

## Veteran's Badge in Commemoration of the 40th Anniversary of the 5th Guards Fighter Aviation Regiment, 1980-81 issue.

In aluminum and paint; the medallion measures approx. 43 mm in height (incl. eyelet), 38.5 mm in width. The reverse has raised inscription "Berlin Order of the Red Banner, Order of Bogdan Khmelnitsky Guards Fighter Aviation Regiment". Note that the unit number is not mentioned anywhere, as typical of Soviet military aviation badges - probably due to the Soviet obsession with secrecy. The unit however is positively identified by the badge's oversized suspension which shows a Guards ribbon as well as ribbons for Orders of the Red Banner and Bogdan Khmelnitsky, 2nd cl. Combined with the title of Berlinskiy or "Berlin", this is a unique combination for a fighter air unit. On the reverse of the suspension, there is raised logo of the Kievprod mash Food Vending Machines Factory in Kiev. The badge is in excellent condition.

The unit was initially equipped with obsolete Polikarpov I - 153 "Seagull" biplanes and called 129th Fighter Aviation when it was formed in 1940. Due to vigilance of its commander, it was able to get in the air and engage the enemy during the German sneak attack on 22 June 1941, and thus escaped being wiped-out on the ground like many other Soviet aviation units. The regiment continued to fight with great valor through the end of the year and was especially effective in the Battle of Moscow by which time it had received new Mig-3 fighters. In December 1941, it was renamed 5th Guards Aviation Regiment - one of the first Soviet air units to be elevated to elite Guards status.

In late 1942, the unit received top-of-the-line La-5 fighters which remained its primary weapon through the rest of the war. It put these aircraft to good use: by the war's end, the regiment was considered the best in the Soviet air forces by the number of shot down enemy airplanes. Twenty- seven of its pilots became Heroes of the Soviet Union, and the regiment itself was decorated with an Order of the Red Banner and Bogdan Khmelnitsky, 2nd cl. - in addition to receiving an honorific title of Berlinskiy i.e. "of Berlin fame" for its performance during the storming of the German capital. This illustrious regiment was disbanded in August 1990, less than a year and a half before the collapse of the USSR.

/See Paul Schmitt, ["Soviet Second World War Veteran Badges"](#), Page 60/.

Please note, penny in our photo is for size reference.

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**\$40.00**









