



**Operation Ratweek**  
**featuring Josip Tito**

**& the  
BAF**

**also: RAF, USAAF, ICB  
IANR, Luftwaffe**

# Operation Ratweek & The Balkan Air Force

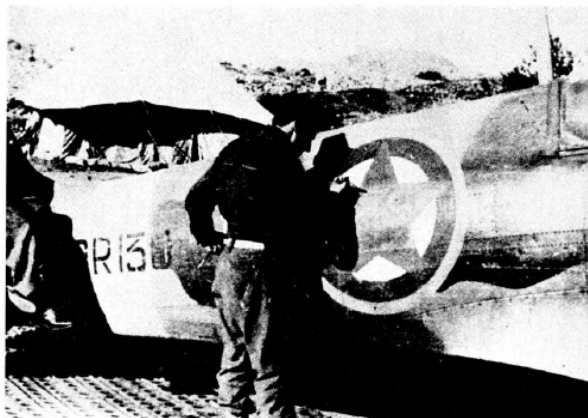
September 1 - 7, 1944



Simply referred to by Partisan Supreme Headquarters as Destruction of communications on Yugoslav front from one to 7 September 1944, Operation Ratweek was major joint effort of Allied air forces and Yugoslav partisans.

The Balkan Air Force (BAF) was established by Eisenhower in June 1944. Based in Bari and Brindisi in liberated southern Italy, the BAF was tasked with co-ordinating Allied operations in the Adriatic.

*Uvertavanje simbola nove Jugoslavije na trupu aviona Prve eskadrile u Benini, severna Afrika*



The Balkan Air Force was a multinational unit, with 15 types of aircraft and men from eight nations: Greece, co-belligerent Italy, Poland, South Africa, Yugoslavia, the UK, USA and USSR (a transport squadron).

William Elliott, BAF Air Officer Commanding, set out three goals: providing air support to Tito's Yugoslavian Partisans, establishing a base on the Dalmatian coast, and organizing attacks on German forces in Yugoslavia and the Adriatic.



The BAF's first success was the establishment of the Balkan Air Terminal Service (BATS). Five BATS teams were parachuted into Yugoslavia, where they made contact with the Partisans and set up a network of concealed airstrips. The flow of Allied supplies to the Partisans increased dramatically, while a base for irregular Allied land operations was established on the



Partisan-controlled island of Vis (Portrayed in game by Valona). (As the Adriatic Coast of Albania represents the Dalmatian Coast of Yugoslavia).

As the Germans, struggling to stay ahead of the advancing Soviets, withdrew from Greece through Yugoslavia, the Allies wanted to close the

escape routes out of the Balkan States.

The plan probably originated from ULTRA decrypts revealing the planned withdrawal of the German Army from the Adriatic coastline and Army Group E from Greece where more than 350,000 German soldiers were used for occupation and coastal defense duties. Disrupting German withdrawal schedules would have serious consequences as subsequent events showed.



Marshal Tito govori postrojenim pilotima posle snobne sa Vite

**Tito Inspects His Pilots**

The BAF launched Operation Ratweek, coordinated with Partisan operations on the ground and 15th USAAF's heavy bomber raids on German communications, supply lines, rail and highways, the first week of September 1944. BAF fighter attacks -- destroyed aircraft, lorries and locomotives as well as severely damaging the rail and road network.

Axis forces had 4187 killed, around 2000 wounded and 5782 captured soldiers

Following the success of Ratweek, relations with the Partisans began to deteriorate, with ground troops meeting political and even physical resistance. While the Allies had greatly enhanced Tito's military strength, his political authority was not to be diluted.

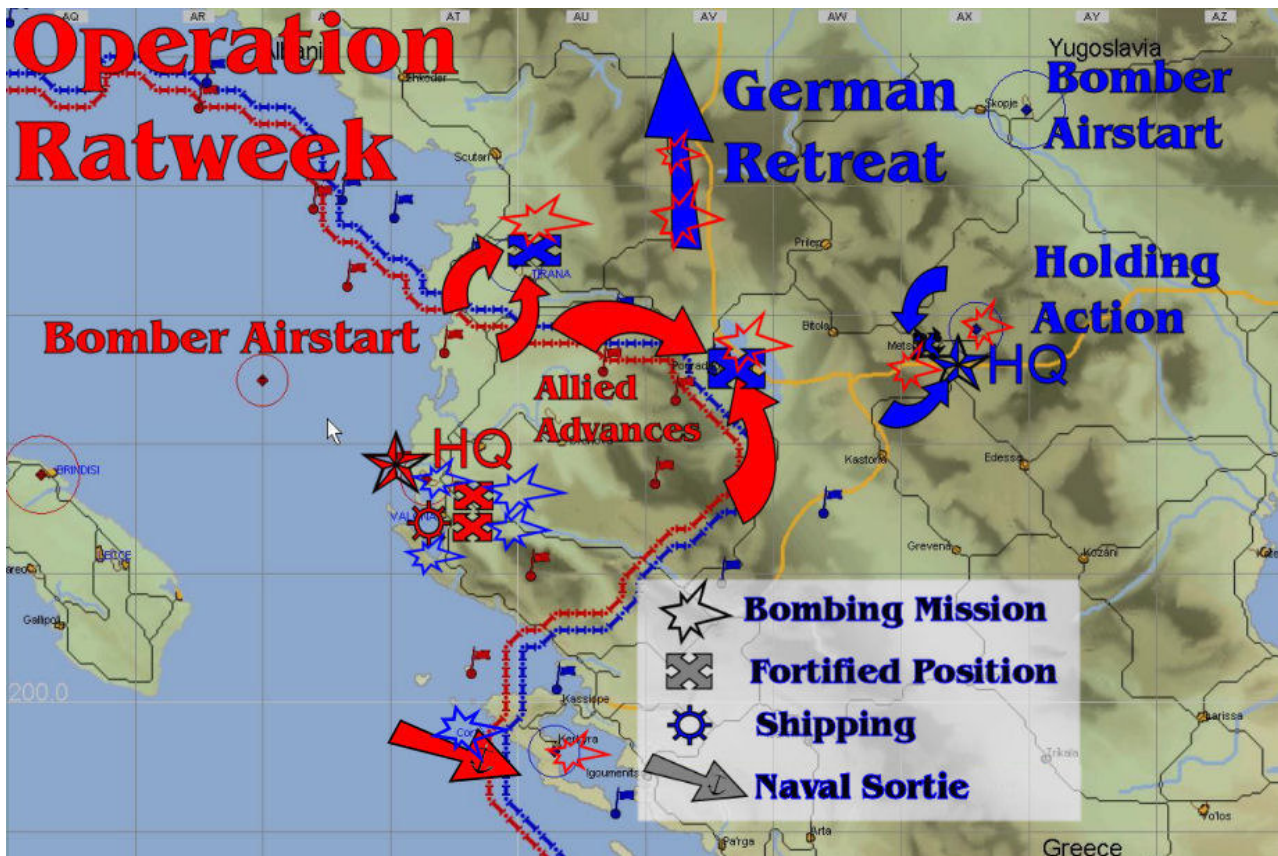
# Operation Ratweek Briefing 3-21

Balkans' Adriatic Coast: 0900 local time

September 1, 1944

Weather: Clear, Warm. Few Clouds 1500m

The Germans have been feeling the heat from the



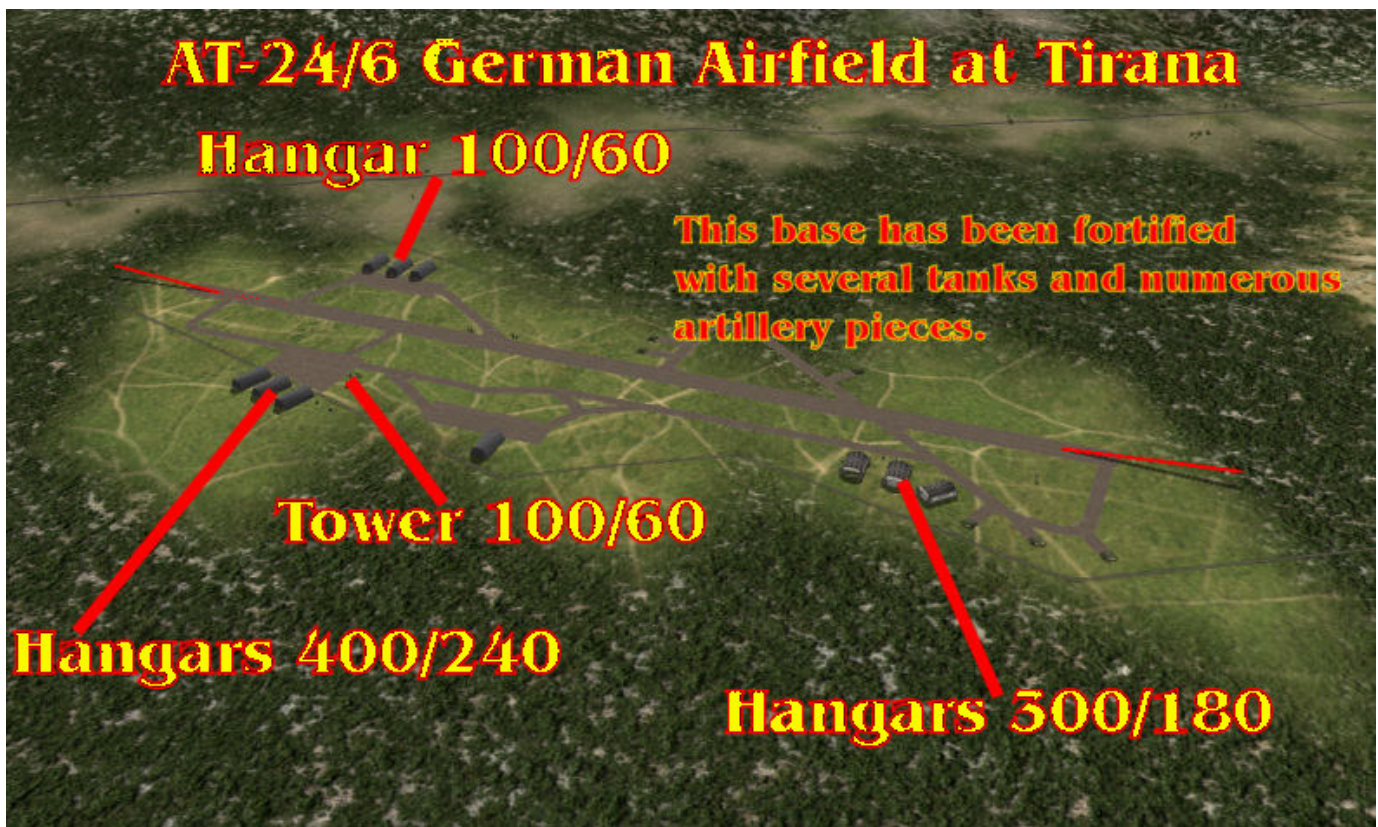
Russians for over a year, and are pulling their Armies out of Greece. Evacuating North through Yugoslavia, they hope to get their Forces back to the Fatherland, and not cut off and surrounded in the Balkans.

Using fortified positions to cover their retreat, a large Axis force is moving North through Yugoslavia (AV-24).

## Allied (Red)

The Allies want to slow this escape down a little, and perhaps, cut some of these Nazis off from their home. September 1, 1944, the Allies launch Operation Ratweek, aimed at disrupting Axis lines of communication, supply, and retreat.

American B-24s, B-17s, and B-25s support Partisan Ground Offensives against German fortified positions at the airfield at Tirana (AT-26), and the Lakeside town of Pogradec (AV-23)

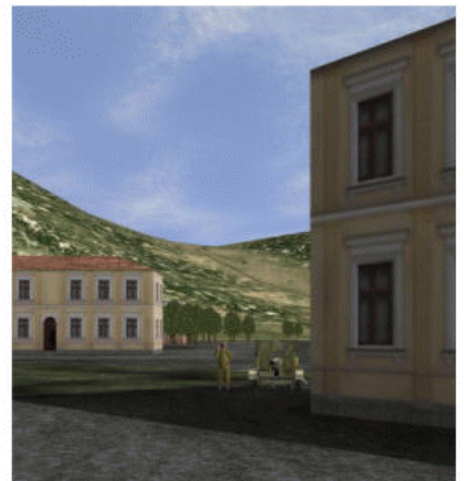


The Partisans have some armor to support their mechanized infantry, but they will need the support of the USAAF and its bombers to overwhelm the Germans.

Especially in Pogradec. No bonus points but Armor must be reduced for Allies to take objective.

## German Armor and Artillery in Pogradec

### AV-23



The Partisans will launch their attack on the Tirana

Airfield at 0930, and the attack on Pogradec at 0940. USAAF bombers must have dropped their ordnance before then. These are the Americans' first two Primary Targets.

The third Primary Target is the German District HQ in Metsovo (AX-23/7), close to their central airfield.



Numbers represent destroyed points if hit by the attacker, and bonus points for the defender if the object survives. Destroyed/Survive.

A Final Primary Target, yes it is a busy day, is the German Column retreating North through the Sar Planina. (AV-24 to 26).



The Royal Navy is sending two Destroyers against the Fascist Italian Airbase at Kerkyra on Corfu (AU-20), if we have the personnel and the time, we can assist.

So, as Allies, American Bombers soften up the Partisans objectives of Tirana and Pogradec. They also target the German HQ at Metsovo. Before the Hour is up the Allies (could be partisans flying in YNLA colors) need to hunt down the Germans running North, and give the Royal Navy a little cover.

## Axis (Blue)

Leave Greece to the Greeks, I say. Who needs a woman who can grow a better mustache than I can? Gotta beat the Ruskies back to Berlin, meine Freund, and save the Fuhrer's Arse one more time. What? You say, you are the new Political Officer, from the SS? Arrgh!

Well, Sieg Hiel meine Kammaraden! Let's get on with this briefing, so we can kick some inferior monkey races butt!



OK, so we are leaving the Balkans, and we are leaving today. But we don't want those dilettante lackey dogs nipping at our heels on the way out the door. We have established Fortified Strong points at the Airfield at Tirana and the Lakeside town of Pogradec to cover the redeployment. When the time comes for these forces to withdraw, they will leapfrog their way out. covering each others withdrawal.

The Airfield at Metsovo is being fortified, with every mobile AAA battery on its way there. That base will be the last to go, we will use it to cover all the redeployment.

As our Primary Objective we will send fighter patrols out to cover troops and equipment on the road, but the best defense is always a good offence.

That's why we need to strike at the Heart of these Communist Pirates, that call themselves Partisans.



A few well placed bombs could sew much confusion through the ranks of Tito's "People's Army".

YNLA AF



Italian ACI (Allied)



RAF



Just a couple of Kilometers further down the road, is the

Port of Valona, full of ships bringing American goods and materials to Tito's Army of Liberation. Most of these Ships are still waiting to unload.



It is a secondary target. Shipping should be considered Targets of Opportunity with no bonus points attached.

Italian ANR (Axis)



Luftwaffe



US Army Air Force



We have spotted two Royal Navy Destroyers heading ESE towards Corfu, and our Italian Allies Airfield at Kerkyra.

# Royal Navy Destroyers in AS-21/2 Sailing ESE to Corfu to attack Kerkyra. ~~400/250~~ **zero** each.



The Luftwaffe has considerable stores of torpedoes at the Metsovo Base, and two different planes to carry them.

All Planes are Limited;

BAF Base Brindisi

P-47D 27 . . . . . 5  
P-51D 20NT . . . 8

USAAF Airstart

B-17G . . . . . 5  
B-24J 100CF . . 5  
B-25G 1NA . . . 4  
P-38G-15-LO . . 3  
P-47D 27 . . . . . 2  
P-51D 25NA . . 3

YNLA Base Drenova

SpitfireMkVc4xH . .4

Luftwaffe/Tirana

Bf-109G6 Trop . . . .5  
Fi-156 . . . . . 5

BAF/YNLA Base Volna

B-24J . . . . . 1  
CR-42BA . . . . . 14  
G-55 . . . . . 7  
HurricaneMkIId . . . .8  
P-39N1 . . . . . 14  
SpitfireMkVIIIclp . . . 8  
SpitfireMkVIIIFB . . . .8

Italian ANR Base Kerkyra

Bf-109F-4/B Trop . . . 4  
MC202III . . . . . 4  
MC202XII . . . . . 5  
MC205I . . . . . 3

Luftwaffe/Metsovo

Bf-109G6ASN . . . . .2  
Bf-109G6 Late . . . . .8  
Bf-109G6 Mid . . . . .8  
Bf-109G6AS . . . . . 6  
FW 190 A7Sturm . . . 2  
FW 190 A8 . . . . . 6  
FW 190 A9 . . . . . 4  
FW 190A50 14 . . . . .2  
FW 190 D9 . . . . . 2  
Ju88A4 Torp . . . . .2

Luftwaffe/Airstart

FW 190 A9 . . . . . 4  
He111 H-16 . . . . .6  
Ju88A4 . . . . . 6

**Sources;**

**bbc.co.uk/ww2peopleswar, vojska.net/eng/world-war-2, wikipedia.org**

# Change Log 3-21-10

Most recent changes to Ratweek;

1. Removed 2030 Bonus points from Red Moving Destroyers, and Transport Ships in harbor at Valona, in an effort to relieve Blue of too many Strategic Bombing missions, and allow them to meet incoming attackers.

2. Air Forces involved are represented by Roundels above, and have been restricted on bases.

3. Homebase at Kerkyra on Corfu (AU-20), does not show as a spawn point in the Briefing map, Map Glitch.

I added a test runway 4, inline with the map runway, that fixed it. Always an Airstart, however this is a fighter base and is only an airstart to overcome a glitch, so the airstart spawns in at 100meters, 275kph, hdg 355, basically right off the end of the runway as if you had just pulled your gear up.

4. Point Generators Red Facilities;

Chevy Flatbed Truck . . 100/60                      Motorcycles . . 5/3

Point Generators Blue Facilities;

Type 94 Truck . . 100/60                                      Kettenkrad . . 5/3

5. Radar. Both sides have Radar, range 55/65km.

Limitations; Minimum Altitude 100/150 meters

Maximum Altitude 3800/4200 meters.

Give it some tests and report back, thank you.

Map by ={TTU}=McSlash.