Badge of a Red Army Air Force Pilot-Instructor, 1945-1949.

Brass, enamels; measures 58.1 mm in width, 24.6 mm in height; the width of the enameled portion is 37.1 mm. Three- piece construction: the propeller and wings are separate parts attached to the enameled triangular base by wires.

In very fine condition. The enamel appears perfect to the unaided eye, but careful examination under ultraviolet ("black") light reveals that there is a small repair to the sky blue enamel immediately under the propeller; the repair was done so professionally that it is practically unnoticeable under normal light. The enamel has only tiny contact marks elsewhere and looks very impressive overall. Traces of the original silver finish are clearly visible on the vertical edges of the propeller, while the silver plating on the reverse of the central portion of the badge is nearly pristine. The wire attachment is sound and completely tight, without any minimal movement of the superimposed parts (Note that the wings are slightly at an angle in relation to the sky blue base - a common manufacturing flaw which is not too noticeable.) The screw post is over 10 mm in length, has not been shortened. The mint marked screw plate is of the period and fits the screw perfectly, although it may not be original to this particular badge.

There is some debate among collectors about the exact time when this badge was introduced: according to some sources such as "Avers 8", it was issued in 1943-45. We believe that it was instituted and manufactured immediately after the end of the Patriotic War and awarded for just a few years up until 1949. Judging by the inscription referring to the Red Army, it was designed and produced before mid-1946 (when the official designation changed to the Soviet Army). It is therefore not inconceivable that this badge could be worn at the end of WW2 by a pilot participating in the Soviet "blitz" campaign against Japan.

These very scarce Soviet Air Force wings are not to miss out on!

/See "Avers 8", p. 463, fig. 2177; Borisov, "Badges of the Soviet Armed Forces", p. 141, fig. 366/.

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