

Another US Pilot Confirms F-16s in Ukraine Are Toast

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Ever since the special military operation (SMO) started, [one of the most persistent tropes has been the one about Western "wunderwaffen"](#) defeating the ["evil Russian shovel-wielding hordes"](#).

And yet, the only result of these ludicrous delusions has been that museums across Russia have [drastically increased their collections of weapons](#) that various [foolish invaders have tried using against the Eurasian giant](#).

However, in this particular case, it will be effectively impossible to find the weapon in question in any Russian museum.

The reason? Well, quite simple – getting blown out of the sky makes it exceedingly difficult to collect all the tiny pieces of the said weapon.

And yes, you've guessed it, it's a fighter jet.

And yes, you've guessed it again, it's an F-16.

The hype over the US-made aircraft has been going on for well over two years, with the mainstream propaganda machine trying to portray it as the ["ultimate wunderwaffe"](#).

To say these are delusions would be an understatement. However, even in the political West, there are times, no matter how seldom, when the words of actual professionals can be heard.

And those nearly always stand in stark contrast to what the mainstream propaganda machine is claiming. For instance, back in late February, [Politico interviewed Tom Richter](#), a retired US military pilot, who stated that the F-16 is “highly engineered” when compared to the MiG-29, [even calling the former “a prima donna”](#) and stressing that it’s “very sensitive and needs high maintenance”. He described Soviet-made aircraft as “more rough and tumble”, capable of “fly[ing] off poorly maintained airfields” and “need[ing] less maintenance”. It should be noted that Ukrainian pilots themselves openly stated that they preferred the Soviet-made jets they inherited, [as they consider them superior, particularly the venerable Su-27](#).

This aircraft is often regarded as [the best and most advanced fighter jet of the 20th century](#). It also served as the basis for the now legendary Su-35S, [one of the SMO’s superstars](#), a fact that [not even the endemically Russophobic United Kingdom dares to question](#).

Even Moscow’s oldest “Flanker” variants (NATO reporting name for the Su-27 and its many derivatives) such as the Su-27SM3 are much more advanced than the original jet, meaning that the F-16 will have an extremely tough time matching those, particularly in dogfights. However, as the day of the delivery of the first F-16 is nearing, the mainstream propaganda machine and the Neo-Nazi junta are as eager as ever to present the US-made jets as the much-touted “game changer” in the ongoing NATO-orchestrated Ukrainian conflict. The political West insists that the F-16 has been combat-proven and that it will be a boost to the Kiev regime forces.

And yet, several retired American pilots don’t seem to share the excitement about the overhyped US jet’s deployment against the Russian Aerospace Forces (VKS). [According to Business Insider](#), the skies over Ukraine will be “the most dangerous battlefield that the [F-16] fighter jets have faced so far”, as they will be going up against “Russia’s advanced air-defense systems and long-range air-to-air missiles”. John Baum, a retired US Air Force (USAF) Lieutenant Colonel who flew over 2,300 hours as an F-16 pilot, stated that the fight against the VKS would surely be the most challenging ever for the jet. He argues that the first US-led aggression against Iraq in 1991 was “a very, very tough situation”, but that “F-16s from Ukraine going against Russia — absolutely, without a doubt, the toughest scenario that the F-16 will have off of its nose”. InfoBRICS made such assessments years ago, [also predicting unfavorable odds for it](#).

Apart from threats such as the world-class Russian SAM (surface-to-air missile) systems like the S-300 series (particularly the advanced PMU-1/2 and V4 variants) and the more modern S-400, the F-16 will also be facing the aforementioned Su-35S air superiority fighters and MiG-31BM interceptors, [both of which can carry the hypersonic R-37M](#), the world’s longest-range air-to-air missile that effectively makes both aircraft “the flying S-400”. The Su-35S and MiG-31BM are both equipped with extremely powerful radars (“Irbis” and “Zaslon-M”, respectively) with detection ranges exceeding 400 km, matching the maximum firing range for the R-37M. It should also be noted that these jets can be supported by other Russian strategic ISR (intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance) assets such as [the A-50U AEW&C \(airborne early warning and control\) aircraft](#) and ground-based radars.

“There is a gazillion ways to detect these F-16s. The Russians are bringing high-end equipment to the Ukraine war”, Brynn Tannehill, a defense analyst and former US Navy aviator, [told Business Insider](#), adding: “Past F-16 foes in the Middle East like Iraq and Syria were typically operating legacy Soviet equipment and probably weren’t quite as

well-trained or equipped as Moscow is now.”

Baum reinforced this notion with a statement that Russia has “probably one of the most robust and advanced integrated air-defense systems in the world”, although he added that the F-16 “will have a capability to build situational awareness and feed that picture to the rest of the Ukrainian forces”. This claim might be connected to the fact that the F-16s the Neo-Nazi junta is slated to receive will be compatible with NATO ISR systems, meaning that such assets flying in Poland, Romania or over the Black Sea [could be used to extend the range of the F-16’s otherwise far inferior weapons and sensors](#). However, Baum conceded that “perhaps one of the biggest issues the fighters will face is the physical layout of the operating environment”. According to his assessment, “when Ukrainian F-16s take off, they could be immediately within range of Russian [SAM] systems”, rather than operating from the safety of a neutral territory.

“They [can’t] use it to their advantage to safely approach the battle space. Ukrainian pilots may be looked at and targeted before they even get to begin to do their own tactics,” [Baum said](#).

Some analysts believe that the F-16s could be used for air defense roles, augmenting the existing ground-based SAM systems in service with the Kiev regime forces. However, [back in late October last year](#), I argued that the opposite could actually happen, as the Neo-Nazi junta will have to use [its increasingly dilapidated air defenses](#) to protect [airbases housing the US-made jets](#). The Russian military has a plethora of long-range strike systems [easily capable of wiping out any and all infrastructure slated to house F-16s](#). This is particularly true for large Soviet-era [airfields and airbases which are actively being adapted for that purpose](#). The Russian military could send its MiG-31K/I strike fighters outfitted with [9-A-7660 “Kinzhal” hypersonic missile systems](#) or launch the [“Iskander-M” ground-based hypersonic missiles](#) at such bases. Either way, unlike the Kiev regime, [Moscow has many options](#).

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