

Deep Voice Gun

by Harald Wolf

The late 1920's and early thirties were difficult times all over the world. Even the farmers in southern Africa had a hard time getting through the depression years. Johan George Meyer, his ancestors settled at the Cape as early as the beginning of the 18th century, had his share as well. He left his farm in the Transvaal in charge of his "bywooner" - these were poor landless boers, who were allowed to live on the property - and went to hunt elephant for ivory in Portuguese Mozambique. Since his beloved 7 mm and 8mm Mauser rifles were not enough gun for this sort of hunting, he went to Groeneveld & Hicks, the best gunshot of Pretoria in those days, to acquire a proper elephant rifle. A German made bolt action rifle by Otto Bock, gun & rifle maker to his Imperial Highness, Emperor Wilhelm II. made it. It was a heavily built massive rifle based on the reliable Mauser 98 action, with four rounds in magazine and along and fairly heavy octagon to round barrel. The ammo by RWS came in blue boxes of ten rounds and was considerably cheaper than British ammo.



Johan Meyer's 11.2 x 72 Schüler is still a sound elephant rifle after almost eighty years of service.

August Schüler, Gewehrfabrik, Suhl.



Halbschattbüchse Mod. 34.



Büchsen für Großwild und Dickhäuter von enormer Wirkung.

Johan's choice was a 11.2 x 72 Schüler, a German cartridge as powerful as the highly touted .416 Rigby; the latter would have cost him far more money. He was not going to hunt Mozambique for pleasure, no - he had to make a living on elephant hunting. Every cent needlessly spent on expensive ammo had to be avoided like the plague. Johan shot many elephant in those years. After World War II Johan sold his Transvaal farm to develop a huge place called Eaglemont in the Rhodesian Lowveld, by then wild and undeveloped Crown Land full of elephant, buffalo and other dangerous game. His trusty old 11.2 Schüler was his tool to clear the bush and pave the way for cattle ranching. To his grief, his son Jannie wasn't much of a rancher by heart. He was a hunter through and through and used his dad's 11.2 to crop elephant and buffalo on Lowveld ranches as well as to back up safari clients until the early eighties, when all the old pre-war RWS ammo was burnt.

Although the German Kaiser entered the imperial race for tropical lands rather late, he secured vast areas such as the Cameroons and Tanganika D.O.A. (German East Africa), which were some of the best game areas of the black continent. The standard issue gun of the black Askari soldiers of the German "Schutztruppe" (colonial force) was the antiquated black powder M 71 caliber .443 Mauser. Although ballistically vastly inferior to the small bore nitro military calibers of that time, the large diameter .443 lead bullet was quite popular. After resigning from service many of the German "Schutztruppen" officers and corporals settled in the colonies as farmers, prospectors and hunters. They all loved their new model 98 service rifles, but required a larger, more powerful caliber than the 8 mm service issue. To meet this demand, Richard Schüler, owner of the August Schüler gun factory of Suhl/Germany, developed a powerful nitro version of the old .443 Mauser termed 11.2 x 60 Schüler. The cartridge fired a 332 gram solid or soft at 2,230 ft/s driven by a charge of 62 grams of flake powder. The cartridge, which was patented in 1904, had a very unusual feature in form of the first rebated rim seen on rimless cartridges. The rim had the same diameter as the much smaller 8 mm Mauser case to utilize the military type stripper clips for fast reloading. The cartridge was in fact not very successful, as African hunters didn't care too much about stripper clips. The 11.2 x 60 Schüler never gained a good reputation because of the too-light-for-caliber bullet, which didn't penetrate properly on thick skinned game. However, two years later, he brought out his much advanced 11.2 x 72. Although he still stuck to the rebated rim design, the new round had a much larger case capacity, holding up to 85 grams of flake powder and fired a heavier 400 gram bullet. With a muzzle energy of almost 5,300 ft/lbs. Schüler's new model was quite a powerhouse. Most people keen on cartridge development history always thought that Schüler's 11.2 x 72 was the German answer to British cartridges such as the .404 Jeffery, .425 Westley Richards or the all time popular .416

16

August Schüler, Gewehrfabrik, Suhl.

Mauser-Repetier-Pirschbüchsen Mod. 98. Größte Leistungsfähigkeit!



11.2 x 60 Schüler

11.2 x 72 Schüler

11.2 x 60 Schüler

11.2 x 72 Schüler

11.2 x 60 Schüler

11.2 x 72 Schüler

11.2 x 60 Schüler

11.2 x 72 Schüler

11.2 x 60 Schüler

11.2 x 72 Schüler

11.2 x 60 Schüler

11.2 x 72 Schüler

11.2 x 60 Schüler

11.2 x 72 Schüler

11.2 x 60 Schüler

11.2 x 72 Schüler

11.2 x 60 Schüler

11.2 x 72 Schüler

11.2 x 60 Schüler

11.2 x 72 Schüler

11.2 x 60 Schüler

11.2 x 72 Schüler

11.2 x 60 Schüler

11.2 x 72 Schüler

11.2 x 60 Schüler

11.2 x 72 Schüler

11.2 x 60 Schüler

11.2 x 72 Schüler

11.2 x 60 Schüler

11.2 x 72 Schüler

11.2 x 60 Schüler

11.2 x 72 Schüler

11.2 x 60 Schüler

11.2 x 72 Schüler

11.2 x 60 Schüler

11.2 x 72 Schüler

11.2 x 60 Schüler

11.2 x 72 Schüler

11.2 x 60 Schüler

11.2 x 72 Schüler

11.2 x 60 Schüler

11.2 x 72 Schüler

Jede Lieferung eine Referenz

Vorzüglich im Schuss

Jede Garantie.

Stets vorrätig am Lager mit und ohne Fernsch.

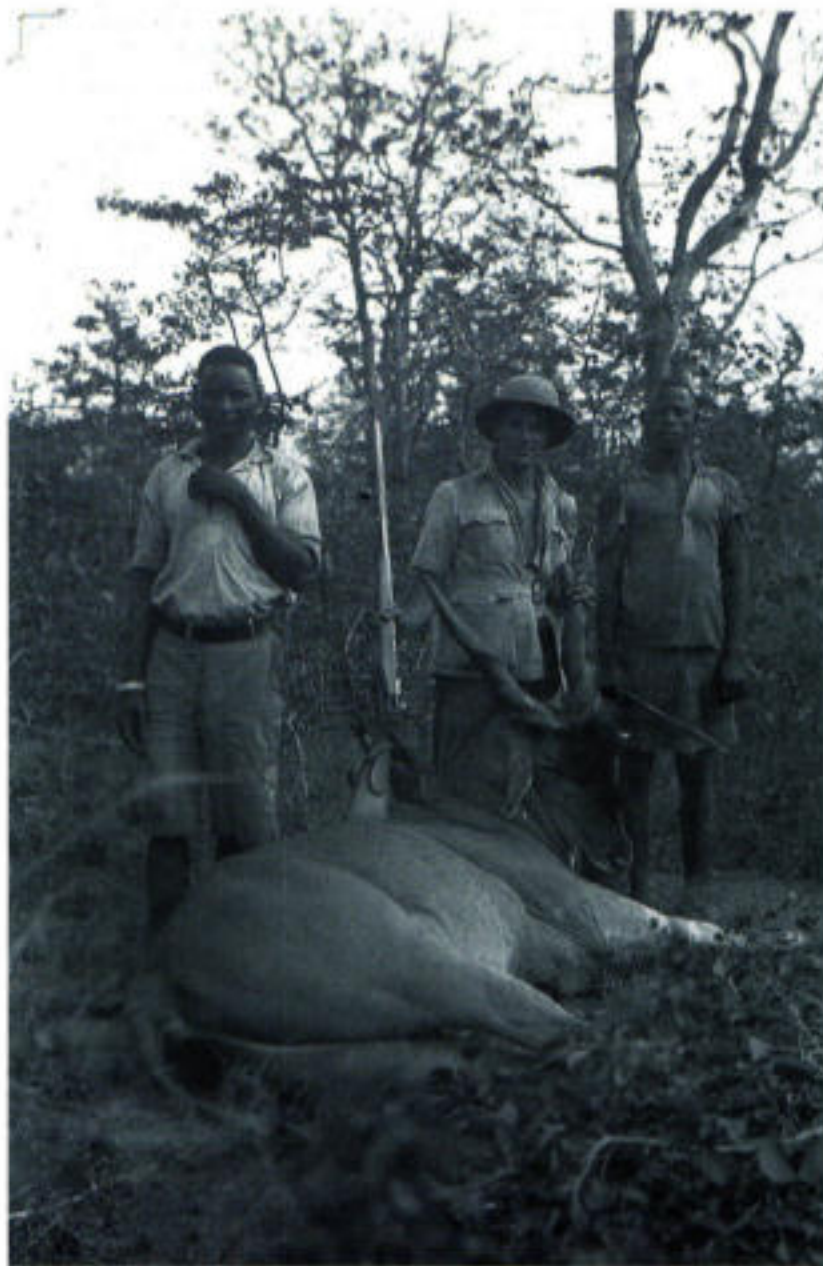
Uebersaus handliche Pirschbüch in vollkommenster Ausführung mit tadelloser Schussleistung.

Original-Mauserpatente. Beste Material v. beste Arbeit

Kaliber 6,5 bis 11,2 mm.




11.2 x 60 Schüler of 1904 (above) and 11.2 x 72 new Model of 1906 with larger case and greatly advanced ballistics (below).



Johan G. Meyer used his 11.2 x 72 as a general all round big game rifle also for hunting large plains game like this Livingstone eland.


Rigby. Today we know this is wrong, as Schüler's 11.2 x 72 was on the market first, all the English designs of similar powerful bolt action cartridges arrived on the scene later.

It seems that the first batches of 11.2 x 72 ammo were still loaded with the light bullet of its forerunner, the 11.2 x 60. However, I never came across one of those rounds. All factory ammo I examined had the heavy 400 gram slug. Strange enough, all 11.2 x 72 rifles were approved for the light bullets. (it might be interesting to note that H & H's cal. .500/.450 Nitro doubles were also all approved and regulated for a light 365 gram bullet but delivered with 480 gram ammo) If you scale old advertising illustrations of 11.2 x 72 cartridges,




LOTHAR WALTHER


Barrel Insert



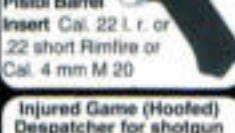
Revolver Barrel Insert
Cal. 22 L. r. Rimfire or
Cal. 4 mm M 20




Despatcher for the Smaller Predators for Shotgun
12, 16, 20 and Rev. 30 spec.
357 Mag. to 22 Lr. 35 ACP




Rifle Barrel Insert Cal. 22 Lr. Rimfire
in the calibre: 9.3x14 R
7x57 u. 57 R 270 Weh.
7x64 u. 65 R 308 Weh.
7.5x55 Swiss 30-06
7 mm Rem. Mag. 300 Win. Mag
8x57 S & S 357 H&M Mag.
8x58 S 458 Win.



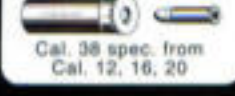
Pistol Barrel Insert Cal. 22 L. r. or
22 short Rimfire or
Cal. 4 mm M 20




Adapters for Rifles fires 22 Lr.
22 WMR, 22 Hor., 32 ACP,
30 Carb., 32 S&W long, 45 Colt



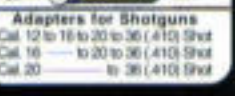
Rifle barrel Insert Cal. 4 mm M 20
Shotgun Practice Barrel Cal. 4 mm M 20



Injured Game (Hoofed) Despatcher for shotgun
Cal. 38 spec. from
Cal. 12, 16, 20



Adapters for Shotguns
Cal. 12 to 16 to 20 to 36 (410) Shot
Cal. 16 to 20 to 36 (410) Shot
Cal. 20 to 36 (410) Shot



Snap cap Buffer Cartridge to protect the
barrel in shotgun, Rifle, Pistol, Rev.

LOTHAR WALTHER
PO Box 1125
D 89551 Königsbrunn

Phone ++49 (0) 7328 96300 Fax ... 5066
Email: info@lothar-walther.de
<http://www.lothar-walther.de>



The sectioned 11.2 x 72 clearly shows how deep the bullet was seated, eliminating a considerable amount of powder space. If loaded to the same overall length like the .404 Jeffery, the 11.2 x 72 Schüler would deliver vastly superior ballistics.

it seems that the total length of the complete round has been similar to the .404 Jeffery, which is a trifle under 89 mm (3.5"). However, all original factory ammo I have seen so far, had extremely deeply seated bullets, shortening the total cartridge length to less than 84 mm (roughly .30-06 length), thus fitting into standard length magazine boxes. The above photo of the sectioned shell clearly shows how deep the bullet was seated, occupying a lot of powder space. The ballistic capability of the cartridge was obviously sacrificed for a more convenient overall length. Maybe they did not want any more power and consequently higher recoil than these factory ammo was capable of, or maybe the cartridge design of 1906 was soon overtaken by the

development of advanced, more progressive high energy propellants. The German flake powders of the 1920's and thirties were certainly much superior to the British Cordite and did not require excessively large cases. Otherwise, the whole case design of the 11.2 x 72 with its large powder chamber and comparatively short neck, makes it still a modern, advanced design even a hundred years after its introduction. To me there is no doubt that this cartridge was originally designed for a total length of 89 mm (3.5"). The short version, as produced, made the conversion of original Mauser military issue actions much cheaper though. Factory loaded ammo, first by GECADO (Dornheim) and later by RWS, was available with three different bullets of 400 grams with cupro-nickel plated mild steel envelopes: a normal soft point, a full metal jacket and a hollow point soft nose. The Austrian/Hungarian monarchy and later the Austrian republic had a powder monopoly held by a government agency, so any import of foreign ammo was impossible. Since the 11.2 x 72 Schüler was quickly gaining a great following, surprisingly enough also among Hungarian aristocrats who used it on wild boar, red stag and brown bear extensively, the ammo was also manufactured in Austria as 11.2 x 71 Rapid. The brass was made by Roth of Bratislava. The famous gun dealer and rifle maker Peterlongo alias Marholdt of Innsbruck was very actively promoting the cartridge in Austria, obviously trading lots of Suhl made rifles. Although many of 11.2 x 72 rifles were sold and exported between the great wars, ammo manufacture was unfortunately not commenced in Germany or Austria after WW II.

The basic diameter of the case is 1/10 of a mm (.004") smaller than the .404 Jeffery. Given the normal tolerances of chamber and case dimensions, it is usually possible to resize and fireform .404 brass to fit. The effort to make a few shells is considerable though, as you also have to turn down the bottom of the shell on a lathe to create the rebated rim as well. Bruce Bertram of Australia furnishes 11.2 x 72 Schüler brass, however, his cases have the same too large base diameter which might not fit into a tight chamber. Bullets are difficult to come by. I managed to talk Geoff McDonald of Woodleigh gunsmithing into making soft points some time ago and

very recently into some of his excellent FMJs as well. A few years ago I managed to get hold of some pre-war RWS projectiles, but these are all spent by now. To work up loads, one could start carefully with loading data of the .404 Jeffery.

Due to the popularity of the 11.2 x 72 during the 1930's and twenties, several other continental gun makers besides the inven-

TIROLER WAFFENFABRIK, Johann Peterlongo, Innsbruck

C.W.C. Jong of Sumatra, Dutch East India wrote: "I have the pleasure to let you know how pleased I am with big game rifle 11.2 x 72. It's the ideal rifle for tropical jungle hunting. The reliability on dangerous game almost insures hunting success. I have shot different game with it including elephant, buffalo and tiger - usually one-shot kills."

John C. Straight, B.E.A. wrote: "In every aspect I am very satisfied with the 11.2 rifle you sent me. It served me very well indeed while hunting elephant and all sorts of large carnivores. Thank you very much."

Charles Koolmann of Singapore wrote: "I had a great success shooting elephant, rhino and banteng with your 11.2 rifle. Its the best big game rifle available today."

C.W.E. Johns, London wrote: "Returned from my safari I want to express my appreciation of the 11.2 rifle. It performed perfectly on all type of game. The flat trajectory makes long shots possible while the enormous knock-down power is ideal for hunting elephant, rhino and cape buffalo. The much more expensive English made .404 would not match your rifle. My companion who used a British .404 had several failures."

Captain F. von Wangenheim, Fort Moshi, D.O.A. wrote: "The new 11.2 Mauser rifle arrived here in November and truly deserves my compliments. I already shot several hippo, buffalo and elephant. The scope proved to be a great advantage as well."



G. Batti von Pezzeri of Khartoum, Sudan wrote: "I just returned from my expedition to Uganda and the Congo, where I had the chance to take the rifle to the test. I shot four charging elephant with four rounds. I was very surprised and delighted indeed."

Judge Smets of Niagara, Uele District, Belgian Congo wrote: "I have the pleasure to confirm the receipt of the Mauser rifle cal. 11.2 x 72 by June 20th, 1910. After hunting big game with it here in the Congo, I can say that it absolutely meets with my expectations. The precision and penetration is remarkable. Its the ideal rifle for open and flat country like we have in the Uele district because its low trajectory allows long shots without correct estimation of the true distance, which is so necessary with other large bore calibers. Please feel free to reproduce this letter."



Mr. Strobel farmer of Bare, Cameroon wrote: "I want to express my utmost satisfaction with the performance of the 11.2 x 72 ammunition. I killed an elephant instantly with a heart shot and another one collapsed with a brain shot."

Karl Zimmermann, D.O.A. wrote: "Concerning the new 11.2 x 72 Mauser rifle, I have to admit that it surpassed my wildest expectations. I have used it exclusively for a whole year now and, according to my experience, may state that there no better rifle available on the market. The performance of the heavy bullet out rivals by far all the highly touted small bores. Your 11.2 with a charge of 85 grams of smokeless powder is indeed the rifle the African hunter needs to hunt successfully, particularly so if he is after thick-skinned game."

Testimonials translated from a 1914 Peterlongo catalog.



Price, \$75.00 — Extras, Page 23

tor built up rifles so chambered. Johan Meyer's gun had the name of Otto Bock, the most famous gun dealer based in Berlin during the imperial era, engraved as maker on the integral rib of the barrel. Several 11.2's went to the Belgian Congo colony and were delivered by Jansen of Brussels, another famous gun dealer of its time. We mentioned the Schüler - Jansen cooperation already in Hatari Times #1 on behalf of the .500 Schüler/Jeffery. While the German rifles had quite rather Teutonic stock features such as the distinctive side panels and German cheek pieces (see Meyer's rifle), the Jansen rifles had a more convenient and simple style, except for a small schnabel forend tip (see picture at the end of the article), though even the Jansen rifles still have much more massive stocks than British made .404s, the latter having almost fragile slimline stocks. Considering the metalwork, proof marks and serial numbers, I firmly believe that all these rifles were made by August Schüler for the gun trade without reading his name on, which was common practice in those days. Typical for the Schüler rifles is a brass made magazine extension screwed to the bottom of the receiver. Schüler never bothered to make a properly fitting new magazine box from scrap, but rather altered the standard issue Mauser box to accommodate a fourth round. The bottom plate of the box could be opened by pushing a button and then releasing the whole lid. All of these Schüler rifles featured German double set triggers, which was most ridiculous for dangerous game shooting. No wonder that many sportsmen replaced it by a normal double pull trigger in the field. The heavy octagon to round barrels with integral full length rib were usually 68 cm (26.8") long. These rifles tip the scales a trifle under 10 lbs. The Mauser Werke Oberndorf never built 11.2 rifles, clearly favoring their own 10,75 x 68 Mauser or alternatively the .404 Jeffery. The only other renown German gun factory which evidently build some 11.2 x 72 rifles was Heinrich Krieghoff. We tried to get some photos of one, but they unfortunately did not turn out well. Anyway, such a rifle is illustrated in the Mauser rifle book by my friend Jon Speed. The



Johan Meyer hunting elephant with his 11,2 x 72 in Mozambique during the early 30s.



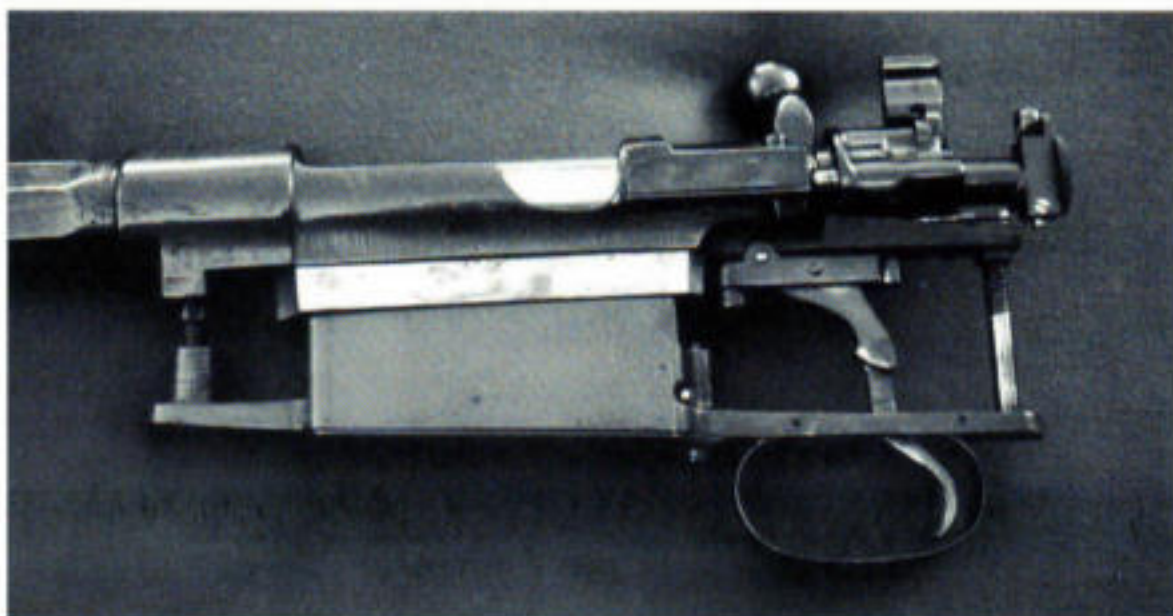
Johan's rifle was in constant use until the early eighties when all pre-war RWS ammo was finally shot and no replacement found on hand.

Original ballistics of the RWS load dated 1940

bullet weight 26 Gramms (400 gr)

chamber pressure 3,200 Bars (46,411 psi)

Velocity in m/s					Energy in Joules					Trajectory in cm				
V ₀	V ₁₀₀	V ₁₅₀	V ₂₀₀	V ₃₀₀	E ₀	E ₁₀₀	E ₁₅₀	E ₂₀₀	E ₃₀₀	50 m	100 m	150 m	200 m	300 m
743	655	615	577	507	7180	5582	4915	4326	3345	- 1,7	+ 3,8	0	- 10,3	- 54



Unusual, but typical for original Schöler rifles is the brass extension screwed to the bottom of the receiver. Schöler utilized cheap army issue Mauser actions. The impractical German double set trigger was replaced many years ago. The Tornado-Rigby peep sight was added just recently.



Krieghoff rifles seem to differ from the original Schölers quite considerably.

John Pondoro Taylor swears against the 11.2 Schöler rather heavily in his books. Alas, I cannot help feeling that old Pondoro, due to lack of first hand experiences with the cartridge, confused the powerful 11.2 x 72 with the much inferior short 11.2 x 60. In fact, seasoned elephant hunters such as Johan Meyer, and later on his son Jannie, never complained about the performance of the cartridge, as did many other hunters particularly of the Congo, Mozambique and south-east Asia, who were full of praise for it. Tony Sanchez started his remarkable career as an elephant hunter with an 11. 2 x 72 Schöler, borrowed to him by the late Otto Krohnert, the great elephant hunter of the rain forest of Spanish Guinea. Admittedly, Tony had some ignition problems due to the fact that Krohnert's ammo had been stored in a very humid climate for a long time. One thing, however, is for sure: The German FMJs, as well as the Kynoch FMJs of those days were far inferior to the Hornady or Woodleigh FMJs as we know them today. The old stuff had much weaker jackets at the bullet base, thus having the tendency to fishtail and sometimes even badly disintegrate on hitting tough bones. This mishap occasionally accrued with all calibers in those days, sometimes even with the famous .416 Rigby.

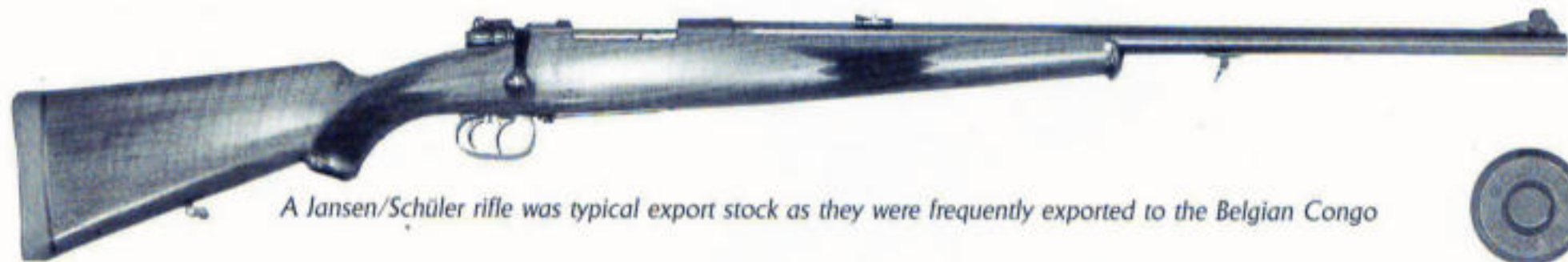
Taking down some fresh ammo, based on Bertram brass and Woodleigh bullets, to Zimbabwe, I frequently used to borrow the old rifle of Johan's son Jannie and have been very fond of it. My trackers called it the deep voice gun because of the big boom it makes.



Is there any room for a revival of the "deep voice 11.2 x 72 Schüler" against the overwhelming competition by the charismatic .416 Rigby, the modern belted .416 Remington and the classic .404 Jeffery? Following the original specifications, I have to admit there isn't. However, the advanced, modern case design, charged with modern powders and topped with a slightly heavier 28 grams (432 gr) bullet and loaded to a total length of 89 mm (3.5"), in combination with one of those wonderful Mauser magnum actions available again, would make an outstanding big game rifle, filling the gap between the various .416s and the .450 or .460 rimless calibers. Such a round wouldn't fall significantly short of .500 Nitro Express in energy, while sporting the flat trajectory of the .416s. Anyway, I am working on it and will share my field experiences with you in another issue of Hatari Times.



All photos © Harald Wolf / Hatari Verlag



A Jansen/Schüler rifle was typical export stock as they were frequently exported to the Belgian Congo

