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Ressort: Special interest

Fliegerschiessen Axalp ob Brienz der Schweizer Armee 2018

Axalp ob Brienz (Switzerland), 20.11.2018 [ENA]

October 2018, autumn just begun, Bernese Alps (Switzerland) suddenly from the beautiful mountains just covered by a veil of snow sprout at high speed some military aircraft that heading towards some ridges of the impervious alpine rocks and... they fire!

No! No war scene, no crazy Pilot, but the now unmissable appointment with the live fire exercises of the Swiss air forces on the shooting range of Axalp ob Brienz and this year we were also able to attend the training event of the skilled Swiss pilots in the Bernese Alps.

On October 10th and 11th 2018 and training on October 9th (but already on Monday we were able to attend an initial training) the Swiss pilots have done their intense training under the eyes of thousands of enthusiasts, and the watchful look of their superiors and some Officers representing some foreign Air Forces such as China, South Korea, Russia and Germany.

More than 7,000 spectators like every year starting from the banks of the Brienzersee in the dark of night with the buses provided by the organization (for a fee) to reach Axalp and from here they climbed the Bernese mountains for a walk of 3 - 4 hours to attend this event which, as planned, also offered many performances to demonstrate the operational capabilities of the Helvetic Air Force.

From the "scramble" of an aircraft that has suddenly invaded the airspace forbidden above the shooting theater, which was actually a government aircraft that lent itself to the show, to the beautiful acrobatics of Patrouille Suisse.

From the display of the F/A-18 Hornet Solo Display Team and the Aerospatiale SuperPuma, to the "SAR" helicopter operations, we have seen how the aeronautical flight and intervention qualities are rapid and at the service for the protection and help of the citizens of the Alpine nation.

Among these also the paratroopers and the evolution of the Pilatus PC21 piloted by the Hptm Daniel "Stampa" Stämpfli, after a flyover together with the F / A-18 and a Pilatus PC7, demonstrated the performance of a superb machine that has now replaced the old but still beautiful Northrop F-5E Tiger II in the training of pilots before the passage to the F/A-18 Hornet.

The Northrop F-5E Tiger II with this year's shooting practice gave its last appearance to the Axalp as a trainer and will in future only be present as a Patrouille Suisse aircraft. After 40 years of laudable service in the Swiss Air Force, the Tiger will slowly be put aside waiting for the future purchase of the new aircraft.

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Purchased at the end of the seventies to fill the gap left by the de Havilland DH.112 Venom has excellently done all the tasks assigned and in the future the 26 aircraft left will be used as a Target for the F/A-18 during training or will carry out surveillance of air radioactivity and some will continue to be used by Patrouille Suisse.

Regarding the purchase of the future air defense system, the Swiss Air Force Commander, Divisional Bernhard Müller, during the media meeting before the show, presented the various aircraft options and ground defense system (in German: BODLUV - "BOdengestützte LUftverteidigung"). The Commander has clarified that for the aircraft will point to European or US choices and from 2019 there will first be the evaluation of 5 aircraft (Eurofighter, Rafale, Gripen, SuperHornet and F35A) and of the various defense and surveillance systems and then until the deadline of 2025 to the various selection procedures and finally purchase in order to arrive at 2030 with a new and complete air defense system.

The second week of October in Switzerland as always has given emotions, warm temperatures and a beautiful blue sky (although a bit of clouds and a the wind have still wanted to participate between Wednesday afternoon and Thursday morning). During the 3 days of "Axalp" there has been an appointment now a point of reference and that is becoming "the Mecca" of many photographers and aviation enthusiasts. Next year maybe we could even have the presence of some special guests because it will be in full activity by the Swiss authorities the choice of the new Swiss Fighter Aircraft (in german: Neues Kampfflugzeug - NKF). While waiting, stay in touch with Best Shot Aircraft that will keep you updated on the evolution of the selection procedures.

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