

## Badge for Excellent Shooting, 1928 - mid-1930s.

Silver-plated brass, enamels; measures 49.7 mm in height, 35.6 mm in width; weighs 10.1 g without the screw plate. This version of the badge features a single-piece construction, silver finish, and very detailed depiction of the soldier.

In outstanding, excellent condition, very rare for any Soviet military badge of its vintage. The enamel is perfect on all parts of the star showing a beautiful luster and having only a few microscopic contact marks that are not easy to find even with a 10x loupe. Remarkably, the red enamel is completely free of the hairlines typical of these badges.

The details of the soldier, rifle and machine gun are essentially pristine; the silver finish is fully preserved on both sides of the badge. The copper screw post is original and full-length, over 10.5 mm. The screw plate marked "Khud-Met, Moscow" is likewise original and fits the screw perfectly. This superb example literally cannot be upgraded condition-wise.

The badge was established in 1928 as an award for outstanding marksmanship. It was issued by the Vystrel ("Shot") advanced marksmanship and weapon training program for Red Army officers. The school was created in 1918, soon after the Revolution, and acquired its famous name Vystrel in 1923. Starting from 1929, it was also tasked with preparing professional sniper cadres. Later, during the Patriotic War, Vystrel training proved its value: according to German frontline reports, the Wehrmacht lost a significantly larger proportion of NCOs and officers on the Eastern Front compared with their losses in France and elsewhere. This was due to actions of well-trained Soviet snipers often using trees, attics, haystacks and other camouflaged locations to take out Nazi command personnel.

/ Avers 8 , p. 423, fig. 2003.a/

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