

April- for the Forty Ninth Wing- was a big month, a fitting climax to the operational close of the air war over Europe.

A multiple array of tasks, extending to strategic bombing behind four individual fronts, and the finest individual bombing performance in Fifteenth Air Force history-- these were April's high points for Brigadier General William L Lee's Wing.

Sands, Wing Navigator and PRO respectively, became majors on the 17th of the month.

The principal personnel change affected the vital A-3 task as a former assistant, Col. Brooks Lawhon, took over, relieving Col. Raymond Todd who became Deputy Commander of the 451st Group. Col Lawhon came overseas with the Wing as Ass't A-3, worked his way up to become C.O. of the 461st and returned to the Wing upon completion of his 35 missions. Col. Craven C. Rogers replaced the departed 461st commander.

As Assistant A-3, Col. Robert Worden, a recent arrival from the U.S., took over on 17 April 1944.

FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING
GENERAL
A.P.O. 520
201.22 12 April 1945
SUBJECT: Commendation

1. The following cables have been sent from the Commanding General, Eighth Army and the Commanding General, Fifteenth Army Group, respectively, to the Commander-In-Chief, MAAF, who has passed same to this headquarters with his congratulations and appreciation.

"Much appreciated is the wholehearted support of the Fifteenth Air Force on 9 and 10 April. The carpet bombing in front of our assaulting divisions, I am convinced, has been one of the decisive factors in our rapid advance to the Santerao River. The degree of success attained shows how enthusiastically all personnel tackled these close support missions. I fully realize the special and intensive training that this task demanded of all bombing crews."

"I want you to know how fully I appreciate the splendid and effective air support which the air forces have already given us in the current attack. The excellent cooperation we have received from all air force personnel starting with the early planning phase has been a source of special gratification. I am confident of your all-out support in the future. Our air-ground team is now a great success."

2. I am particularly gratified to pass these well-earned commendations to all units of the command and to add my own praise for an outstanding demonstration of successful coordinated effort between air and ground forces.

N.F. TWINING
Major General, USA
Commanding
DISTRIBUTION 'H' PLUS AOC,205 GROUP, RAF

HEADQUARTERS 49TH BOMBARDMENT WING(H)
APO 520 U S ARMY

28 April 1945

SUBJECT; Bombing-Navigation-Pathfinder Analysis for
26 April 1945.

TO: C O, 451st Bomb Group, APO 520, U.S. Army
C O 461st Bomb Group, APO 520, U.S. Army
C O 484th Bomb Group, APO 520, U.S. Army

1. Bombing Analysis.

a. The 451st, 484th, and 461st Bomb Groups were briefed to attack the CORTINA AMMUNITION STORES DUMP employing normal effort, Colonel Stefonowicz of the 451st BG was the Combat Wing Commander.

b. The 451st BG led by Colonel Stefonowicz, with Lt White as bombardier, bombed SACHSENBURG M/Y, AUSTRIA, as an alternate target. One ship, the flight lead in Charlie flight, bombed KLAGENFURT M/Y as a target of opportunity. Good results were observed. All boxes had long smooth runs, but a thick ground haze impaired visibility. Able box had a good concentration of bombs on their briefed bombsight malfunction, however, the deputy was setting up rate, and the wing men toggled on his bombs. This pattern started on the M/A and extended over in a very long pattern. Dog flight's bombs started at their briefed MPI in a compact pattern. Fox flight's bombs were on their briefed MPI and extended over in a fairly long pattern. They bombed with four boxes in trail, seven to nine aircraft to a box. A total of 32 aircraft flew over the target.

c. The 484th BG, led by Major Trotter, with Lt Laver as bombardier, bombed the M/Y at SPITTAL, AUSTRIA as an alternate target. The first attack unit bombed with boxes in trail. On the first run the target was overcast, so they made another run, at which time it could be picked up visually. Able flight's bombs were squarely on their briefed MPI in well concentrated pattern with the bombs from two aircraft extending over due to late toggling. Baker flight's bombs were on their briefed MPI, starting a little short and extending through the yard. The second attack unit was separated from the first in weather and was unable to bomb any target visually. They returned their bombs to the base. There were six and seven aircraft in Able and Baker box, respectively. A total of 13 aircraft dropped their bombs.

d. The 461st BG, led by Colonel Rogers, with Lt Connelly as bombardier, bombed the M/Y at LIENZ, AUSTRIA as an alternate target. Able flight's bombs were generally to the right of the briefed MPI. Baker flight's bombs were on their briefed MPI in a fairly long pattern that started at the near edge of the yard and extended through the yard to the extreme edge of the yard. Dog flight's bombs were in the vicinity of the target, being slightly over from the briefed MPI. Easy flight's leader had trouble with both the C-1 auto pilot and the PDI, and was forced to talk the pilot on course. He did not quite have all of the drift taken out when the bombs went away, and the resulting pattern was over and to the right of the briefed MPI, with some hits in the vicinity of the target and many hits in the town immediately adjacent to the yard. They bombed with four boxes in trail, seven to eight aircraft in each box. A total of 30 aircraft flew over the target.