

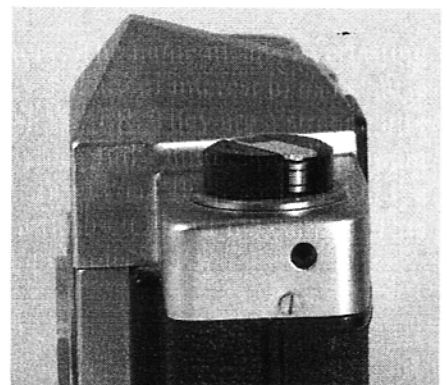
Non-Exakta with Exakta mount Part II

Or what to buy if you think you've got them all

by Hugo Ruys

A. Cameras from Tokiwa Seiki

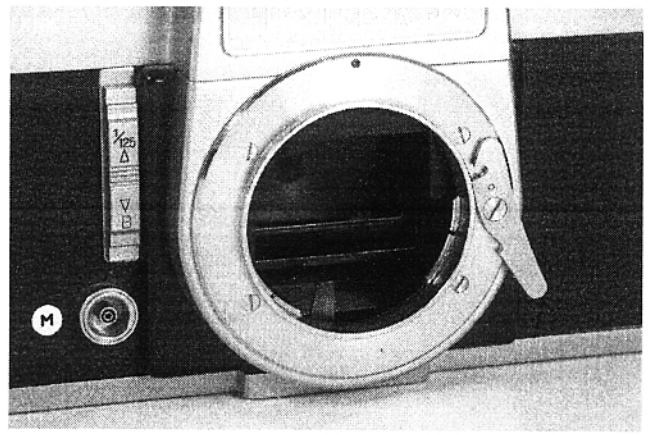
Disappointingly little is to be found about this Japanese factory. The name means Everlasting Precision Instruments. This company has made three cameras that are of interest to us because they have an Exakta mount: Plusflex 35, Firstflex 35 and GM 35 SLR. They are a strange mix of sophistication and simplicity. They have their own internal fully automatic diaphragm closing mechanism. They have one or even two (on the Plusflex) coax flash sockets. On the left side is a small threaded hole to fix a shoe for mounting a flash on top of the camera. This is not mentioned in the manual. Finally they look and feel like serious SLRs.



However, the shutter is as simple as in an old roll film box: 1/125sec (on the Plusflex an extra 1/60) and B. Its construction is in principle the same as the shutter of the Exa, with mirror and metal sector working together. The manual calls this a focal plane shutter. *It is the secret to the low cost, the lack of mirror shock or vibration, and the lowest noise level of any single lens reflex camera.*

The name Plusflex is said to be derived from the name of the company Paul Plus Ltd, with its head office in Newcastle, Kent and an office and showroom in London.

The lens, with a special sideways moving pin to shut the diaphragm, carries the text AUTO TOKINON 1:2.8 f=45mm, or AUTOPLUSCARON on the Plusflex. The manual describes two additional lenses: a 3.5-35mm wide angle and a 4-100 telephoto lens, both branded Tosinon [No typo, or at least not by me].



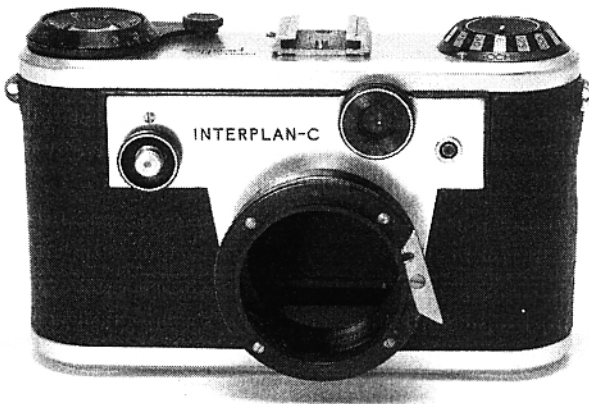
The factory sold an earlier Firstflex 35 in 1955. According to McKeown's it has a bayonet mount but not for Exakta. The three with Exakta mount, again according to McKeown's, are from 1958; Plusflex is the name for England and GM 35 SLR the name for the USA. Value about \$ 100. Hugh Montgomery from New Zealand however writes in ET28 (September 1997) that the Plusflex was widely promoted in 1963-66; it was reviewed in Modern Photography in or around 1965. I haven't tested theses cameras but the sound and feel is from everlasting precision instruments indeed.

B. Corfield Interplan C

This information is provided by Jerry E. Lewis, author of *The Corfield Story*:

The Interplan bodies first came out in **late 1960**. They were designed to be an inexpensive second body for those who already owned a camera with the appropriate lens mount. As you

surely know, in those days when many amateur photographers were still using black and white film having an extra body meant you could keep the 'main' camera loaded with your favourite film (mono or colour) and have a second body ready to use with the alternative. OK, you might have lost the reflex viewing in the case of Pentax and Exakta, but at least you did have some flexibility.



The Interplan A (Leica thread) body sold far more than the others - as might be expected, but in general, none of them sold in large numbers, so the B and C are the rarer ones. They were well promoted at the **1961 Photo Fair** in London which was Britain's major camera event open to both trade and public.

When Corfield camera production finished in 1962 the Interplan bodies were sold off at a big discount to a leading London photographic dealer called BENNETTS. Corfield married the bodies up with lenses they had in stock so the dealer could offer them as a complete instantly useable camera.

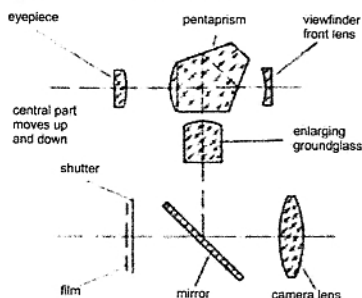
They were first advertised in August 1962 in the photo magazines and the prices were.

- Interplan A with f2.8 50mm Lumar (2 lever) lens £19.12.5d (£19.63)
- Interplan B (Pentax mount) BODY ONLY. £13.7.5d (£13.37)
- Interplan C with 50mm f2.9 MERITAR lens £19.12.5d (£19.63).

Note that the first prices listed were in old Pounds, Shillings, and Pence -the currency used before we went decimal in 1971. Today's pricing is the one in brackets.

Matching the C body with the Meritar lens was an obvious option for Corfield as they had the Exakta agency for the UK and it was used on the Exa cameras. As Corfield didn't supply lenses with the M42 Pentax mount, that's why the B was offered as body only. Once again, the Interplan A's sold quickest, but six months later Bennetts were still offering the B and C models for sale. In the end some weeks later they had to discount these even more to get rid of them!

C. ELOP Ucaflex



Material provided by Michael Parker from Woden, Australia and Dieter Scheiba from Belgium.

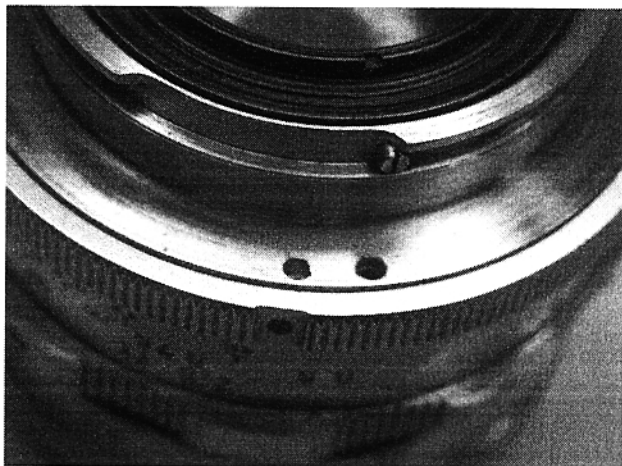
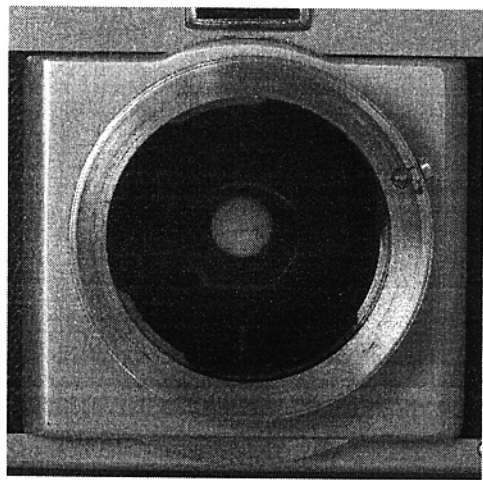
ELOP in Flensburg in Germany near Denmark is a continuation of Feinmechanischen Werkstätten Franz Robert Neubert in Jena. After one year (1950) it was replaced by UCA Werkstätten für Feinmechanik und Optik GmbH. UCA finally was taken over by AGFA in 1952.

So Neubert had only one year to build his Ucaflex, based on his earlier designs Neucaflex and Uniflex. The Ucaflex is said to be a Leica copy, but to me it's quite different. The main difference is the Periflex-like focusing mechanism. The camera itself is rather flat. It has a small-mirror-plus-prism device for focusing on the centre of the object. When the shutter button is pressed, the mirror-plus-prism moves upward and the viewfinder becomes a Newton viewfinder. More pressure trips the focal plane shutter.

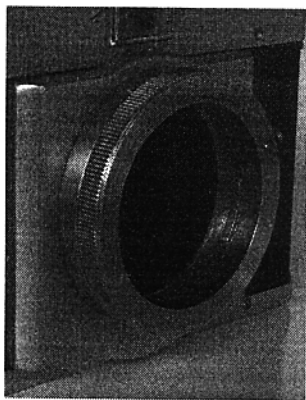


The lens mount is threaded M40. For Exakta lenses there was a special connector. Usually it is impossible to have a ring to connect M40 to Exakta properly, but because the camera is so thin, there is space available between the body and the Exakta mount lens, allowing focusing

to infinity. I haven't seen one, but there must be an Ucaflex version with a fixed Exakta mount, no doubt protruding from the body.



Exakta mount lenses can be used on this camera, but the little locking screw at the rear of the lens has to be removed first. The Ucaflex has its own lens locking mechanism.



From a sales brochure: *The Ucaflex unites the advantages of the reflex and the viewfinder camera. For Professional photographers, scientists, reporters and advanced amateurs. With the appearance of the Ucaflex the predominance of the rangefinder system in 35mm SLRs has ended. The future will belong to the construction principle used in the Ucaflex.*

The UCA price list of October 1952 offers the Ucaflex with Ucalux 1.9-50mm lens for DM 648 and with a Schneider Xenon 1,9-50mm for DM 10 (manually corrected into DM 789). The Ucaflex nowadays is very rare and very expensive. For many months if not years, a German internet shop has one for sale for about \$ 1.500.