

Order of St Stanislaus, Civil Division, 2nd class Neck Badge, by Julius Keibel, circa 1860s-70s.

In gold and enamels. Measures 48.8 mm in height incl. eyelet, 45.1 mm in width; weighs 19.2 g not including the golden connecting link which weighs 1.2 g. The award exhibits trademark superb quality of the early Keibel issues, superior even to the orders produced by the same firm later on, from the last quarter of XIX C. through the first decade of XX C. Note in particular the magnificent red enamel of very dark tone which fully reveals the hand-cut guilloche pattern to the gold surface underneath.

Marked "IK" (Julius Keibel) on the reverse lower arm and shows the Imperial warrant of a double-headed eagle on the reverse upper arm. The eyelet has a gold hallmark "56" and a poorly struck assayer's hallmark with a partly visible but nevertheless clearly recognizable scepter and anchors emblem of the St. Petersburg assay inspection. The rest of the latter hallmark is not visible, but judging by the "square" style of the gold hallmark "56", it undoubtedly had a year of manufacture, most likely from late-1860s - mid-1870s (a so-called "year hallmark").

The order is in excellent condition. The red enamel is extremely well-preserved and shows beautiful luster. It is completely free of wear visible to the unaided eye and has just a few microscopic contact marks undetectable without magnification. The green leaves on the band are likewise intact having just a few microscopic flaws and none of the usual chips or significant unfilled areas. Both sides of the center medallion are literally perfect and pristine with perfectly preserved, bright cypher and none of the typical hairlines or flakes.

The gold surfaces of the arms on the reverse are free of dents, significant scratches or other noticeable wear, and have only minuscule scuffs that do not detract. The eagles are firmly attached and sound, and have not been repaired or reattached. The badge comes on a suspension loop in unmarked gold which appears to be of imperial period although probably of later vintage than the decoration itself.

The Keibel jewelry firm was the primary supplier of orders for the Russian Court and the Kapitäl (Chancellery) starting from the 1840s. Its early pieces bearing the Wilhelm or Julius Keibel markings are renowned for their exceptional quality. They are also very scarce, especially in upper classes and showing the early version of the hallmark. The vast majority of these were returned to the Chancellery upon the death of the award recipients and in most instances, scrapped.

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\$3,700.00







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