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By RT NARA Date 9-10

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HEADQUARTERS 47TH WING
APO 520

E: MEF/AJR/PS/ls

9 September 1944.

SUBJECT: Tactical Analysis for Mission of 5 September 1944.

TO : Commanding Officer, 98th Bomb Group, APO 520.
Commanding Officer, 376th Bomb Group, APO 520.
Commanding Officer, 449th Bomb Group, APO 520.
Commanding Officer, 450th Bomb Group, APO 520.

1. Bombing Analysis:

a. The 47th Wing attacked the FERRARA R.R. BRIDGE in Northern Italy with very satisfactory results.

b. The 450th led the attack on the target, scoring satisfactory results. The Group hit I.P. as briefed, was in trail and squared away for a good bomb-run. Lead Bombardier of the first box started run on auto pilot, but A-5 went out so the run was finished on P.D.I. Evidently, the Bombardier was not completely synchronized as the bombs missed the target. The second box failed to release bombs when another box went under them just prior to release time. Bombs were returned to base. The lead bombardier of the third box was not synchronized, but using very poor judgement, dropped bombs anyway. The bombs completely missed the target. The fourth box was having a normal run until the last few seconds before bombs away, at which time the left wing of the lead ship started dropping, making synchronization difficult. Results were only satisfactory.

c. The 98th went over the Bridge second, to score excellent results. All boxes hit the I.P., as briefed, were in trail and squared away for a good bomb-run. Although smoke from bombs of the previous group had begun to cover the target, all bombardiers were able to pick up the aiming point well enough to synchronize. An intense smoke covered the target area, preventing an accurate plotting of the bomb strikes, so an N.A. has been requested for this group. However, with very few bombs plotted outside the 1000 foot circle, it is very evident that this group did excellent bombing.

d. The 449th followed the 98th over the target to score satisfactory results. All boxes hit the I.P. OK, were in trail and squared away for a good bomb run. Complete smoke coverage of the target forced all bombardiers to synchronize on check points and then displace cross hairs onto target. While on the bomb run, the lead ship of the first box was hit by flak which cut the electrical system to the sight making further synchronization impossible. Up to this point the bombardier was synchronized, so he matched indicies and toggled when cross hairs crossed target, scoring satisfactory results. In the second box, the leader had an early return and the deputy lead was having electrical trouble, so the No.4

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ship assumed lead. Synchronization was bad and bombs missed the target. Third box experienced a normal run, synchronizing on R.R. leading into Bridge and then placing cross hairs on smoke. Results were believed to be good. The lead bombardier of the fourth box, making a P.D.I. run, had to complete the run by talking the pilot on course when the P.D.I. went out half way down the run. Bombs hit slightly left of aiming point for satisfactory results. Due to intense smoke over the target, an N.A. has been requested for this group.

e. The 376th, bombing last, scored excellent results. All units hit the I.P. as briefed, were in trail and squared away for a good bomb run. Due to smoke coverage of aiming point all bombardiers synchronized on check points and then displaced cross hairs onto target. Intervalometer in the lead ship failed and navigator salvaged bombs, but all other boxes had normal releases and scored excellent results.

f. Summary: The good pattern put down by the 450th denotes good formation flying by pilots - but unfortunately, the good pattern missed the target. The pilot who led his unit under the second box of the 450th not only led his box into grave danger - he also prevented the high box from releasing their bombs, and scoring possible hits on the target. The 98th and 376th proved their ability to effectively bomb a smoke covered target. Their scores - an N.A. for the 98th, and a 55% for the 376th - certainly belie the excellent bombing these groups accomplished. Lead Bombardier KOHNESCHER of the 449th is to be highly commended for his quick thinking, and excellent display of "Bombing Sense" in using the sight as he did after the electrical system was shot out. Against an almost impossible situation, Lt. KOHNESCHER did everything that could possibly be done to place his bombs on the target.

<u>GROUP</u>	<u>THIS MISSION</u>	<u>RATING</u>	<u>REPORTS</u>	<u>LAST FIVE</u>	<u>PREVIOUS PRACTICE</u>
376th	55%	excellent	excellent	77.8%	all units
98th	NA	excellent	excellent	69.9%	one unit
449th	NA	satisfactory	superior	61.1%	three units
450th	54.4%	very satisfactory	excellent	47.2%	three units
wing average 55%				64%	

2. Navigation Analysis:

a. Rendezvous: The rendezvous was carried out very satisfactorily, although somewhat loosely. The first wave (450th and 98th in that order) was ordered to rendezvous over MANDURIA, on course to SAN VITO. These two groups were to employ the usual time and altitude spacings. The 449th, leader of the second wave, was scheduled over MANDURIA, to be followed by the 376th over SAN PAN, and with both on course to SAN VITO. Thus, both the wing and second wave rendezvous were completed over SAN VITO. This system will be employed, in the future, only when the wing formation to be used would make the usual pattern (two wave points and a wing point) difficult to accomplish accurately. Briefed times and altitudes and actual times and altitudes were as follows:

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- (1) 450th - 0728 and 4,000 feet - 0728 and 5,000 feet.
- (2) 98th - 0729 and 5,000 feet - 0728 and 6,000 feet.
- (3) 449th - 0731 and 6,000 feet - 0733 and 8,000 feet.
- (4) 376th - 0732 and 7,000 feet - 0735 and 7,000 feet.

b. Route out: The entire wing faithfully followed the briefed route, with allowances for the echeloning of the groups. The keypoint was a water position off ANCONA. The briefed time for this point was 0916, and the altitude, 20,000 feet. Actual times and altitudes were as follows:

- (1) 450th - 0917 at 16,000 feet.
- (2) 98th - 0918 at 18,000 feet.
- (3) 449th - 0920 at 18,000 feet.
- (4) 376th - 0924 at 19,000 feet.

The above figures denote a very fine wing formation (with the exception of the time interval between the groups of the second wave.) The climb schedule was planned on the basis of 200 feet per minute, but due to slow climbing lead aircraft, this was a stiff arrangement. In the future, a basis of 150 feet per minute will be used, and it is believed that this will allow a safety margin for abnormal conditions. The Italian Coast was crossed on course near the PO River mouth and all groups squared away on the initial point.

c. Target: All four groups were assigned the same target, FERRARA RIVER BRIDGE. Briefed target time was 1000, the axis was 250 degrees, and bombing altitudes were 22,000 feet for wave leaders (450th and 449th), and 23,500 feet for following groups (98th and 376th). Actual times, axes, and bombing altitudes were as follows:

- (1) 450th - 1002 at 21,000 feet on 243° to 249°.
- (2) 98th - 1006 at 22,500 feet on 245° to 260°.
- (3) 449th - 1009 at 22,000 feet on 248° to 253°.
- (4) 376th - 1014 at 23,500 feet on 245° to 255°.

Target spacing was wide to allow as much smoke as possible to clear from the target. Rallies were as briefed (sharp left) and were effective in avoidance of the main flak concentration.

d. Route back: All groups followed the briefed route to base.

e. Escort: The escort was scheduled to rendezvous on course abeam RIMINI (40 miles above the keypoint). Actual contact was established off PESCARA (60 miles below the keypoint). From this point to, at, and after the target, continuous cover was provided for all or part of the wing. Escort departure on the withdrawal was just above VIESTE.

f. Communications: Communications as a whole, was very satisfactory. The 450th could not attain completely satisfactory communication with the 376th. This is the only deficiency reported in the whole wing.

g. The navigation of this mission, on the whole, is considered excellent. Individual group ratings are as follows:

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- (1) 98th - navigation very satisfactory - logs very satisfactory.
- (2) 376th - navigation very satisfactory - logs very satisfactory.
- (3) 449th - navigation very satisfactory - logs superior.
- (4) 450th - navigation excellent (wing lead) - logs very satisfactory.

3. P.F.F. Analysis:

a. Lt. REZNIK operated for the 449th and Lt. STRGANAC for the 450th. The 98th and 376th did not use PFF ships.

b. The pre-flight check and aerial operation was good. Both sets worked well.

c. The 449th did not have a scope camera aboard their ship. The 450th attempted to take pictures but the camera was inoperative.

d. Both operators were able to pick up FERRARA in their scopes.

e. Both operators flew on a practice mission the previous day.

f. The equipment was used for navigational aids only. The D.R. navigators were supplied with fixes on the route out.

g. Rating of Operators' logs:

- (1) Both operators - very satisfactory.

By order of Colonel RUSH:

Robert H. Warren
ROBERT H. WARREN,
Lt. Col., Air Corps,
A-3.

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