

## Type 20 chronograph 1954

### Auricoste

The Auricoste Type 20 is particularly interesting as it is the only one to use a movement from Lémania. Interestingly, the calibre used, the Lémania 2040 (15TL base), is the only Lémania wrist chronograph to have a fly-back function, and, as far as we know, Auricoste is the only maker to have used this movement, something which increases the attraction of this model even more. Moreover

it is rare, with only 2000 units produced. As opposed to the Breguet Type 20s, there is only one version of the Auricoste, only the material used for making the case varies. They are generally in chrome-plated brass, much more rarely in steel or aluminium. Finding a nice example is therefore not made any easier because of the fragility of the chrome case and snap back. So, if possible, favour

the rare examples in steel or aluminium. Watch out, the back of the case is always in steel, whatever the material used for the case band.

### Dodane

With more than 5000 units produced and marketed under various names such as Dodane, Airain, Chronofixe etc, the 'Dodane' Type 20s and 21s are the most widespread and, with their chunky lines, also the least elegant. Almost always in steel and fitted with a screw back they are, however, well made and have generally withstood the tests of time. Almost all of the Dodanes are fitted with the Valjoux 222, and a few rare versions with three counters also exist. Anecdotally there also exist a few watches fitted with the Urofa 59 calibre, produced in Germany by the URFG AG and supplied to France as part of war reparations. Both military and civilian versions of this watch exist, the military versions having



*Auricoste Type 20 chronograph, c.1955. Lémania 2040 calibre*

a higher value than the civilian ones. Of all the Type 20s and 21s the ones produced by Dodane are the most affordable today.

### Vixa

The Vixa Type 20 occupies a special place among the Type 20 chronographs. On the one hand it is the fruit of war reparations paid by Germany to France and on the other the only Type 20 not to have been available in a civilian version. As opposed to the other Type 20s the Vixa is not fitted with a Swiss movement but a German, the Hanhart 41 calibre. This latter, however, does not match the version Hanhart used for their own chronographs. The Vixa version has no anti-shock system and leaf springs have been replaced with cheaper wire springs. These apart, with its elegant lines, faceted lugs, fine fluted bezel and hands, the Vixa Type 20 looks more like the first generation of Breguet Type 20s than the clumsily-shaped military chronographs produced by Hanhart and Tutima.

Vixa chronographs are available in a large 39 mm waterproof steel case with screw back of excellent workmanship. Because of the high quality of the casing the Vixa Type 20s have often worn well and prices remain relatively affordable because of the significant number of pieces produced (between 4000 and 5000 watches). All the same, care must be taken to ensure that the hands, of individual design, are truly the original ones.



*Vixa Type 20 chronograph, c.1960, Hanhart 51 calibre*

*Airain Type 20 chronograph, c.1955. Valjoux 222 calibre*

