Introduction

Lately there has been much discussion surrounding what constitutes an authentic Heuer Bundeswehr-specific chronograph. This is an effort to document the many dial variations and gather, in a single place, enough information to make an informed assessment of this highly regarded timepiece.

To start, I solicited members of the Military Watch Resource (MWR) to provide scans of their Heuer Bundeswehr chronographs. Then I ran a Google search for "heuer bundeswehr chron*" to locate any more examples on the web on personal homepages or dealer websites. All told, over 30 examples were found. Please note that this project only addresses the dial variations at this time. There is yet another set of questions around the various markings found on the case and caseback.

If you'd like a self-contained version of this project, click here to download this page in PDF format.

Findings
There are 5 general configurations of Heuer-branded dials:

- the "classic 3H/T" - a red 3H-symbol appears just below the dial center, and a tiny "T" appears just above "6".
- the "3H-only" - a red 3H-symbol appears just below the center.
- the "T-only" - a tiny "T" appears just above "6".
- the "clean" - no markings beyond the "Heuer" logo.
- the "sternzeit" - STERNZEIT REGULIERT markings just below the dial center.

There are 2 general configurations of Sinn-branded dials:

- the "3H-only" - a red 3H-symbol appears just below the center.
- the "clean" - no markings beyond the "Heuer" logo.

To add to the confusion...there are 4 variations of the "3H" symbol:

- the "standard" 3H.
- the "big-letter" 3H - circle is same size as standard, but the letters are larger and fill the circle more completely.
- the "small-letter" 3H - circle is same size as standard, but the letters are smaller and there is a small dot in the center.
- the "small-circle" 3H - the circle is noticeably smaller.

It doesn't stop there...there are 3 variations of the manufacturer logo:

- the "standard" Heuer logo - fits inside :58 and :02.
- the "big" Heuer logo - fits even with :58 and :02.
- the Sinn logo.

Finally...there are 2 variations of the font used for the hour-markers:

- the "standard" font - most noticeable because none of the numbers are cut-off.
- the "cut-off" font - the 10:00, 8:00, and 2:00 are cut-off by the subdials.

Dial Comparison

Here are cropped images of each unique style, allowing you to easily scan the various styles to find one that interests you. In addition, each image has been (as much as feasible) given the same relative dimensions to make meaningful comparisons relatively easy. Click on a style that interests you to learn more specifics.

These examples have the "standard" Heuer logo.

These examples have the "big" Heuer logo.
First, let me say that I believe all of these Heuer/Sinn Bundeswehr chronographs to be authentic: all have the proper movement, all have the proper case, all have the proper bezel, all have the proper crystal...etc. They only have subtle differences in their dials, apparently based on when, and by whom, they were produced or assembled.

The questions for the enthusiast become:

- do I want a watch that is likely to have been issued in the '60s or '70s? *some folks consider these watches the only “authentic” Bundeswehr chronographs.*
- or am I happy to have the exact same watch that may have been updated with new, slightly different, parts in the 1990s? *a “real” Bundeswehr chronograph, just updated with newer parts and possibly less accumulated wear & tear.*

That said, it is arguable that the best indicators for whether a watch is from the '60s, and most true to the Bundeswehr specification, are:

- the presence of the standard sized Heuer logo
- either a standard 3H-symbol, or a T-symbol, or both
- the presence of the standard sized font

*However, a few have been seen with unusual variations in the style of the 3H-symbol. Perhaps Heuer changed the 3H printing screens at some point in production? Perhaps these 3H-symbols were added by the unscrupulous?*

These features seem to be associated with the work Sinn did in providing Bundeswehr-spec watches.
the presence of the large Heuer logo, or a Sinn logo

There was no consistency in the style of 3H-symbol - 3 styles were found. Perhaps Sinn used a number of different 3H printing screens in production? Perhaps these 3H-symbols were added by the unscrupulous? In addition, the absence of the T-symbol was not distinct to these later watches, since several early examples were found without the T-symbol.

In summary, some dials feature markings that are the most true to the original Bundeswehr spec, while others may reflect changes to the spec over time and should still be considered authentic, yet others may reflect attempts by the unscrupulous to add additional markings to otherwise proper dials.

If anyone owns or knows of yet another dial variation, please forward me an in-focus, close-up scan of the dial. In addition, if anyone is in possession of any factual data around the timeline and evolution of the Bundeswehr specification and the watches produced to meet that specification, please forward that information to me for inclusion in this living document.

Disclaimer

These images have been borrowed without permission from the MWR and various sites that have been linked from posts on the MWR and discovered via web-searches. Since this effort is not for fiduciary gain, I'm comfortable using these images without permission. If you see a scan of your watch and would not like it to be part of this project, please contact me directly and I'll remove it. However, I encourage everyone to participate as this project is intended for the edification of the watch community as a whole.

This represents an example of the "classic" Heuer Bundeswehr chronograph:

- standard Heuer logo
- classic 3H-symbol
- T-symbol
- regular font
- 8 examples found

Back to “Dial Comparison”
Yet another variation on the Heuer Bundeswehr chronograph:

- standard Heuer logo
- no 3H-symbol
- T-Symbol
- regular font
- 6 examples found

Back to "Dial Comparison"

This is the most rare of Heuer Bundeswehr chronograph - the STERNZEIT REGULIERT:

- standard Heuer logo
- no 3H-symbol
- T-Symbol
- regular font
- special STERNZEIT REGULIERT markings
- 1 example found

Back to "Dial Comparison"
This represents a slightly different example of the Heuer Bundeswehr chronograph:

- standard Heuer logo
- classic 3H-symbol
- no T-symbol
- regular font
- 2 examples found

Back to "Dial Comparison"

Yet another variation on the Heuer Bundeswehr chronograph:

- standard Heuer logo
- big-letter 3H-symbol
- T-Symbol
- regular font
- 3 examples found

Back to "Dial Comparison"
Still another variation on the Heuer Bundeswehr chronograph:

- standard Heuer logo
- big-letter 3H-symbol crammed into a smaller circle
- cut-off font
- 2 examples found

Back to "Dial Comparison"
This is a copy of an advertisement from the early 1990s offering overhauled/refurbished Heuer Bundeswehr chronographs - just contact Sinn! With this, we're introducing 2 key new dial variations:

- big Heuer logo
- clean (no 3H or T-symbols)
- cut-off font

Research project: Heuer Bundeswehr fly-back chronograph dial variations
http://brown-snout.com/horology/articles/heuer_bundeswehrChrono/
Here is an apparent example of a Sinn-refurbished Heuer Bundeswehr chronograph:

- big Heuer logo
- clean (no 3H or T-symbols)
- cut-off font
- 3 examples found

Back to "Dial Comparison"

Another apparent example, though slightly different, of a Sinn-refurbished Heuer Bundeswehr chronograph:

- big Heuer logo
- small circle 3H-symbol
- no T-symbol
- cut-off font
- 1 example found

Back to "Dial Comparison"
Another apparent example, yet another variation, of a Sinn-refurbished Heuer Bundeswehr chronograph. There are slight differences between the dial print of these 2 examples, with the 2nd one quite different from the dial print found on most other dials:

- big Heuer logo
- small letter 3H-symbol
- no T-symbol
- cut-off font
- 4 examples found

Back to "Dial Comparison"
Here we see our first example of a Sinn-branded Bundeswehr chronograph:

- Sinn logo
- big letter 3H-symbol
- no T-symbol
- cut-off font
- 2 examples found

Back to "Dial Comparison"

Another example of a Sinn-branded Bundeswehr chronograph:

- Sinn logo
- clean (no 3H or T-symbols)
- cut-off font
- 1 example found

Back to "Dial Comparison"

Here's a scan of the original Bundeswehr specification. In addition, here's a link to the servicing manual for the Heuer Bundeswehr chronograph (written
### Armbandchronograph 1550 SG

**Bundesrepublik Deutschland**

**Vorz.Nr.:** 6645-1E-146-3774
6645-12-146-6081 (Satz)

**Werk:** Massives Ankerwerk mit Additions-Stoppainrichtung Valjoux 230, 33mm Ø

**Hemmung:** S.A.

**Laufzeit:** > 36 Stunden

**Anzahl der Steine:** 17

**max. Gangabweichung:** ± 10 a/Tag

**max. Druck:** 3 bar

**Arbeitstemperaturbereich:** -18°C bis 50°C

**Einführungsjahr:** 1967

**Masse:** 60 g

**Hersteller:** Heuer-Leonidas S.A., Biel-Bienne, Schweiz

**Besonderheit:** Incabloc-Stoßsicherung, ununterbrochene Zugfeder, antimagnetisch, H3- Leuchtfarbe
While the Sternzeit Reguliert is impossibly rare, this is arguably the most rare of Heuer Bundeswehr chronographs: a unique prototype powered by the Caliber 12 automatic movement. This was submitted to the Bundeswehr for consideration, but never adopted. This amazing piece is owned by Gerd R. Lang, owner of Chronoswiss and formerly an engineer with Heuer.

This is the spiritual successor of the Heuer Bundeswehr chronograph: the Sinn 156 Mil. This is a thoroughly modern interpretation, featuring:

- a robust Lemania 5100 automatic movement
- virtually identical bezel, acrylic crystal, and case construction with a proper 4-screw caseback

Subsequent to introduction of the 156, Sinn made some compromises and went to a threaded caseback in place of the proper 4-screw design. Unfortunately, as of 2006 manufacture of the Lemania 5100 has ceased. Production of this piece is entirely dependent on existing stores of this movement - when those supplies are depleted,
the 156 will also disappear. This watch was also re-marketed by Bell & Ross as the M1.

This is Michael Kobold's effort in 2003 to tack onto the success of this storied timepiece: the Kobold 323 Pilot Chronograph. This watch is a Sinn 156 fitted with a Kobold-signed dial. Technical features are identical to the Sinn 156 and it even features a Sinn-signed crown! The supplies for this watch and movement are limited; Kobold's run of 323s was only 20 pieces.
This piece came to my attention in late 2005: the Sinn 155 Replica. Apparently this is specially produced in limited numbers for the Japanese market. It appears very true to the original, even featuring a hand-wound ETA7760 movement and proper 4-screw caseback. Obviously, the style of the hands is from Sinn's existing 103 flieger-style watches.
This piece came to my attention in late 2008: the second-generation Sinn 155 Replica. This was produced in limited numbers (300 pieces), possibly for the German market. Like the first-generation 155, this one captures the essence of the original; however, with critical departures in the sub-dials and the addition of a day/date display. Based on an ETA7750 movement, this necessitated the relocation of the sub-dials from 3-9 to 6-12 along with the replacement of the constant-seconds register with a 12-hour totalizer. The style of the hands is from Sinn's existing 103 flieger-style watches and is fitted with a threaded caseback.
It finally happened in 2006 - "Ray" the notorious creator of Chinese mil-watch reproductions found on eBay got around to trying his hand on the Heuer Bundeswehr chronograph. Actually, Ray stole the idea from a mil-watch enthusiast I know. Ray's effort is pretty good at capturing the essence of the original, and even includes a reproduction of the Venus 175 column-wheel movement. The main problem people have with this watch are the issue-markings on the back and the ambiguous/dishonest descriptions used on his auction listings.
Apparently, Breitling supplied a very similar sort of watch to the Italian military forces with the 817:

These 2 watches are examples of generally similar Heuer watches apparently produced for the Italian Air Force, albeit powered by a Valjoux 7750 movement. I cannot say for certain if they are legitimate, but they sure are interesting pieces:
This interesting variant came to light in 2008. The same Valjoux 230 powered Heuer was also issued to the Norwegian Air Force in the '70s. The dial was the same as the typical "small-t" variant without the "3H". The most interesting feature is the unique engravings on the caseback, as pictured.
Research project: Heuer Bundeswehr fly-back chronograph dial variations

http://brown-snout.com/horology/articles/heuer_bundeswehr_chrono/