

TARGET:

A REPORT OF, BY AND FOR
COMBAT FLYING PERSONNEL

CONFIDENTIAL



WEEK ENDING
DEC. 9,
1944

VICTORY

AIR-RAIL WAR RAGES



MAJ. WILLIAM J. HOVDE: 355TH

Shot down 5½ FW 190s and Me 109s
on Tuesday (Dec. 5), flying escort.
Day's total claims for 2BD were 28.

BIELEFELD LIB-BATTERED, FIGHTERS TOPPLE TRANSPORT

With Allied superiority in the air pinning back Jerry's wings, 2BD fighters and bombers are now teaming to keep him from riding the rails.

Wednesday's (Dec. 6) Lib H2X attacks on Bielefeld marshalling yard ringed the target with a tight collection of patterns that must have convinced Jerry the heavy cloud covering was real only to his eyes. (Photos on page 7.)

The rail junction used as MPI was completely blanketed by two concentrations of high explosive bursts, mostly 1,000-pounders. Direct hits were scored also on adjacent sidings, main through lines, passenger station, city power plant, and factories.

Fighter strafing analysis for 2BD groups (65th Fighter Wing) in November shows 73 locomotives destroyed plus 96 damaged, and 68 rail cars destroyed, 535 damaged.

Operating at extreme long range in a month of bad weather, these results are outstanding in addition to their escort work. 2BD fighters destroyed 182 enemy aircraft (110 of them in air) during the month, and damaged 50 more.



EAGLE CLAWS THE SERPENT:

By bomber and fighter, 2BD slashes the crawling cargoes of Hun supply and transport.

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ALLIES FLY BEFORE THEY WALK

The Lib and Fort have now proved they can steal across enemy lines and destroy heavy defenses in intimate contact with our own ground forces, weather barriers notwithstanding.

It took courage and confidence to prove this ability. Ground forces now are grateful and excited about it. "Doughboys thank you for a fine job," stated Maj. Gen. Terry Allen, commanding the 104th Infantry Division, after the Reichsweiler area attacks on November 16.

As Lt. Gen. Patton strolled about the Metz-Verny area on November 19 after an air-gaged advance into these fortifications, he was inspired to pen his impressions to Lt. Gen. Spaatz and Lt. Gen. Doolittle -- "tell him also how much the 3rd Army appreciates the magnificent support rendered." His letter is quoted on page 8 of this issue.

Both of these memorable attacks used GE instruments for navigation and bombing. How long ago would such achievements have been termed fantastic? They testify that 8th Air Force, including our own 2BD, remain the first-line challenge to Germany's defense.



"Betty Jane" -- flying a wing position today, one of hundreds that pack the k.o. punch of 2BD.

"BETTY JANE", OF 389th, LAYS HER PFF EGGS



A cloudy winter day over Germany. It's her 41st mission, and she's alert for the PFF release sign from the lead.



Lead ship crews carry heavy responsibility, but only one load of bombs. Wing ships make the pattern, knock out the Hun.



Bombs away -- sharply on signal -- as Betty Jane's potent eggs head for their Rheinland munitions nest.



REIMS MARSHALLING YARD

***CLOSEUP PHOTOS PRESENT PREVIEW OF
PARALYSIS NOW ATTACKING GERMANY***

29 aircraft from three 28D groups attacked Reims marshalling yard on May 20, 1944. Their NFI was the turn table and locomotive sheds in the center of the yard. Delivery was perfect. Thousand-pounders demolished the turn-table, the roundhouse, and 29 locomotives were destroyed, at least 48 damaged.

In the report of a high French railway official, damage to repair facilities was even more costly to the Germans than the loss of locomotives and tracking. To rail attacks he attributed success of the battle of Normandy. No traffic could flow thru this Paris-Ruhr link for three weeks -- by then D-Day had happened.

Germany now faces much larger bombing forces, concentrated to ruining the Reich's links with the Western front. Remove this Reims scene to a hundred German marshalling centers. Couple with this the crippling of oil production for motor transport, and you have the Achilles heel that could win the forthcoming invasion of Germany for us even if we did not possess the more powerful army at the front.



**EN ROUTE
TO REIMS**



**REIMS MARSHALLING YARD
AN INSTANT BEFORE ATTACK:**

Flak was accurate, but 280 Lib bombs were infinitely more so.

REIMS M/Y PRESENTS PREVIEW



(continued from page three)

A troop train delayed here on May 30 was bombed with 1500 Huns aboard -- 600 were casualties. Not a civilian was killed in the 280 attack of May 20, and only one was wounded. About this precision the French were enthusiastic.

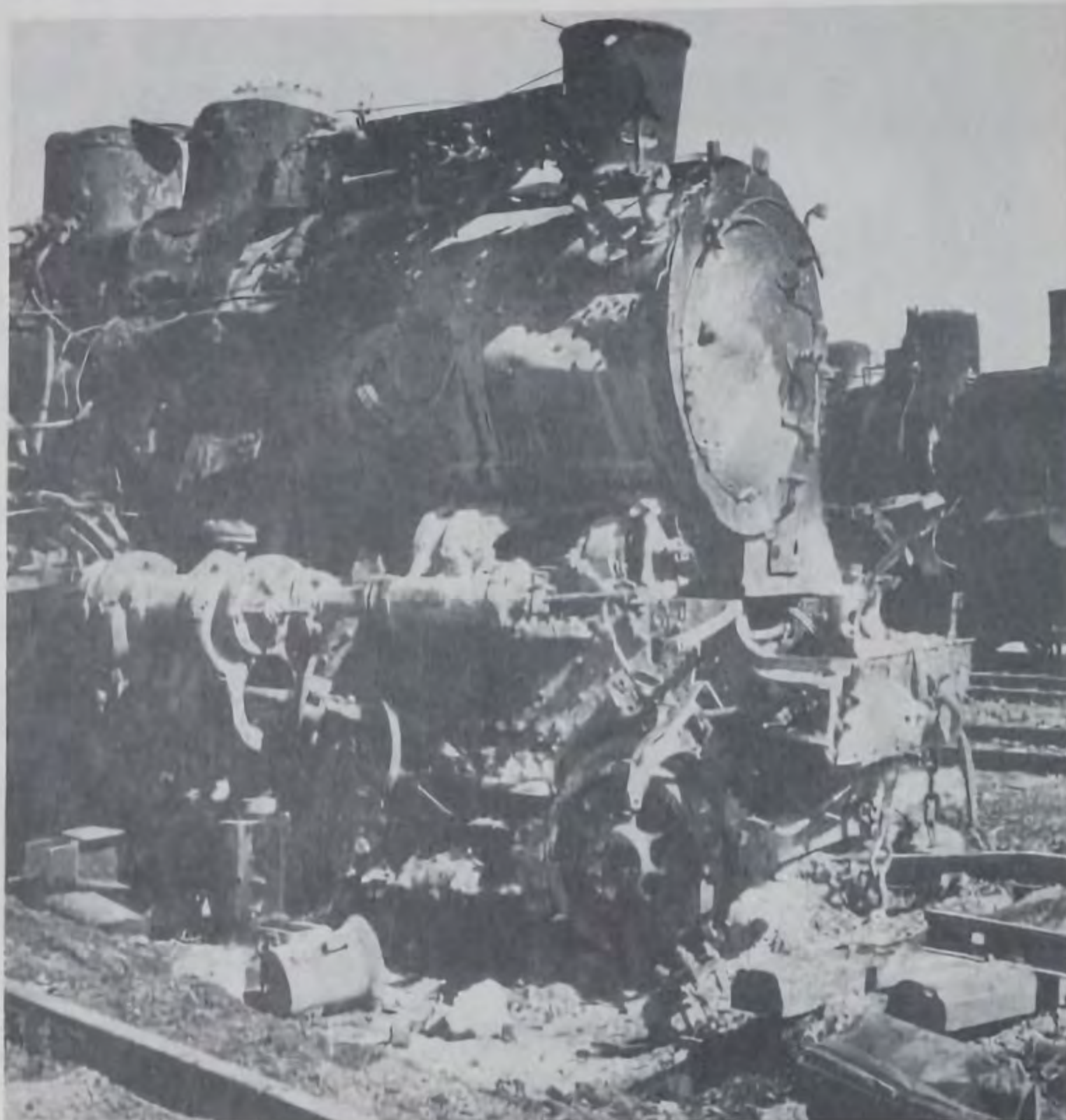
Photo-scoring of the three Groups' strike patterns showed 389th on top -- both of their squadrons placing 100% in 2000 feet, one squadron hitting 90% within 1000 feet of the assigned MPI. 453rd and 445th contributed scores of 94% and 55%, with damage excellent by all three Groups.

Winter accuracy has difficulty approaching the record levels, yet each week several groups seize an opportunity to assist sharp instrument runs with moments of visual, and the cloud-bombing standard climbs higher and higher. The excellent jobs coming in now show not only rehearsed coordination, but high ingenuity in using the short-lived opportunities that will occur for visual checks.



THE MPI WAS
TURNTABLES AND
LOCOMOTIVE SHEDS:

This damage remained
for our closeup inspec-
tion many weeks after
the knockout attack.



100 HORSEPOWER
FOR THE HUN:

REIMS M/Y PRESENTS PREVIEW



**FRENCH WORKERS GLADLY
GAVE INFORMATION ON RAIDS**

Their names and faces
were kept secret.



BEST HIT BY A GROUP THIS WEEK



458TH GROUP'S BOMBS ON BIELEFELD WERE PHOTOED BY 466TH AND 467TH

458th MARSHALS 85% IN MPI RING

FRASER-SABO COMBO BEATS 10/10 SHIELD, 30 SECONDS VISUAL

The crews of the 458th Bomb Group capture the spotlight this week for one of the most successful jobs of the winter -- but they can thank their 96th Wing buddies, the 466th and 467th Groups, for bringing home the proof.

Bielefeld fan-danced beneath broader cover than Sally Rand would wear to an ice-skating ballet, and as 458th approached (leading the Division) the target was wrapped in 10/10. That kept Mickey Navigator 1st/Lt. J. E. Sabo and Lead Bombardier 1st/Lt. D. A. Fraser busy and breathless. Thirty seconds before bombs away, Bielefeld gave them a visual peek, then hid completely. They could only guess and hope where their bombs had fallen. But when a window appeared, the 466th and 467th caught unmistakable pictures of 458th's bullseye pattern.

85% of the Group's total smashed inside the 2000 foot circle -- 50% within 1000 feet of the MPI. That's hot even for visual -- for H2X-assisted it's sizzling. Take a bow, 458th!



THE BOMBS FELL THROUGH CLOUDS:

Mickey led the way, Visual gave some assistance.

"I HAVE NEVER SEEN SO MANY LARGE CHUNKS OF CONCRETE..."

Quotation from a letter addressed to
Lieut. Gen. Carl A. Spaatz, commanding U.S. Strategic AF Europe
by Lt. Gen. George S. Patton, 19 November 1944,
regarding the GH-aimed heavy bomber support in Metz area.

"This morning, I was in the Verny group of forts which, as you remember, was the No. 1 priority in the bombing attack which you put over on the 9th. One of the forts was completely removed -- I have never seen so many large chunks of concrete in my life.

"Another fort, which we are now occupying as a Command Post for the 5th Division, was not hit but the people were so badly scared that they all left, because we occupied it without firing a shot. Also, the No. 2 priority fort, north-east of No. 1, received direct hits and was occupied without firing.

"I would appreciate very much if you would transmit this information to Jimmy Doolittle, and tell him also how much the 3rd Army appreciates the magnificent support rendered.

"We are now in Metz. About half the forts have been taken or found unoccupied; the other half are contained. There is a limited amount of street fighting now taking place."

LT.GEN. G. S. PATTON, JR.
Commanding,
Third U. S. Army

ERRATUM:

In Nov. 25 issue, the Air Sea Rescue Detachment B, commanded by Capt. Edward L. Larson, was incorrectly identified as part of 56th Fighter Group. This rescue unit is a Detachment of 65th Fighter Wing.



TARGET:
VICTORY'S

NOMINATION FOR
OUTSTANDING

"MAN-OF-THE-DIVISION"

LIEUT. ROSSLYN PRICE

When 2BD organized its own Air-Sea Rescue service in Spring of '44, perplexing safety problems stood unsolved. Division and Group rescue officers united in search of the answers.

First Lieut. Rosslyn Price, of 491st Bomb Group, set up an

inventor's shop in his Air-Sea Rescue office. Here he designed and built three different safety belts now placed in service. He has just completed a fourth safety device -- a strong cable which guards against the peril of the Martin turret crashing into the flight deck during ditching.

In the States, Lieut. Price (then an enlisted man) flew on sea patrol as radio operator in B-24s, until grounded by ear ailments. Capt. Holmes M. Alexander, 2BD Air Sea Rescue officer, who directed research for the safety inventions, states: "Lieutenant Price's ingenuity and industriousness have surpassed his duties as Group Air-Sea Rescue officer. His work has become highly important to the whole 2nd Division."

His originations have won him the Bronze Star, and are safeguarding the crews of dozens of B-24s now in operation.



RADIOMAN,
RESCUER,
INVENTOR
PRICE