

HEADQUARTERS 47TH WING  
APO 520

E: MEF-RWE/hwm

24 September 1944.

SUBJECT: Tactical Analysis of the 21 September Mission.

TO : Commanding Officer, 98th Bomb Group, APO 520.  
 Commanding Officer, 378th 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 Railroad Bridges in BAJA, HUNGARY and NOVI SAD, YUGOSLAVIA with excellent results.

b. The 98th, attacking the BAJA RR BRIDGE, led the Wing and proved that they were real leaders by racking up a 98.2%, to score superior results. As far as we are able to determine, this is the all time Air Force high for a Group score. The Group, led by the 345th Squadron, found it necessary to bomb 1,000 feet lower than briefed altitude because of an overcast; however, all units hit the I.P. as briefed, were in trail and squared away for a good run. All units experienced very good runs, and every box scored superior results by putting their pattern down "according to the book", that is, the pattern started just slightly short and developed over the aiming point. All personnel contributing to this excellent performance, and especially Group Leader LT. COL. VAN SICKLE, Lead Bombardiers SEROTOFF, SCHIMOLLER, STEFFENS and RUND, and pilots NELSON, SENSEMAN, BALLASSES and WRIGHT, merit the utmost commendation for this outstanding achievement.

c. The 449th bombed the BAJA R.R. BRIDGE second to score excellent results. All units hit the I.P. as briefed, were in trail and squared away for a good bomb run. The first, second and fourth boxes, from the 719th, 718th and 716th Sqdns. respectively, had normal bomb runs, and bombed with excellent results. Lead bombardiers GORMLEY, HOLFER and BLACKWELL experienced favorable conditions and made the most of them by leading their units on excellent bomb runs. The 717th Sqn., flying third, had enough trouble for the entire group. The original lead ship was forced to return to base right after take-off, so deputy lead took over. Original leader took off in another ship and after catching up with the Squadron, flew No. 3 position. This box had a normal run but bombs did not release from either lead or deputy lead ship at bomb release line. However, bombardier PERKINS in No. 3 position was synchronizing and when his bombs released, No. 4, 5, 6 and 7 ships toggled on him, with bombs falling in the target area. Lead bombardier then made run on secondary target, but the run was too short, so he held the bombs and went around for another run. Bombs were dropped on the second run with unsatisfactory results.

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d. The 450th, flying second in the wing formation, led the attack on the NOVI SAD R.R. BRIDGE to score satisfactory results. All boxes hit the I.P. as briefed, were in trail and squared away for a good bomb run. All units except the second box experienced normal runs. First box from the 723rd Sqdn. missed the target completely, their bombs falling far right. The lead ship of the second box (721st Sqdn) experienced an auto-pilot malfunction on the bomb run, so the bombardier held his bombs rather than drop them, knowing they would miss the target. Pilot decided against taking another run because of flak over target. This unit did not make a run on the secondary or turn lead over to deputy for another run on primary, but returned bombs to base. The 720th Sqdn. flying third, hit right of target with no hits on the aiming point. Bombardier was not completely synchronized. The last box, from the 722nd Sqdn., was the only Sqdn. in the group to hit the target. Making a P.D.I. run because of preference, Bombardier HUDSON led his unit on an exceptionally good run to score excellent results.

e. The 376th followed the 450th over the NOVI SAD R.R. BRIDGE to score very satisfactory results. All units hit the I.P. as briefed, were in trail, properly spaced, and squared away for a good bomb run. First box, from the 514th Sqdn. had a normal bomb run; however, intense flak jolted the ship somewhat in the last few seconds, making synchronization more difficult. Although the bombs fell within the 1000 foot circle and gave the box a good percentage score, all bombs missed the bridge. The deputy leader of the 513th Sqdn. took over the lead before I.P. because of auto-pilot malfunction in lead ship. Bombardier experienced some trouble with a smoke covered target, but was able to point the assigned aiming point before bombs away. Although synchronization was reported good, results were unsatisfactory. The 512th Sqdn., flying third, had a run similar to that of the first two boxes. Synchronization was good, and the pattern was very near the aiming point, but no hits were observed on the target. The fourth box from the 515th Sqdn. put their bombs right around the aiming point to score the best results of the group. Although Bombardier BOOSALIS experienced difficulty in picking up the target during the early part of the run, because of smoke from previous bombs, he nevertheless managed to synchronize during the latter part of the run and put his unit's bombs right around the aiming point.

f. Summary: On today's target, the Wing set an All Time Air Force bombing accuracy record by putting 81% of its bombs within the 1000 foot circle. All groups are commended for displaying such a high degree of bombing accuracy. The 98th particularly for having established a new All Time Record of 98.2 percent, merits our highest praise and commendation. It is interesting to note that every attack unit in the Wing conformed to the fundamental principles of "GOOD BOMBING". Each attack unit --- HIT THE I.P., WAS IN TRAIL, PROPERLY SPACED, SQUARED AWAY AT THE TARGET, and PERFORMED A NORMAL SIGHTING OPERATION. Constant application of these fundamental principles will undoubtedly help us to realize our immediate goal of completely destroying every target we bomb and recording 100 percent within the 1000 foot circle. Only with superior team work as demonstrated on today's mission, can we hope to fulfill this aim and thus materially aid in bringing about the successful end of the war at the earliest possible date.

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Authority NNJ745005By RE NARA Date 9-10C O N F I D E N T I A L

<u>GROUP</u>	<u>THIS MISSION</u>	<u>RATING</u>	<u>REPORTS</u>	<u>LAST FIVE</u>	<u>PREVIOUS PRACTICE</u>
98th	98.2	superior	superior	84%	one unit
450th	57.6	very satis.	excellent	68.1%	all units
376th	83.7	very satis.	superior	66.5%	all units
449th	86.	excellent	excellent	53.6	all units
Wing Av.	81.4			68.5	

2. Navigation Analysis:

a. Although 4/10 scattered cumulus type clouds were present at the rendezvous points no time or altitude changes were necessary. The usual MANDU-ILAN-SAN VITO points for the wave rendez spots were used. The 98th and 450th at the former and the 449th and 376th at the latter, in that order with a twenty minute interval between waves. This time difference was scheduled to eliminate all possibility of smoke from the previous groups' bombs from obscuring the target. The last element of the 98th (lead group) was spread out a trifle from the other elements and crossed MANDURIA about 30 seconds later than their allotted time, this forced the 450th to make a dog leg in order to get intrail. This was accomplished and a very good wave formation was formed in the vicinity of SAN VITO. The 449th and 376th experienced the same difficulty in their rendezvous over SAN PAN; however, this wave also was in a well spaced formation in the middle of the Adriatic, on course.

b. The route out was precisely adhered to by the first wave. The 449th, lead of the second wave, inserted a dog leg to the right to by pass the keypoint RAGUSA. This group is still under the impression that anti-aircraft fire will be encountered here. True, quite some time ago, flak was reported here but it is believed to be of a small caliber nature. Other groups passed directly over it, and some units of the 449th did so also, and no flak was reported. The 376th being echeloned to the right of the 449th, found themselves about 8 miles right at this point, which is on the verge of heavy ack-ack fire range from KOTC.

c. The first wave hit the split point of ILINCI at 1033 and 1036 respectively and proceeded to their respective I.P.'s and targets. The briefed axes and target times were:

- (1) 98th on 55° at 1100 (Baja R.R.Bridge)
- (2) 450th on 90° at 1048 (Novi Sad R.R.Bridge)

Actual times and axes were:

- (1) 98th on 55°-58° at 1102-1105
- (2) 450th on 88°-90° at 1046

The second wave also hit the split point and were assigned the BAJA R.R.BRIDGE and NOVI SAD R.R. BRIDGE with the same axes as the first groups over but at 1120 and 1108 respectively.

Actual axes and times were:

- (1) 449th on 31-45 degrees at 1116-1118 (Baja)
- (2) 376th on 90-102 degrees at 1101-1103 (Novi Sad)

Some planes of the 449th had bombs that hung up, so proceeded to VINKOVICI, the alternate, and dropped them there at 1139. Again superior bombing resulting in direct adherence to the briefed bomb run from the I.P.

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By R.T. NARA Date 1-9-10

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d. No escort was scheduled. Numerous P-38's and P-51's were seen by the 98th and 449th in the OSIJEK area.

e. All groups returned individually on the briefed course.

f. Individual group ratings:

- (1) 98th - navigation superior - logs superior
- (2) 450th - navigation superior - logs superior
- (3) 449th - navigation superior - logs superior
- (4) 376th - navigation superior - logs superior

g. Lts. MICHAUD, FOCKLER, STRACK and HALE, lead navigators of their respective groups are to be commended for their superior work on this mission.

h. Communications: All group commanders reported that the frequencies used were very satisfactory except that Maj. WOOD of the 376th had some trouble with the air to ground frequency.

3. P.F.F. Analysis:

a. P.F.F. ships stood down for mission of 21 September 1944.

By command of Brigadier General RUSH:

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

DISTRIBUTION:

- 6 - C.G. XV A.F.
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