

### Advanced Training School for Air Force Technical Personnel, graduation badge, #77, 1936-38.

Brass, silver plating, enamel. Measures 35.6 mm in height, 53.6 mm in width; weighs 13.1 g without the screw plate. Massive riveted four- piece construction: the enameled red star, technical branch emblem of hammer and wrench, and aircraft engine are separate parts superimposed on the winged base. Engraved serial number to the reverse.

Excellent condition. The enamel on the star is essentially perfect and shows a beautiful luster; it has only a couple of microscopic contact marks that are completely invisible to the naked eye and none of the usual chips, flaking, rubbing or repairs. The silver plating on the wings, aircraft motor and the reverse is well-preserved, having only a minor amount of wear to the high points and exhibiting a very attractive uniform patina. There is a small amount of verdigris on the obverse under the star, greatly exaggerated in our enlarged photos but not detractive in the least in real life. The original copper screw post is full-length, approx. 14 mm. The unmarked screw plate is a replacement but works perfectly with the screw.

This piece is one of the first Soviet Air Force graduation badges, the type issued for only two years. In 1938, this series was replaced by a new series of badges, unnumbered, lighter-weight and of more streamlined design. The badges of the first series are rare. It is due in large part to the terrible attrition suffered by the Soviet Air Force cadres in the first weeks and months following the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941. It also must be mentioned that the number of graduates of Soviet military aviation schools increased dramatically just before WW2, which of course reflects on the rarity of the early AF school badges in comparison with the 1938 series.

/Avers 8, p. 474 fig. 2246/.

Item# 46407

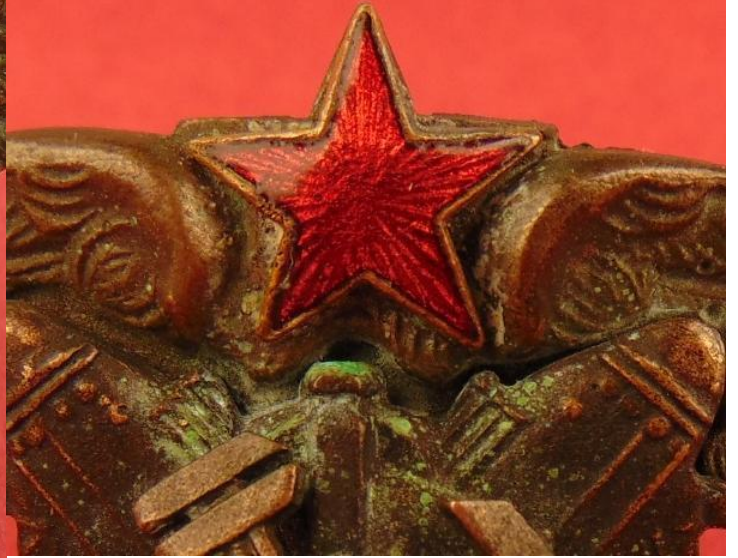
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