

GR 219-54-OP (3 name)
 Nov 42 - Nov 43

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GP-317-SU-OP (NOV-29-43)

SECRET

Sheet No. 1 Review of a year's operations - 91st Bomb Gp. M. - Decimomannu

November 29, 1943

Prepared by Lt. William B. Monroe, Jr., as PRO

Lt. Col. Joseph R. Holzapple's "Big-tail Birds" today bombed Grosseto airdrome on Italy's west coast to mark the completion of a full year of hedge-hopping, skip-bombing and medium altitude raids against the Axis in the Mediterranean theater.

The AAF B-26 Marauders of the theater's oldest medium bomb group started operations a year ago, 28 November 1943, when a nine-plane formation hit the Tunisian port of Sfax, sweeping in from the sea at deck level and pulling up to a mere thousand feet to drop their bombs, which left docks and warehouses aflame.

The anniversary bombing of Grosseto, effected through a hole in thick cloud layers, post-holed the runway and resulted in hits on airdrome buildings and revetments. It was the group's 123rd mission.

The only similarity between Sfax and Grosseto was the flak, which today "looked like greasy mushrooms coming up through the clean clouds," according to T/Sgt. Peter T. Miller, 4084, S. Artesian Ave., Chicago, a waist gunner.

The Marauders have carried out 2,582 sorties against enemy airfields, shipping and communications. Their plane nose scoreboards of swastikas and ship symbols show nine enemy ships sunk, 106 enemy fighters shot down, 44 probably destroyed and 56 damaged. The group operated in the infancy of the North African Air Force with fewer planes than now are assigned one squadron.

Colonel Holzapple, of Peoria, Ill., on Nov. 6 was presented the British Distinguished Flying Cross for pioneering in the development of skip-bombing tactics and the American Distinguished Flying Cross for leading a six-plane formation on Jan. 22 which sank two Axis freighters and shot down five German pursuits.

A DFC for skip-bombing also went to Maj. Donald L. Gilbert of Redwood City, Cal., who, according to legend, judged his proper approach level by the tail gunner's complaint that the guns were getting wet.

Switching to medium altitude raids, the big-tails hit Italian marshalling yards and aided in the five-day aerial envelopment of Pantelleria. They "sweated out" the flak of Messina, Naples and Rome's Ciampino airdrome, and in the critical days of Salerno duplicated their Pantelleria record for number of sorties in two days by three-a-day raids against German-held roads and bridges.

Sheet No: 2 Review of a year's operations - 319th Bomb Gp. M. - Decimomannu

29 November, 1943

Prepared by Lt. William B. Monroe, Jr., as PRO

The group weathered barrage type flak to bomb a Gerbini, Sicily, satellite airfield and coming home shot down 19 enemy fighters, probably destroying four more. Two bombers were lost.

Over Italy August 22 they knocked down 24 fighters and probably destroyed 14 others against a loss of five. Four days later the B-26 of 1st Lt. Gwynn N. Robinson, 230 E. 71st, New York City, flying at 50 feet altitude over the sea on one engine, shot down five me 109's in a 35-minute battle before crash landing in friendly waters.

Attacking the German communications center of Alife, Italy, on Oct. 13, the formation found its planned approach blocked by clouds, picked the only clear approach and laid its entire bomb pattern within the small town. Incredible tales of returning crews -- "a square-shaped column of smoke rising from a square town" -- were confirmed by photos and later by commendations from Air Chief Marshal Tedder and Major General Jimmy Doolittle.

The group went over the Salon bomber base north of Marseilles on Nov. 16 in the first daylight medium bomber attack on Southern France.

Of the planes the "Big-tail Birds" have put over the target in the course of a year, only 1.7 per cent were lost to all types of enemy action -- an average that would be considerably lower omitting the first 20 missions. Of men over the target, only ~~XX~~ .735 are prisoners, missing in action or wounded sufficiently to be transferred. Thus, more than half of the personnel of bombers destroyed by enemy action returned to their base to fly again.

HEADQUARTERS 319TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (MEDIUM)
 ARMY AIR FORCES
 APO 520

Statistics of 319th Bomb. Group in North African Theatre

Mission No.	Date	Sorties	A/C Dest.	Probable	Damaged	Losses: Planes	Personnel	Crash landed in friendly territory
No. 1	11-28-42	9				1	1	
No. 2	11-30-42	9				1	1	
No. 3	12-02-42	12				1	1	
No. 4	12-14-42	7				1	6 (Jones)	1
No. 5	12-12-42	7				2	6 (Kelly)	1
No. 6	13-12-42	5				1		
No. 7	14-12-43	6				1	5 (Arnold)	
No. 8	15-12-42	7				1		
No. 9	17-12-42	5	3			2	12 (Gibbs & Leonard)	
No. 10	18-12-42	5	1					
No. 11	31-12-42	5						
No. 12	1-1-43	3	1	2				
No. 13	9-1-43	3						
No. 14	12-1-43	5						
No. 14	14-1-43	6						
No. 14	14-1-43	5						
No. 15	15-1-43	5						
No. 16	16-1-43	5						
No. 17	16-1-43	5						
No. 18	21-1-43	4						
No. 19	22-1-43	4						
No. 20	22-1-43	5						
No. 21	23-1-43	4						
No. 22	27-1-43	4						
No. 23	28-1-43	3	1		1	2	1 (Miller)	2
No. 24	29-1-43	6	3	2		2	6 (Lane)	
No. 24	30-1-43	6						
No. 25	31-1-43	6						
No. 25	3-2-43	11				2	6 (Mix)	
No. 26	13-2-43	5	3	2	11	1	3 (Hale)	Crashed at Oujda
No. 27	17-4-43	5			2			
TOTAL		159	18	9	14	16	47	

(Reconnaissance mission)

GP-319-50-OP
 28 Nov 1943
 OLT 442-1443

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 DOD DIR 5200.9

REF ID: A66000
 39-319-56-OP
 17 Dec 1942

ENEMY **319TH GROUP** **PLANES**
SCORE BOARD

DATE	MISSION NO.	DESTROYED	PROBABLE	DAMAGED	GLAMMANT
DECEMBER 17, 1942	9	✖ AU 88			CORP. F. W. MCDELL 438TH LT. S. L. DARR S/SGT. R. P. GULLER 438TH S/SGT. W. A. MOHLER S/SGT. W. A. MOHLER
JANUARY 9, 1943	13		✖ ME 109		ENEMY: F. L. SAVOY SGT. R. E. COLLIERE SGT. F. V. QUINCY JR.
JANUARY 9, 1943	13		✖ ME 109		S/SGT. W. A. MOHLER 438TH
JANUARY 9, 1943	13		✖ ME 109		SGT. R. A. RIDGS 438TH
JANUARY 22, 1943	19	✖ ME 109			S/SGT. W. A. MOHLER 438TH
JANUARY 22, 1943	19	✖ ME 109			S/SGT. E. L. SAVOY 437TH
JANUARY 22, 1943	19	✖ ME 110			S/SGT. H. F. COLTRITS 457TH
JANUARY 22, 1943	19	✖ ME 110			S/SGT. R. V. DAVILA 439TH
JANUARY 22, 1943	19	✖ ME 110			S/SGT. H. L. FLEISHMAN 439TH
JANUARY 22, 1943	19	✖ ME 110			SGT. A. SIMONOWITZ 437TH
JANUARY 22, 1943	19			✖ ME 109	S/SGT. V. W. ONLAND 439TH
JANUARY 23, 1943	23	✖ ME 109			S/SGT. G. D. MCDURE 438TH
JANUARY 23, 1943	23	✖ ME 110			CORP. G. D. HOLTON 438TH
JANUARY 23, 1943	23	✖ ME 110			S/SGT. E. L. TAYLOR S/SGT. P. A. WOLFE S/SGT. V. A. VAN ANTWERP S/SGT. L. L. WILGATE
JANUARY 23, 1943	23		✖ ME 109		CORP. J. R. MOOK 438TH
JANUARY 23, 1943	23		✖ ME 110		LT. S. L. DARR 438TH
JANUARY 23, 1943	23	✖ ME 109			S/SGT. R. V. KLINKE JR. SGT. W. F. QUINCY
JANUARY 23, 1943	23			✖ ME 109	S/SGT. E. H. GORDON S/SGT. T. GISHM
FEBRUARY 3, 1943	26		✖ ME 109		CORP. R. H. O'DELL 438TH
FEBRUARY 3, 1943	26			✖ ME 110	LT. R. L. JONES TS/SGT. C. W. ALLEN S/SGT. A. F. AYER S/SGT. R. V. DAVILA
FEBRUARY 3, 1943	26			✖ ME 110	S/SGT. H. L. FLEISHMAN S/SGT. R. E. WEBER S/SGT. R. V. DAVILA
FEBRUARY 3, 1943	26			✖ ME 110	SGT. H. L. FLEISHMAN S/SGT. S. E. WEBER
FEBRUARY 3, 1943	26			✖ ME 109	CORP. G. D. HOLTON 438TH
FEBRUARY 13, 1943	27	✖ ME 109			TS/SGT. C. D. PIPER 437TH
FEBRUARY 13, 1943	27	✖ ME 109			CORP. G. D. HOLTON 438TH
FEBRUARY 13, 1943	27	✖ ME 109			S/SGT. O. S. JOHNSON 439TH
FEBRUARY 13, 1943	27		✖ ME 109		S/SGT. S. I. WEBER 439TH
FEBRUARY 13, 1943	27		✖ ME 109		S/SGT. W. F. GOOCH 457TH
FEBRUARY 13, 1943	27			✖ ME 109	CORP. G. D. HOLTON 438TH
FEBRUARY 13, 1943	27			✖ ME 109	CORP. G. D. HOLTON 438TH
JANUARY 22, 1943	19	✖ ME 110			SGT. T. P. MELLISKEY 437TH












* JANUARY 22, 1943
 * LATER VERIFIED

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ENEMY **319TH GROUP** **SHIPS**
SCORE BOARD

DATE	MISSION NO	DESTROYED OR DAMAGED	BOMBER CREW
JANUARY 21, 1943	18	MEDIUM FREIGHTER 	PAULSEN BURT DELGHEERTY LOVE TRAYLOR VAN ANTWERP
JANUARY 22, 1943	19	LARGE FREIGHTER 	HOLZAPFLE LIGHTY NELLER MOKLER BARNES
		CARGO LINER 	GRAHAM BAKER APPRODE SINKOWITZ MELUSKEY
JANUARY 23, 1943	20	LARGE SUPPLY BARGE 	GILBERT MELDON DARR MOCK HOLTUN
		LARGE SUPPLY BARGE 	MEYERS GRIMM DREFFEN KENT FERRELL
JANUARY 29, 1943	23	LARGE CARGO LINER 	GILBERT MELDON DARR MOCK HOLTUN
		CARGO LINER 	NEK ROOSMAN CALLEE HOLGATE WOLFE
FEBRUARY 3, 1943	28	MEDIUM CARGO LINER 	HOLZAPFLE LEBAY GIBKIN GRAY HOLTUN
		CARGO LINER 	MEMORY BANK CATT DE GURIE BELLINO
JANUARY 28, 1943	23	DESTROYER 	GILBERT MELDON DARR MOCK HOLTUN
JANUARY 21, 1943	18	FREIGHTER 	SPRING SUNBERLAND REFLEX WILCOX PHEBUS FLITENBERG

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