

GTO (Ready for Labor and Defense), 1st level badge, 1941-1946 issue.

In silver-plated brass and enamels; measures 23.1 x 17.1 mm; weighs 4.1 g not including the screw plate. A very scarce wartime type featuring slightly concave smooth reverse with a raised mint mark "Monetnyi Dvor". The badge exhibits typically high quality of Soviet mint production. The enamel in particular is superb.

Outstanding, excellent condition. The enamel is flawless and shows beautiful luster; it is completely free of even the microscopic contact marks that could be found with a 10x loupe. The silver plating is pristine on both sides creating the full impression that the badge is made in solid silver. The screw post is full-length, over 8 mm. The mint-marked screw plate is a replacement of circa 1950s vintage but it fits the screw perfectly.

This very interesting piece is one of the very few manufactured at the Leningrad Mint for no more than a few months just before the beginning of the Patriotic War in June 1941. With the German invasion and evacuation of the Leningrad Mint into the Soviet interior, the production of the non-essential badges such as this one ceased in favor of the more important state decorations. The GTO badges remaining in stock were issued sparingly throughout the war years until the supplies had run out at some point in 1945-46. Apparently, very few GTO badges of the 1941 model were made; even fewer have survived to our day judging by how infrequently they appear on the market (compared for example with a 1946-1961 version of similar size and design.)

/Badges of USSR Defense Societies, p. 34, fig. I-31; Soviet Badges, Volume 1: Physical Culture and Sports, p. 258, fig. 1.941/.

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

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