

C O N F I D E N T I A LHEADQUARTERS 47TH WING  
APO 520

E:PRM/AJR/PS/LS

17 September 1944

SUBJECT: Tactical Analysis of the Mission of 15 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. Two groups of the 47th Wing attacked the ELEUSIS AIRDROME in GREECE with excellent results.

b. The 376th led the attack, bombed in a column of boxes and scored excellent results. The first attack unit of the 513th hit the I.P., were squared away for a good bomb run. Bombardier's nose blisters greatly aided Bombardier YOUNG in picking up the target early. Although he encountered no malfunctions, a number of bombs in this unit hung up which necessitated a late salvo. The second attack unit, the 514th Squadron hit the I.P., were in trail and properly spaced behind the first unit. Although the C-1 pilot was out, the pilot flew good P.D.I. run and with the exception of a few hung bombs, most of this unit's bombs hit the assigned area. Bombardier BJORMAN scored excellent results. The fourth attack unit, 515th Squadron, went slightly beyond the I.P. and came in on a heading of 10° off the briefed axis of attack. Bombardier LAWSON, however, encountered no difficulty picking up the target, and with the exception of a few late salvos from rack malfunctions, bombed with excellent results. The 512th Squadron, last unit across the target, also hit the I.P., and although pilot was forced to lose 500 feet altitude, he notified Bombardier JOHNSON, who put an excellent concentration of bombs on the assigned target area.

c. The 98th, also bombed in a column of boxes, and although they were forced to overshoot the I.P. to prevent a collision course with the 376th, they too recorded excellent results. The first two attack units were comprised of the 344th and 345th Squadrons, and led by bombardiers ENGELSTEIN and PECK respectively. Although some planes had rack malfunctions, they encountered no trouble and bombed with superior results. The 415th came in on a heading of 44° off the briefed axis of attack. Bombardier consequently had trouble in pointing himself, did not locate target

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until late on run and bombed with unsatisfactory results. Bombardier VATH, leading the 343rd, was last over the target, and scored very satisfactory results. Although bombardier encountered no trouble picking up the target, at bomb release line only two bombs released from his plane. Wing men did not observe this and toggled on his salvo a few seconds later, consequently, although a good number of bombs were in the target area, the main concentration fell over the aiming point.

d. Summary: Today's mission was considered quite successful. Although the damage was comparatively light, for the most part the bomb patterns covered the briefed area and destroyed what planes were located there. Another example of the benefit of the rocket flare used as a release point marker was demonstrated, when only two bombs released from the lead ship, and the box, dropping on the leaders salvo, dropped most of their bombs over. Had the rocket flare been utilized, bombardiers would have dropped simultaneously with first two bombs and flare signal.

<u>GROUP</u>	<u>THIS MISSION</u>	<u>RATING</u>	<u>REPORTS</u>	<u>LAST FIVE</u>	<u>PREVIOUS PRACTICE</u>
98th	Frgs	Excellent	Very satis.	73	three units
376th	Frgs	Excellent	Excellent	69	all units
449th	did not drop	_____	_____	59	_____
450th	did not drop	_____	_____	55	_____
Wing Av.	_____	_____	_____	64	_____

2. Navigation Analysis:

a. Rendezvous: The usual pattern was employed. The Wing was divided into two waves. The first wave was composed of the 376th, 98th, and 449th, in that order, with the first two groups over SAN PAN, and the last group over MANDURIA. The second wave was the 450th Group, assigned MANDURIA for rendezvous. The usual time and altitude variations between groups were used, except in the case of the 450th. This group was scheduled 31 minutes behind the 449th. Briefed times and altitudes and actual times and altitudes were as follows:

- (1) 376th - 0846 and 13,000 feet - 0847 and 13,000 feet.
- (2) 98th - 0847 and 14,000 feet - 0847 and 14,300 feet.
- (3) 449th - 0849 and 14,000 feet - 0849 and 14,000 feet.
- (4) 450th - 0920 and 15,000 feet - 0921 and 15,500 feet.

At SAN PAN, the 98th cut above and across the 376th. The purpose of this maneuver was to gain a left echelon position. The run to SAN VITO was made with the 376th in the lead, and with the 98th echeloned left and slightly forward. At SAN VITO, the 376th commenced a right turn to course. The 98th, on the outside of the turn, slid across the top of the 376th to a right echelon position, and then back across again to left echelon. In each of these maneuvers, the low boxes of the 98th dragged through the 376th. The 376th, its formation disrupted, fell into third position and requested the 449th to take the Wing lead. This was done.

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b. The route out: As the wing was attacking with two groups on each of two widely separated targets, a split point had been established on the far ADRIATIC Coast. Crossing the ADRIATIC, the 376th had returned its bases. The 449th reached the split point at 0925 and two miles left of course. This group now turned left on course for its respective target (the 449th and 450th, in that order, shared the northern target, with a half hour interval for smoke clearance). The 376th again took the lead position, reaching the split point at 0926 and ten miles left of course. This group was followed by the 98th, which gained the point at 0928, 8 miles left of course. Both groups then turned right and on to course, for they were both assigned the southernmost target. In all four cases, the groups proceeded on course to their respective initial points.

c. Target: On the southern target, the 376th went in first, as scheduled. The turn at the initial point was carried out in a superior manner. The 98th chose to overshoot the initial point 10 miles, and then come in on an off-heading. Briefed target time for these two groups was 1030, the axis 176, and the altitudes 21,000 feet (376th) and 22,500 feet. Actual times, axes and altitudes were as follows:

- (1) 376th - 1034 Baker cma 182 Deg., 21,000 feet.
- (2) 98th - 1040 Baker cma 215 to 230 deg., 22,500 feet.

Rallies were sharp right (as briefed) off this target. The 449th and 450th arrived at their initial point to find a 10/10 overcast. These two groups were 30 minutes apart, but nevertheless, found conditions the same. Both groups went to the secondary, SALONIKA, and found it overcast. Returning to the primary, which was still overcast, the groups turned for bases.

d. The route back: All groups returned to bases via their respective briefed routes.

e. Escort: The scheduled escort was a fighter sweep of both target areas (continuous at the southern target, ELEUSIS A/D) P-38's and P-51's were seen near ELEUSIS.

f. Communications: Able and Baker Channels (VHF) were found satisfactory in all communications reports.

g. Ratings: The overall rating of the navigation of this mission is excellent. Individual group ratings are as follows:

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

### 3. PFF Analysis:

a. PFF Standown on this mission.

By order of Colonel RUSH:

*Robert H. Warren*  
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