

Slide rule Rietz Universum

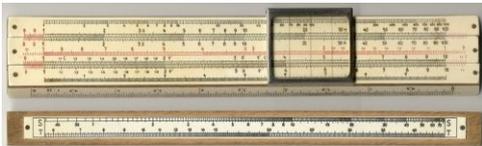
1 Slide rule Rietz Universum

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It is not uncommon to find a Rietz slide rule of very simple design in collections and also on Ebay, which is mostly called HH Universum. At first, the scale length of estimated 20 cm is striking, but this can also be found on older Nestler models. However, when measuring the scale, the value is 18.9 cm. An explanation for this unusual scale length could not be found so far.



Based on several models from my collection and from Klaus Przada's, this slide rule can be described as follows:

Body made of solid beech wood, in the bottom a narrow slot, without or with simple spring elements.

Body covered with celluloid strips, these are fixed with screws of 2mm diameter or with pins. The strips on the front and rear edges are partially missing.

Scales in the usual Rietz arrangement, on the back of the tongue only S and T.

CI scale and extensions are red.

Upper edge 0 - 20 cm, on one specimen up to 22 cm.

Lower edge 1:25, "upside down".

Some slide rules have a finer scale, probably they were made later.

3-line cursor made of celluloid, glass or plexiglass in a frame of brass, aluminum or nickel-plated metal. The celluloid is often yellow colored, probably due to age.

Back with glued on paper table with values from mathematics, civil engineering, electrical and mechanical engineering.

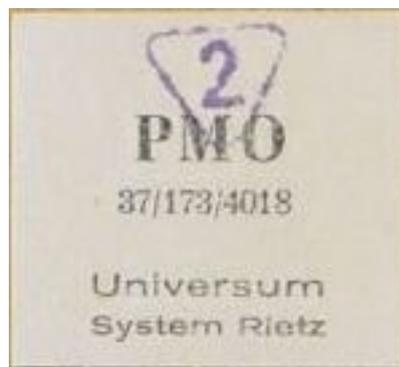
Plug-in case with loop made of fabric, coated with grained soft plastic, similar to some REISS slide rules. Next to it there is a dark green pasted wooden case with hinged lid, lined with black felt. This package also includes an instruction manual on a folded sheet 203 x 172 mm.



In the Klaus Przadka collection there is also a copy in a dark red cardboard slipcase with silver imprint "HH". The instruction manual for this is identical except for small deviations in paper size and thickness and a printing error in the last line (up to 15° instead of up to 45°).



The manufacturer's details found were: mostly HH, more rarely PMO, on one specimen an only partially preserved logo, possibly pmo. If you take a closer look at the HH logo, you can see a ruler and two curve rulers above the letters, and a slide rule and a protractor below them. This obviously symbolizes the production program of this manufacturer.



Where and when were these slide rules made?

On the picture with the PMO logo, you can see a subsequently stamped triangle with rounded edges, inside a 2. If you ignore the fact that the 2 is upside down, this is unmistakably the quality mark of the GDR. On another specimen, this mark is stamped with a 1 in correct orientation. This

mark was introduced in the early 1950s in grades S, 1 and 2: Special quality, 1st and 2nd quality respectively.

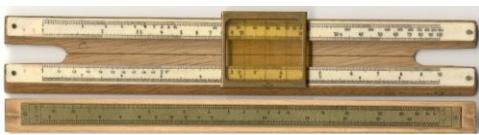
Under the logo PMO you can see the sequence of digits
37/173/4018

This was the first central order number of the GDR, known from Meissner and REISS slide rules. Later numbers followed the pattern 1731 xx.

Now we know that this is a GDR product from the 1950s. At the same time, however, it is also clear by comparison with the slide rules in question that they are neither from REISS nor from Meissner.

Another note can be found in the footer of the user manual. There it neatly states:
Hoh. Ndf. 8432. Ndb. 20641.

Now, before all the possible German place names could be checked, I received a slide rule from Peter Holland that brought clarity.



This unfortunately not very well preserved slide rule has the identical scale image on the front side. However, some features indicate that it must be an older specimen.

- The body is somewhat flatter and has no beveled edges, but is profiled similar to a trim.
- The cm and 1:25 scales are missing.
- The scaling is more unclean than on the other specimens.
- The scales on the back of the slide are applied to a brass strip.
- On the back, there is the same constant table as on all other rods. To the left of it are the following indications:

Präzisionswerk Hohen Neuendorf A.A. Höhler
Hohen Neuendorf bei Berlin
Annemariestraße 27.

The logo "HH" is thus formed from "Höhler" and "Hohen Neuendorf".

On the very well designed homepage of Hohen Neuendorf, a small community on the northern edge of Berlin, the town archive was quickly found. Unfortunately, there were no documents here, but a reference to the local historical society. All following information I owe to Dr. Dietrich Rätzer and Franz Noerling. Further valuable information was provided by Mr. Jürgen Caspereit from Berlin. I would like to thank all of them for their help.

Unfortunately, no contemporary witnesses could be identified who remember this manufacturer. Annemariestraße is located in a neighborhood that has been developed since about 1910, partly with upscale housing stock. In the post-war period, however, there have also been isolated commercial enterprises there. The house number 27 does not exist today. Neighbors have no memory of a manufacturing plant in this street.

In an unpublished "Chronicle of the Municipality of Hohen Neuendorf from the Beginnings to 1995", the reporting of the district on the production of the enterprises for 1948/1st half of 1949 is discussed. After a remark about the incomplete and inaccurate data, the following entry is found:

A. A. Höhler, produces slide rules, founded after 1945, 2 male workers

In addition to this confirmation of the existence of the slide rule manufacturer Höhler after 1945, however, there are three other interesting entries that relate to the period before that:

Schlecht & Roth, Mechanical Workshop, Oranienburger Str. 74

Ewald Schlecht 1944, parts for slide rules, jigs and lighters

Ewald Schlecht 1945, 3000 slide rules produced, 3 employees

It can probably be assumed that these were the forerunners of the Höhler Hohen Neuendorf company.

The question remains unanswered, until when the production ran. From the fact that most of the known specimens do not yet bear the GDR quality mark, the end can be assumed for the period from the beginning to the middle, at the latest the end of the 1950s.

So far, only the Rietz Universe has been reported. However, there is also a rod that bears the identical scale image on the front, but applied to a matte metal coating instead of celluloid. The staff body is the same as the old version without beveled edges. The scales cm and 1:25 are on the back. However, this is designed differently and bears the company name "AIG Berlin".



Also to this designation as well as to the logo "PMO" so far no references could be found.

Unfortunately, the research remained rather unsatisfactory overall. However, with Höhler, another German slide rule manufacturer could be identified who produced a narrowly defined program in not very high quantities for a short period of time. Further additions and corrections will be gladly received. We would like to thank Klaus Przadka for his assistance.

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