RUSSIAN KNIGHTS AEROBATIC TEAM REPORTEDLY RECEIVED FIRST SU-30SM FIGHTER JET

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The Russian Knights aerobatic team based in Kubinka near Moscow has started receiving the first Sukhoi Su-30SM (NATO reporting name: Flanker-C) multipurpose fighter jets, some Russian Internet sources recently said.

According to public sources, the Irkutsk Aircraft-Manufacturing Plant, part of the Irkut Corporation, manufactured the first Su-30SM fighter jet in September 2016. The plane was given the colors used by the Russian Knight aerobatic team and received '31 blue' registration number.

In images on the Internet, the plane with a KAB-500Kr-u practice guided air bombs on an external weapon station was being prepared for takeoff from the Irkutsk airfield. This munition is used to check the Su-30SM plane's fire control system.

Russian Aerospace Force Commander-in-Chief Viktor Bondarev said earlier that the Russian Knights aerobatic team would receive advanced Su-30SM multipurpose fighter jets in the autumn of 2016.

Bondarev also said that he hoped the Russian Knights aerobatic team would show aerobatic

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maneuvers with the use of the planes by late 2016.

The Su-30SM is a specialised version of the thrust-vectoring Su-30MKI and MKM variants for the Russian military, produced by the Irkut Corporation. It has been equipped with the Bars-R radar and a wide-angle HUD. The Su-30SM performed its maiden flight on Sept. 21, 2012.



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