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NUREMBERG, GERMANY, 11-14.03.2011



IWA 2011
& Outdoor Classics

PRESS-RELEASE

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Ten years ago the firearms market favorably accepted the new gun of “Izhevsky Mekhanichesky Zavod” - MP-153. By the end of 2010 the number of shotguns made on basis of MP-153 has exceeded half a million pieces.

Development of semi-automatic gun started in 1997 on the base of IZH-81. First projects were intended to fire Ga 12/70 rounds. In view of consumer demands for Ga 12/89 shotguns able to provide reliable operation with all types of ammunition from Ga 12/70 - with light loads for skeet & trap shooting - upto heavy Ga 12/89 rounds, in February 1999 in-house designers’ team started development of new model MP-153. Semi-automatic gun with wide range of ammo used has represented a step into a new unfamiliar area for the enterprise. The gun creators decided to preserve the following actions of basic model IZH-81:

- principle of barrel lock-by a single, retractable lug on the top of the bolt that cams into a recess cut into the barrel extension (analogous to the J.M. Browning patent and applied in Remington 870 model and its semi-auto options);
- under-barrel tube magazine.

As a result of upgrading the automatic gas-engine and cartridge feed the reliability of the gun has improved significantly.

The basic obstacle to remove while providing the reliable operation of a semi-auto gun was the variety of ammunition loads. The 89 mm chambered barrels allow accommodation of “light” sporting 70 mm shells with 24 g shot load as well as 89 mm shells that can contain up to 66 g of shot. Naturally, in both cases, amount of gas pushing the piston will vary.

**The
success
worth
500
thousand**



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As in majority of similar models, self-regulating adjustment system operates by bleeding high-pressure gases through the pressure release valve in gas chamber.

Among other things this simple unit (spring-loaded ring) works in extremely hard conditions: gas temperature exceeding the melting point of steel, spring subjected to dynamic load. The stress calculations determined necessity to apply a rectangular section of the spring wire. Here the decisive role played the engineer's expertise and insistence of General Director Vassily S.Tchougouevsky. After the calculations were submitted to him, proving the rectangular section only can provide the required characteristics, Vassily Sergeyeovich managed to supply the enterprise with material of necessary section and needed properties.

Both development and launching into quantity production of MP-153 was a result of coordinated actions of all factory services. Direct guidance of development and coordination of all project participants performed Chief Designer Alexander U. Dorf and his Assistant Vladimir P. Budanov. All activity relevant to building-up the new gun was supported and supervised by GD Vassily S.Tchougouevsky.

The serial production of MP-153 started in 14 months after its first line appeared on the PC display. Two months later the Ga 12/89 gun version has entered the market. The repeated tests showed all MP-153 automatic actions function reliably with all types of ammunition (from Ga 12/70 to Ga 12/89).

The best engineering solutions, which render a positive impact on reliability and consumer properties of the gun, were adopted by MP-133 (pump-action repeater).

Later the style-makers of Italian company "Molinari" have furnished the gun with synthetic stock and forend. As a result the ergonomic and style of hand-hold elements were found to be successful by dealers and consumers.

The first year when MP-153 appeared on US market the gun attracted an impressive collection of awards: two diplomas "Shotgun of the Year in USA" from "Sports Afield" and "Guns and Ammo" magazines, diploma the "100 Best Goods of Russia". The "Sports Afield" magazine named MP-153 as the "Gun of 2001". Certificate of granting the title "Shotgun of the Year" was presented to General Director Vassily S.Tchougouevsky in August of the same year by Ted Hetfield - the magazine Editor.

In 2004 the Italian magazine "Armi e Tiro" has tested the MP-153 by firing 50.000 rounds within five days or 10 thousand shots a day. The gun worked perfectly: no delays in functioning.

Appearance of Russian semi-automatic gun MP-153 on the world weapons market made a real sensation.

The international media wrote the following:

1. David Fortie - independent journalist. Extract from his article for "Gun World" magazine:

"We were impressed much by the collection of Baikal small shot shotguns". Well-made and reliable, they represent a wonderful choice for reasonable price. Particularly, the most surprising feature is the capacity to operate reliably with 1-oz. 2³/₄" light field loads and 3¹/₂" magnum shotshells, chambered all together in one magazine."

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2. "Guns & Ammo" magazine, July 2001:

"MP-153 operates the same way as the advertisement promises - a powerful convincing argument is the variety of cartridge lots from different manufacturers, with different lengths of shells and weights of small shot, which we fired with it.

The MP-153 shotgun imported by EAA company represents (like all the other Baikal shotguns which we saw) an astonishing advantageous thing. If a dictionary could show a picture representing an universal, reliable and always-ready-to operate field shotgun, possibly this namely shotgun would be depicted there."

"American Rifleman" magazine, February 2001:

"We fired the gun with a wide variety of light and heavy shotshells of all three lengths. Functioning proved flawless. We were pleasantly surprised to find that it would even operate reliably with 1-oz. 2³/₄" light field loads and 1¹/₈-oz. 2³/₄" target loads.

The trigger group is simple, robust and easy to strip down. All shooters commented on the smooth operation and good balance of MP-153.

Everyone who fired the Baikal MP-153 commented on low perceived recoil while shooting 2³/₄" and 3" shells. Despite the weight this shotgun features excellent balance, which facilitates significantly the handling.

We have here a reliable, well-made, magnum semi-auto shotgun that is affordably priced and fully equipped out of box with the features many shooters desire."

Nowadays the MP-153 semi-auto gun is available in various options and makes, which You can see and order via the Internet-shop, see our Website www.imzcorp.com.

The experts and designers of enterprise continue working on perfection of MP-153.



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Along with serially manufactured products, the factory craftsmen create unique custom-made rifles and pistols with artistic hand engraving.

The enterprise has developed unique style of artistic gun decoration by blending the centuries-old traditions of Izhevsk armourers and talent of artists. To preserve and multiply traditions of gunsmithing and keep up the high quality of Izhevsk guns, the factory has established in 1956 the School of Engraving and Gunsmithing for training of qualified experts in manufacture and artistic finish of weapons. From generation to generation they hand down secrets of engraving art. The school graduates tend to reflect in their creative work the harsh and beautiful nature of the Urals.

Leonard M. Vassev was a person of rare talent and endowments - the best Izhevsk artist-engraver. To own a shotgun of Vassev's work is a dream of any collector. The talented artist and teacher, Vassev has rendered huge influence on creativity of Izhevsk engravers. In 1997 the School of Engraving and Gunsmithing was named after him.

He has invented a new way of inlaying the precious metals into the "dovetail grooves" and introduced the method of multi-color inlay to embellish the finish of artistic guns. Significant part in ways of weapon finish takes his proprietary "frost" engraving.

The shotguns are decorated with exquisite engraving executed in original style, inherent to IMZ masters only: "frost" engraving with embossed gold inlaid, relief engraving, damascening with gold, silver or their alloys; planar incision of precious metals or alloys, multi-color inlaid work and gold beading. Engraving options are diverse: from elementary patterns to highly artistic plots performed in a variety of techniques with use of precious metals and their alloys. Particularly successful are hunting scenes depicting animals and birds through a unique performance language transferred to plasticity of animal habit and themes of nature. The armourers purposely walk out into fields, to forest or the lake to feel the poetry of hunt, which the artist craves to reflect on the gun.

Any studio of elite weapons has in its arsenal a certain "specialty", which is intended for weapons "gourmet". The "branded" frost-style engraving developed and implemented by talented artist Leonard Vassev plays a prominent role in methods of finishing the Izhevsk guns. The "frost" is a kind of jewelry technique applicable by skilled engravers only. A gun ornamented with engraved "frost" brings delight and fascinates. The light shimmers on steel surfaces, as if you see a window painted with frosty patterns - hard to believe this is a work of human hands.

The shotguns finished by masters-engravers - followers of Leonard Vassev - are often valued as works of art and exhibited at the art shows.

At present time the high-class artists-engravers - tradition-bearers of Izhevsk gunsmiths - constitute the board of mentors in the School of Engraving and Gunsmithing. In addition to training of young engravers, they create unique guns themselves. While developing a project of finish, the master takes into account general style of the gun, including the shaping of outward wooden and metal parts and their uniform decorative composite solution. And this idea he brings to his disciples above all. The manner of master's work involves the numerous variations of compositional

Best traditions-preserved and multiplied

"The artistic styling transforms weapon into a piece of art, separate parts of which are conceptually tied by unique plan"

(M. Nobily)

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and technological approaches. For example, components of stylized floral ornament based on classic Czech ornament and performed in technique of precious metals or alloys' inlay are fused with a relief pattern and smoothly turn into the scene image. The master plotlines are distinguished by diversified and multi-figured compositions. The ardour for hunting and passionate love for nature help the master to perceive subtly and depict on metal the features of animals' habit amid their native habitat. Each new workpiece of master is attractive and uncommon both by composition and combination of techniques, where the master's style and hand are always felt.

Leonard Vassev's school of Engraving and Gunsmithing plays the leading role in education of qualified personnel by transferring from generation to generation and preserving the best traditions and ancient secrets of the Izhevsk gunmakers. Today the School is the only educational center in Russia for training the experts in all trades connected to manufacture and artistic finish of weapon.

Shotguns crafted by school graduates - successors of Leonard Vassev - are distinguished by customized assembly performed by high-class fitters, careful tuning and finish to provide high functionality of mechanisms, extremely smooth action, easy opening and closing of barrels. For elite guns the best preselected barrels are chosen. The guns are subject to most stringent control for geometry and processing quality of outer surfaces, bores and chambers. The handcrafted buttstock allows providing of any ergonomic characteristics in view of individual customer demands. Traditionally the forends and stocks are made of hardwoods like walnut and beech.

The work of engraver certainly is the brightest and most attractive part of gun appearance, but not the sole purpose. The bad engraving can spoil a good gun, but the bad gun will be made never better with a fine engraving. A good gun is a harmonious combination of perfect design, fitter craftsmanship and ergonomic stock. Figuratively speaking, the mechanics of a gun is its heart, stock - its soul and engraving provides its individual and unique appearance.

The highly artistic guns are made in small batches or as individual copies.

To honour the 250 anniversary of Izhevsk city the enterprise has manufactured an unique shotgun, dedicated to count P.I. Shuvalov, who played an important role in formation and development of the gunsmiths' city.



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The General, Chief artillery commander, P.I. Shuvalov has founded the ironworks, which were giving rise to city of Izhevsk. Bolt head of the shotgun reveals Shuvalov portrait in a decorative frame of oak and laurel leaves, symbolic architectural monuments of city as well as the State Emblem of Russian Federation, Coat of Arms of Izhevsk and emblem "250 years". The dummy side-plates bear multi-figure scenes that embody victories of Russian army in XVIII century wars and contribution of Ural craftsmen. Artistic decorations are performed in technique of deep-relief hand engraving with a use of colored enamels. Metal parts were subjected to glass-sand blasting then nickel-plated. The buttstock grip and forend reveal the hand-carved decorative checkering.

To commemorate the 65 Anniversary of the Great Victory 1945, IMZ' armourers have created an exclusive collection of shotguns.





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The collection embodies seven shotguns dedicated to seven Russian Cities-Heroes: Moscow, Leningrad (St. Petersburg), Stalingrad (Volgograd), Smolensk, Tula, Murmansk, Novorossiysk. Artistic finish of collection blends a style unity, supported by unity of engraving techniques (deep-relief engraving to show the battle scenes and symbolic architectural elements of the Cities-Heroes, gold inlay in combination with colored enamels to depict the Golden Star, the Order of Lenin and emblems of cities) and individuality of plotlines.

Above collection displays the first experience of Izhevsk gunsmiths in creating thematic memorial gun collections.

In-house IMZ guns with upgraded consumer properties are presented by such classes as "Prestige", "Deluxe", "Exclusive", "Collection". Belonging to any class is determined by level of artistic finish, quality of machining and assembly, quality of wood and shape of buttstock and forend.

The models class "Exclusive" and "Collection" are unique and inimitable due to their careful performance. We invite You to acquire such a shotgun and to become the proud owner of a second to none masterpiece.



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