, features of which are, stamped and formed sheet metal magazine holder and receiver assembly, folding metal butt stock, plastic grips and forestock, absence of barrel jacket, telescoping multi-piece firing pin recoil spring assembly, cocking handle on left side of receiver, and the magazine positioned vertically from below.

Sometime prior to August 1940, a simplified and modified form of the MP 38 was put into production as the NP 40. The basic differences between the two were that the cast aluminium pistol grip and trigger guard assembly was replaced by one of sheet metal. There were other minor differences in the ejector and magazine holder. The early NP 40 had smooth sided magazine holder, the later versions sides were ribbed for strength.

A dual magazine system appeared on the NP 40 in 1943 which permitted the attachment

Attachments for the MP 40 include a blank cartridge firing device, which screwed on to the end of the muzzle of the barrel when the protective bushing was removed. There is also a cold weather triggering device which is attached to the trigger guard and extends a lever below to fire the weapon with a gloved hand.

There was also canvas or leather slings and magazine pouches usually carried in pairs with three magazines in each; one pouch had a compartment which held a magazine holder.

Design of Fire	Blowback, fully automatic only.
Calibre	9MM parabellum, pistol cartridge.
Weight	With empty magazine: 9 lbs. 8 oz.
Overall Length	With stock extended 32.8 in.
With stock folded	24.8 in.
Barrel	Length 9.9 ins., 6 grooves, right hand twist.
Front sight	hooded, wide base, on ramp.
Rear sight	fixed 100 meter - folding 200 meter leaf.
Rate of Fire	350 - 400 rounds per minute.
Magazine	32 round capacity. Weight loaded 23 oz.
Unloaded	9 oz.
Manufactures;	Steyr, Erma, Haenel, and other small parts contractors.