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Authority NND745005

By RT NARA Date 1-9-10

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HEADQUARTERS 47TH WING  
APO 520

E: PRN/RWE/amb

22 September 1944.

SUBJECT: Tactical Analysis for 19 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 KRALJEVO and MITROVICA Railroad bridges with excellent results.

b. The 449th Bomb Group led the attack with all units hitting the I.P. and getting properly squared away at the target to bomb the KRALJEVO R.R. bridge with excellent results. Lead bombardier of the 717th encountered a sight malfunction and dropped bombs some 3000 feet from the briefed aiming point with unsatisfactory results. Bombardier YOUNG of the 716th put down an excellent concentration to record superior results. Bombardier MOLNAR, of the 719th, encountered an auto-pilot malfunction, however pilot McKEE flew a good P.D.I. which enabled this unit also to score superior results. ALPERT, lead bombardier of the 718th, encountered the same favorable conditions as the preceding groups. Although when indices crossed bombs did not release, however, thanks to the rocket flare which fired at the proper time, all bombardiers toggled on it to score superior results.

c. Pioneering in the art of bombing by 3 and 4 ship elements the 98th Bomb Group was first over the MITROVICA Railroad bridge and scored very satisfactory results. Five of the eight individual attack units had normal bomb runs and bombed with excellent to very satisfactory results. The 1st and 5th attack unit leaders returned their bombs to the base. Bombardier in 1st attack unit experienced sight malfunction and failed to release bombs. The 5th attack unit experienced lack of pilot - bombardier coordination. Since the pilot cut short of I.P. to get properly spaced, bombardier was not given sufficient run for proper synchronization; he however, employed good judgment and called for a second run. A 360° turn was made but again they cut short and run was too short, so bombs were returned to the base. The bombardier of the 2nd attack unit experienced bubble trouble on his initial run but also employed "bombing sense" and bombed on the second run with excellent results.

d. Although the 450th hit the I.P., were in trail and fairly well spaced, only one attack unit dropped on the first run. Even though the percentage with 1000 feet was exceptionally high and the bomb patterns were the best concentrations produced by the Wing, unfortunately relatively few bombs hit the aiming point, the center of the KRALJEVO Railroad bridge. The 720th,

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Unit, encountered an auto-pilot malfunction on the 1st run and malfunction on the second run, so they returned bombs to base. The attack units comprised of the 722nd experienced a normal run and laid down a beautiful concentration of bombs slightly right and over the aiming point on the initial run. The lead bombardier of the 723rd was not properly synchronized on the 1st run, but employed good judgement and called for a second run. This time however he was unable to get synchronized again, but used very poor "bombing sense" and dropped bombs regardless, some hundreds of feet right and over. The 721st encountered prop wash on their initial run, so made a 360° turn and bombed with excellent results.

g. The 376th was last over the MITROVICA Railroad bridge to score very satisfactory results. All units hit the I.P. were in trail and properly spaced. The 512th led by bombardier POHUTSKY had a normal run and scored a few near misses, but most bombs fell over. Bombardier KINGHAM of the 515th also scored a number of near misses, but most bombs over shot the aiming point. Bombardier KASSAB of the 514th encountered auto-pilot trouble on the bomb run, employed good judgement and took a second run to score excellent results. Although bombardier MC GOWAN of the 513th encountered a smoke obscured target, he bombed with very satisfactory results.

f. Summary: It was interesting to note the comparative effectiveness and accuracy the 98th was able to record by bombing in 3 and 4 ship units. Although their bombing accuracy was not up to par and the bombing was not as effective as we hoped for, it is reasonable to assume that this type of bombing has unlimited possibilities and may even surpass our present system, as the six ship boxes have replaced the old 12 and 18 ship attack units. The 98th is to be highly commended for pioneering in this field. Although they may have suffered a little from the percentage view point, a number of new lead bombardiers gained some valuable experience that will undoubtedly pay dividends in the very near future.

GROUP	THIS MISSION	RATING	REPORTS	LAST 5	PRACTICE PREVIOUS TO MISSION.
98th BG.	63%	Very Sat.	Superior	65%	All units.
450th BG.	91%	Excellent	Excellent	63%	All units.
449th BG.	72%	Excellent	Excellent	51%	All units.
376th BG.	52%	Very Sat.	Excellent	49%	All units.

## 2. Navigation Analysis.

a. There was no Wing rendezvous scheduled. All groups were scheduled to pass over SAN VITO at a designated time and altitude. There was to be 5 minutes between groups and 20 minutes between the waves. This was deemed necessary to eliminate all possibility of the smoke interfering with the following groups bombing. The briefed times and altitudes were:

- (1) 449th at 0833 Able at 11,000 feet.
- (2) 98th at 0838 Able at 11,000 feet.

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(3) 450th at 0853 Able at 11,000 feet.

(4) 376th at 0858 Able at 11,000 feet.

Actual times and altitudes were:

(1) 449th at 083340 Able at 15,000 feet.

(2) 98th at 0840 Able at 13,000 feet.

(3) 450th at 085130 Able at 13,000 feet.

(4) 376th at 0858 Able at 13,000 feet.

Due to scattered cumulus clouds and the shortness of the mission all groups decided to raise the rendezvous altitude by 2,000 feet prior to the rendezvous time.

b. The route out was precisely adhered to by all groups. Lts. REZNICK, TREDGAR, HACKETT AND HALE, the respective group lead navigators are to be commended for their excellent navigation and cooperation at the I.P., insuring a good bomb run.

c. Briefed Target times and axes were:

(1) 449th - 1000 Able - 120° on KRALJEVO Railroad bridge.

(2) 98th - 1002 Able - 164° on MITROVICA Railroad bridge.

(3) 450th - 1020 Able - 120° on KRALJEVO Railroad bridge.

(4) 376th - 1022 Able - 164° on MITROVICA Railroad bridge.

Actual times and axes:

(1) 449th - 1006 Able - 120°

(2) 98th - 1005 Able - 164°

1020 Able - 29°

(3) 450th - 1022 Able - 120°

1050 Able - 120°

(4) 376th - 1024 Able - 164°

1046 Able - 135°

The reason for the long spread in time over the target of the 98th Group is due to their bombing in elements of three and four planes. The 450th and 376th had bombsight trouble and were forced to make 360's in an effort to release on the target.

d. Although no escort was stipulated in the order the wing was notified in the morning, while the planes were taking off, that due to a stand down for the other wings an escort would be furnished for this wing. All groups reported an effective escort of P-38's in the target area.

e. The route back was followed as ordered.

f. The navigation on this mission is considered superior.

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