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Subject: Re: Gruen "Chrono-Timer"

Posted by [JackW](#) on Thu, 06 Nov 2025 19:42:18 GMT

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Gary wrote on Thu, 06 November 2025 07:33 The chrono timer was made starting in 1947. They stopped making them shortly thereafter. Probably they couldn't compete with other chrono makers. Here is a good read.

Gruen published a series of parts catalogs that showed the movements. The cal 450 is shown in the catalog that is assumed to be from 1945. So it is possibly earlier than 1947. The first and only advertisement for the chrono-timer is from 1947. Scroll down the page and it is shown here at this link.

My personal opinion on why these were so short lived, as a production and sales item is related to the vertical clutch system to engage the chrono seconds. The design is pretty cool but having worked on a few of these now, the mechanism is susceptible to seizing should a watchmaker inadvertently lubricate the clutch. It should be dry. The lubrication will eventually gum up, especially the lubricants of the time in 1945-47 which were natural oils and greases (think whale). They degrade and become thicker. Even with synthetic oils, small amounts of dirt or even the high cohesion of oils will "lock" the clutch together and cause the chrono function to cease working and stopping the watch. My guess is that Gruen was immediately swamped by warranty service requests. Secondly, like what Gary suggested, the advent of high-quality column wheel chronos, like the Valjoux 23 or cam shift chronos like the Venus 188 were hard to compete with for reliability. Also the 450 is small compared to these other chronograph movements. Styles were changing.

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