

## Non-Exakta with Exakta mount / Exakta without Or what to buy if you think you've got them all *by Hugo Ruys*

Limiting your collection to the original Exaktas and Exas - i.e. built by Ihagee -, you may have reached the point where you got the feeling: I've got them all. Switching to Leitz or Kodak helps immediately of course, but true Ihagee collectors don't see that as a feasible solution. A better way out of your problem is presented here: a wealth of items that have the Exakta mount but a different background, or carry the familiar name without having that mount.

To cover the available knowledge on this subject, several instalments will be necessary. The first one is based on part of an article by *Michel Rouah*, chairman of the French EICF, published in the photographica magazine *Cyclope* in 2003, with some additions by me.

### Exakta Mamiya, what is the connection?



#### *Mamiya-Exakta*

It's difficult to ignore the many reflex cameras, built in Japan, fitted with the bayonet mount of the Exakta from Dresden. The best known is the Topcon R from 1957. (*Topcon will be treated in another instalment. HR*) The brand Mamiya became known by its medium format cameras, but in 1960 the company introduced a first SLR 24x36, the Prisma PH, equipped with a central

shutter, selenium photocell and interchangeable lenses. In the same year Mamiya fitted the Exakta bayonet on a new body with focal plane shutter, the PCA Prisma. In a Novoflex catalogue I (*MR*) have found a trace of an adapter for MAMIYA REFLEX FP; I think that it was the commercial name of this first SLR with focal plane shutter. (see Abring 4142)

#### *The first Mamiya with Exakta bayonet*



The Mamiya Reflex FP has a focal plane shutter with a range of shutter times from 1 to 1/500 sec plus B and selftimer. The release button is positioned on top of the body, in the center of the time setting knob. The mirror is not of the quick return type. This new SLR has both inner and outer

Exakta bayonets. To avoid just copying the Exakta with its leftsided shutter release and the external diaphragm closing buttons on the lenses, Mamiya positioned the diaphragm shutting mechanism on the right side. A little pusher, coming out of the body activates the diaphragm closing mechanism inside the lens. Shutting is automatic, but reopening has to be done by hand with a lever, as with the semi-automatic Tessar and Biotar. The lenses - 2.8-48mm and 2.8-135mm - are from Mamiya Sekor and have the internal Exakta bayonet. All Exakta lenses fit the Mamiya but the Sekor lenses with their external appendix don't fit the Exakta.

In 1961 the same camera, slightly modified, was sold under the name Tower 37 by Sears, a world famous mailorder house and specialised in distributing cameras from different



countries. Its office, the Sears Tower in Chicago, was for some years the highest building in the world. Several accessories were offered for the Tower 37: a macro bellows, a set of extension rings and a microscope adapter. They all carry the name Tower 37 but are equally usable on the Exakta. The differences between first and second body are limited. The top of the front plate and the camera name are rounded on the original, straight on the Tower 37. The Tower 37 shutter lacks the selftimer. It has a rather elaborate locking mechanism on the

back opener.

*The second body*

Still in 1961 a new body appeared. It had a quick return mirror and shutter times down to 1/1000 sec. The shutter release and the time setting knobs are now separated. This time Mamiya produced the camera in two versions, the Mamiya NP with Exakta bayonet – inner bayonet only - and the Mamiya WP with Argus bayonet.



*(The Argus versions will be ignored here. HR)* To add to the possible confusion, the Mamiya NP was sold also under the names Sears 32B, Tower 32A, Tower 32B and Reflexa. The same lenses as for the first body were available, but particularly the Reflexa was also sold with a Canon 1.9-50mm lens. It seems that the Tower 37A is the last version. It lacks the selftimer and the 1/1000sec, so it seems to be a cheaper version just as the Tower 37. All second

body cameras could be equipped with an exposure meter coupled to the shutter time knob. The available flash shoe fits the the older Tower 37 and the Sears 32B, but not the other second body versions.

Topcon lenses can be used on all these Mamiya cameras; the lens catch lever is flat enough to allow that. The flat lever wasn't standard on Exakta until the VX1000.

First Body

PCA Prisma	1960
Mamiya Reflex FP	1960
Tower 37	1961

Second Body

Mamiya Prisma NP	1961
Tower 32A	1962
Reflexa	1963
Sears 32B	1964
Tower 32B	1964
Tower 37A	???

