Air Force officer dress dagger, dated 1955.

The pommel shows the appropriate Soviet State Seal with 16 scrolls representing the republics in the Soviet Union, the style used only until 1956. The throat is maker-marked "ZIK" with the 1955 date and on the other side, shows serial number "N13943". There is an arrowhead-shaped maker mark stamped on the underside of the cross guard. Medium-toned, lightly speckled Bakelite grip. The scabbard is wrapped in black patent leather. The dagger measures approx. 13.5" (34 cm) when in scabbard.

In very good to excellent condition. The brilliant factory-sharpened blade is very clean, has only the slightest in-and-out wear, no pitting, notches or oxidation spots. The scabbard leather is generally well-preserved and exhibits attractive "healthy" sheen, not overly dry as is often the case. There is a split on the edge along the seam between the upper and middle (ring) fittings, not very noticeable when the dagger is displayed and not threatening the integrity of the rest of the leather. Elsewhere, the leather has only some minor indentations, no significant scuffs or tears.

The grip is clean and pristine, completely free of the usual chips, hairline fractures or scratches. Both the artwork and the seal of the USSR are sharply detailed. The gilt finish is bright on all the brass fittings and does not show significant wear.

Overall, this is a very attractive example of the by far the most scarce of the daggers for the three branches of the Soviet military. Unlike the Navy daggers, those for the Air Force and Army (Land Forces) were rarely needed after the 1958 changes in the Soviet uniform code. Thereafter, the production of both the Army and Air Force daggers stopped, while the naval daggers were manufactured almost uninterruptedly throughout the 70s and 80s. Almost needless to say, the number of officers in the Soviet Land Forces was larger than in the Air Force by orders of magnitude. Therefore, very few Air Force daggers were ever produced compared to the Navy or Army versions.

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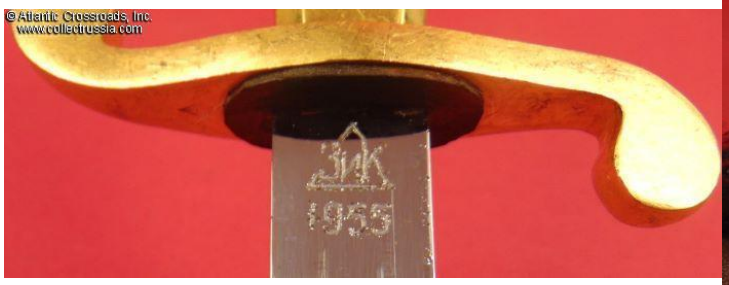
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