= Type 26 revolver =

The Type 26 or Model 26 " hammerless " revolver (??????? , Nijuuroku @-@ nen @-@ shiki kenjuu) was the first modern revolver adopted by the Imperial Japanese Army . It was developed at the Koishikawa Arsenal and is named for its year of adoption in the Japanese dating system (the 26th year of the reign of the Meiji emperor , i.e. , 1893) . The revolver saw action in conflicts including the Russo @-@ Japanese War , World War I and World War II .

It is a conglomeration of design features from other revolvers made during the time period . The revolver has a design flaw that allows the cylinder to over @-@ rotate and align the wrong chamber . Five distinct phases of production have different markings depending on the time and individual Type 26 produced . The 9mm Japanese revolver ammunition used is unique to the weapon . The Type 26 has a double @-@ action only mechanism and is therefore difficult to aim accurately . The Type 26 was replaced by the Nambu pistol in the first half of the 20th century .

= = History = =

Known as the Meiji 26 Nen Ken Ju (meaning " Pistol , Pattern of the 26th year of the Meiji era ") , the Type 26 revolver was the first indigenous revolver adopted by the Japanese military . The Type 26 was produced to replace the aging Smith & Wesson New Model No. 3 and was officially adopted March 29 , 1894 . The design is widely believed to be a mixture of features taken from other revolvers . The lock design is similar to Galand designs , the hinged frame is similar to Smith & Wesson designs , and the hinged side plate covering the lock is similar to the Modèle 1892 revolver . The cartridge was loaded with black powder until 1900 when the cartridges began to be loaded with smokeless powder . The Type 26 is considered a remarkable leap in Japanese pistol development despite the international influence , with the matchlock being the most common domestic Japanese handgun 40 years earlier . Production stopped after 1923 when much of the Koishikawa Arsenal was destroyed in the 1923 Great Kant? earthquake , with assembly continuing until the exhaustion of stockpiled parts . Approximately 59 @,@ 000 Type 26 revolvers were produced and an additional 900 revolvers were made in pre @-@ production . Restoration and re @-@ issue of revolvers that had been removed from service because of damage or wear , was carried out on an as needed basis over a period of many years . The original Type 26s are missing the external markings of later produced revolvers and are identifiable by numbers stamped on internal parts . Type 26s were still being used in 1945 which , according to firearms expert and author Ian Hogg , is considered a testament to their original workmanship and a much more suitable combat weapon than later Japanese produced pistols .

= = Design = =

The Type 26 revolver is 231 mm (9 @.@ 09 in) in length and 130 mm (5 @.@ 12 in) tall , weighing 880 g (1 lb 15oz) unloaded . It has an octagonal barrel , with the foresight blade being embedded directly into the barrel . The rear sight is incorporated into the top of the frame . A hinged sideplate allows access to the mechanism for lubricating and servicing . The weapon was opened by lifting the top latch , after which the barrel was swung downward , activating the automatic ejector . The notch that allows access to the cylinder is at the top rear of the frame . The revolver is double @-@ action only because of the absence of a cocking spur , intended to avoid snagging on clothing and firing accidentally . The lock was self @-@ cocking and was slow to respond . The delay in response made accurate shooting virtually impossible . The cylinder contains a serious design flaw , with it only notching while the hammer is cocked . This allows the cylinder to revolve by being brushed against an object or the inertia from a sudden sideways motion . As the cylinder can move freely , an empty or already fired chamber can rotate into position instead of the next shot , a dangerous event for the user during combat . Later Type 26 Revolvers have grips with lateral serrations in place of an earlier knurled pattern as well as differences in external finish , depth , and look of die stamped markings . The bluing of the steel is excellent , even though the steel used is

soft compared to Western standards . The 9mm Japanese revolver ammunition used by the Type 26 is unique to the weapon . Both the Type 26 Revolver and the ammunition used was later replaced by semi @-@ automatic pistols such as the Nambu in the beginning of the 20th century .

= = Five production periods = =

Differences in markings and appearance across surviving Type 26 revolvers , has led to the categorization of production runs into five categories .

= = = Limited early production with no markings = = =

Early production Type 26s have no external markings . The revolvers have markings that indicate they were arsenal re @-@ worked and believed to have been produced in late 1893 or early 1894 before official adoption . It is possible that around 300 revolvers with no external marking were produced . No known examples of Type 26 revolvers have duplicate serial numbers .

= = = Limited early production = = =

A small number of revolvers are known to have the external arsenal symbol stamped but without the external serial number stamped on the frame . The revolvers are interspersed among revolvers with standard production markings for unknown reasons . This production range has examples reported to chamber .38 S & W ammunition but this could be because of later modification .

= = = Standard production = = =

All standard production Type 26s have checked pattern grip panels as well as original finished characteristics . Most standard production revolvers have a serial number that is between 1 @,@ 000 and 58 @,@ 900 . The standard production models suffered from extreme wear because of the long military service the revolvers served .

= = = Limited final production = = =

The final production revolvers were possibly produced after the Great Kant? earthquake and possibly only 325 of these revolvers were produced . Known examples have serial numbers ranging from 58 @,@ 903 and 59 @,@ 227 .

= = = Arsenal reworked = = =

Arsenal reworked Type 26s lack the bright charcoal blue finish or standard checked patterned grip panels . Serrated grip panels are common among reworked Type 26s and the marking of the Nagoya Arsenal indicate repairing of the Type 26 past its production at the Koshikawa Arsenal . Two existing arsenal reworked Type 26s show stampings of Siamese numerals on the front grips indicating official procurement by the Thai government . Two additional reworked Type 26s have a five @-@ pointed star stamped on the side plate of the revolver indicating Indonesian service after World War II .

= = Accessories = =

= = = Holster = = =

The Type 26 revolver was issued with a clamshell holster similar to the French Modèle 1892 revolver . The earliest Type 26 holsters were black , and the cotton lanyards issued with them were

a dark blue color known in Japan as kon . A leather pocket for the cleaning rod was provided , sewn onto the forward edge of the holster body . Most examples of holsters are stamped on the inside of the clamshell flap with the maker 's identification and arsenal inspection markings with the year of manufacture . Very early holsters , issued in the late 1890s and early 1900s , were of a slightly different size and shape and without a pocket for the cleaning rod . A few holsters developed in 1943 have been noted to be all black lacquered hardware , missing the brass and galvanized steel fittings . Holsters produced towards the end of World War II have a last ditch fabric similar to late production Type 94 Nambu pistol holsters , with no shoulder straps or pouches for cleaning rods and ammunition .

= = = Grenade launcher = = =

The Type 90 tear gas grenade launcher was developed to be fired with the Type 26 revolver . Gas grenades could be fired by a special 9x22 mm cartridge in place of the regular ball ammunition .