

SEMINARSKA NALOGA

V OKVIRU PROROGAMA TURISTIČNI VODNIK TURISTIČNEGA OBMOČJA BELA KRAJINA

Udeleženec izobraževanja:

Rok Babič

Kraj in datum: Črnomelj, 22. 6. 2020.

S KOLESOM SKOZI ZGODOVINO BELE KRAJINE/CYCLING TROUGH HISTORY OF BELA KRAJINA

INTRODUCTION

The second world war (WW II) in Bela krajina represents a dark and brutal part of its history, full of injustice, pain, violence, destruction, conflict, suffering, oppression and division. Discussions and talks related to the events from this part of our history are still controversial. Therefore, you might ask why should one reopen old wounds, why should one go back and analyse this horrible past? Namely, even in the darkest times when everything seemed lost, some people in Bela krajina did not lose hope. Their stories are full of bravery, inspiration, dedication and are often defying all odds. This amazing men and women should be remembered and they deserve respect. Their stories are worth listening to, at least as a reminder to all who take peace for granted. As the saying goes: *“if you eat today thank a farmer, if you eat in peace thank a veteran”*.

To completely understand all the events in Bela krajina that occurred from 1941 to 1945, it is crucial to be familiar with broader context, however due to space limitation this seminar paper will be focusing on the events that took place within this relatively small region. In the first part I will recap the important events focusing on the military history. In the second part I will present one of the possible ways through which a visitor of Bela krajina could discover and learn more about this events.

I. BRIEF EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT EVENTS

“All partisans know Bela krajina. If they did not fight there... they at least heard something about this good and noble Slovenian region... Bela krajina was, and I think we can say that, from all the partisan regions the most partisan one.” Radko Polič

On April 13, 1941, German Army entered Črnomelj without resistance, it stayed for only two weeks. With agreement between Italy and Germany Bela krajina became the part of the so called “Ljubljanska pokrajina” and was under complete control of Italian forces. Bela krajina was under control of units from division “Isonzo”. 6000 soldiers were stationed in Črnomelj, **Metlika, Semič, Vinica, Stari trg**.

The attack of Črnomelj resistance fighters on the section of Italian soldiers, on the railroad Črnomelj-Vranoviči, during the night of August 11, 1941, marks the start of an armed resistance. It was one of the first resistance actions in Slovenia. Importance of this early attacks was mostly demonstrative. The resistance fighters group had a camp in **Miklarji**. The creation of this partisan group motivated the activities of Liberation Front (OF). Similar groups were later created in **Metlika, Semič and Gradac**.

Their focus in the early stages of the war was the sabotage and informational warfare, with some very limited attacks on Italian patrols, logistics and supplies lines. One of this sabotage actions was, inter alia, stealing 260 kg of dynamite from **Kanižarica** coalmine on August 26, 1941. Also one of the first morale busting attacks was the attack on Italian patrol somewhere between Črnomelj and **Griblje** on September 6, 1941, which had a deep symbolic meaning, because it happened just before the visit of the high commissioner for the Ljubljana Region.

The Italian Army had no direct answer to this type of asymmetric, guerrilla warfare, so they tried to extort peace with civilian hostages, they also relied on gathering information from collaborators. This type of warfare was often more deadly for partisan forces and their supporters than direct fighting with the enemy.

The first Bela krajina partisan company was formed on October 30, 1941, on the hill **Smuk** next to **Semič**. It was armed with rifles and only one machine gun. They did not have uniforms or they wore old Yugoslav army uniforms. Headquarter of partisan army (HQ) ordered them to move to **Bučka (Dolenjska)**. HQ was trying to organise the resistance against relocation of Slovenian civilian population from this region. On the way to **Bučka** they were not able to cross river **Krka** and they were forced to turn back in the midst of snow blizzard. It was a deadly move, they were followed by Italian mounted and motorized units. They went to sleep in the village of **Gornje Laze**, where they were ambushed. 19 partisans died and two were caught. **Jože Mihelčič**, the Commissar of the company, was the first Slovene to get the death penalty under Italian occupation. Local supporters of the occupation massacred the bodies of the fallen. It was a big tragedy for the resistance. Two of the fighters that were caught gave important information, based on which Italians made arrests. Most of the arrested did not see the end of the war. Thus, at the end of 1941, almost every pioneer partisan was either in prison or dead. But the symbolism of their early rebellion was very important. They were the spark that started the flame of the resistance.

Partisan command decided on March 30, 1942, to reorganize the structure of partisan detachments. Third detachment group was formed out of detachments of **Dolenjska, Notranjska** in Bela krajina. Volunteers from smaller local groups started to join Bela krajina detachment. Volunteers from **Vinica** had a big celebration before they left their village and while they were moving past **Črnomelj** the guards spotted them. **Jože Vidnjevič** was shot in the backpack, the backpack exploded, but **Vidnjevič** was left without a scratch. Just like it happened to the famous **Dimnjičar** from the stories of **Kapelski kresovi**. This new forming unit had a camp in **Popoviči**. With the help from **Dolenjska** detachment's partisans they formed a battalion (two companies of 40 men).

They learned important lessons from the events in **Gornje Laze**. Their primary assignment was to avoid detection. They had no real logistical support like we see in classical military operations. That's way they were relying on local people's support. But some people were collaborating with occupying forces and they often reported on the movements of partisan forces. The partisan solution for this problem was swift and brutal, when they found out. Even if there were no shoots fired the war with information was constant.

Second company, which camp was situated in **Talčji vrh**, contacted the partisans from **Kočevje**. They agreed to joined action against Italian crew in **Stari trg**, because they were terrorizing peaceful **Poljanska valley**. On May 31, 1942, 120 partisan soldiers from Bela krajina and **Kočevje** attacked **Stari trg**. The enemy was fortified and dug in. Croatian partisans heard the shooting and they joined the fighting, this was the first time they fought together. For successful attack it was crucial to stop reinforcements from **Črnomelj** and **Vinica**. They were able to stop the reaction force from **Črnomelj** on **Tanča gora**. However, the reaction force from **Vinica** used a different route and was able to come to **Stari trg** and engage partisans from the back, they were forced to disengage and retreat. Nonetheless, this was a very successful attack. 36 Italian soldiers were killed, many more were wounded, while partisans had just a few casualties, even though they were attacking a fortified

position. The reaction from Italian military was to heavily fortify all of their bases and they were especially careful when leaving them.

First company, which camp was situated in **Brezova Reber**, was also active in disrupting enemy activities. On June 19, 1942, they attacked the Italian bunkers that were guarding the railroad around **Semič**. The attack was also successful and they were able to destroy the railroad and two Italian section, they also took their weapons. This type of actions represented a moral boost, it was also the only way partisan forces were able to get military grade weapons. What is more, the railroad communication was a logistic backbone for Italian forces.

Bela krajina group of partisan (battalion) was also present in the attack on enemy strong point in **Zajec**, July 2, 1942. This was the important victory for partisan forces because they denied control of this important road communication. It was also important because they saw what were the intentions of the so called “Štajerski Bataljon”, which collaborated with the occupying force and attacked partisans from the back, forcing them to retreat. This was also a time when many more volunteers joined the partisans, resulting in the formation of two battalions, with camps in **Zagradec**, **Kleč**, **Vimolj**, **Mirna gora**. This was the time when sabotage attacks were frequent, clashes with smaller Italian units happened often. Partisans were even able to control some roads (Miklarji- Kočevje) and they pushed Italians into their bunkers. However, they were still poorly armed, uniforms were rare and they were living in hard camp conditions. Despite that, their moral was high. On July 22, they attacked strong point in **Hrast pri Suhorju**. After aerial attack they were forced to retreat and were not able to completely destroy it.

On July 16, 1942, so called Rog offensive started. Italian massed massive forces in what was then called Ljubljana region. Offensive had many stages. In one of them they crossed Bela krajina. The goal was to completely destroy the resistance of partisan forces. Odds of forces was 1:26 in favour of Italians. Italians also concentrated forces that were better trained and equipped (special forces), all together 6 divisions. But this was not just military offensive, the goal was also to crush the very idea of resistance. Italian forces burned, pillaged and killed civilians. The night between 25th and 26th of July is in **Črnomelj** called “the night of terror”. One of brutal examples of how the offensive was conducted is the “Bloody morning” in small village **Zapudje**. There they killed all the able men and burned all the houses. Villager Peter Lasič jelled “long live liberty” as he was shoot in the chest, he felled only after they shot him again in the head.

Partisans in Bela krajina did not oppose this offensive in direct military action and were not able to stop the advance of the enemy. Their primary goals were evasion and survival. With careful manoeuvres, smart engagement and breaking up in to smaller units they were successful in escaping encirclement. There were no major military clashes in Bela krajina, and Italian forces were not able to fully engage the core of partisan forces, still many were caught. Italian anger was therefore almost completely released on civilians. On August 20, in **Topli vrh** Bela krajina’s partisans regrouped and formed battalions again.

On September 16, fourth Kordun brigade entered Bela krajina through **Gorjanci** and went in the direction of **Mirna gora**. There were more than 700 soldiers. They established a connection with command of Bela krajina forces. Together they organised attacks on **Črnomelj**, **Kanižarica** and **Rožni Dol**. In the latter two they were successful. Operation of coalmine **Kanižarica** was completely stopped (September 22) and they destroyed a big train

composition in **Rožni dol**. Attack on **Črnomelj** was not successful and they were not able to breach the perimeter of fortified Italian positions. But they were successful in destroying Italian relief forces that were advancing to **Črnomelj** from **Vinica**. They attacked them close to **Tanča Gora**. Italian suffered heavy losses. On December 25, fourth Kordune brigade left Bela krajina.

During the operations of Kordun brigade, Tomišič and Cankar partisan brigades also entered the territory of Bela krajina. In this period, we can witness heavy concentration of partisan forces. Focus of Italian armada shifted from **Gorjanci** to Bela krajina. On September 25, 1942, Tomišič Brigade, Cankar Brigade and Bela krajina detachment ambushed Italian forces on **Planina, Koprivnik and Sredgora**. Italian forces abandoned their advance. In October West Dolenjski Detachment joined Croatian forces in the fight around **Žumberak**.

Organization of Partisan forces in period went through many transformations. Partisan forces were created in short period of time from nothing. More people joined and engaged in more tactically advanced operations, this and other factors demanded changes. Due to changes and lack of standardization, it is a sometimes hard to follow the partisan units' development. In August Fifth group of detachments was transformed in East and West Dolenjski Detachments. Area of Bela krajina was under control of West Doljenjski Detachment. People from Bela Krajina mostly joined Cankar brigade. In December, 1942, four companies were formed in West Dolenjski detachment: Gorenjska, Črnomaljska, Dušanova in Roška (zaščitniška).

During Rog offensive Italian forces were able to organize and arm their collaborators. Three Battalions were formed, the third one created its strong point in Bela krajina in **Suhor** and **Radoviči**. On November 26, the 13th Proletarian brigade in cooperation with Cankar brigade attacked the strong point in **Suhor**. After eleven hours of fighting the collaborationist strong point with more than 200 soldiers was destroyed. All efforts to relief the strong point from Novo mesto were turned back by partisan rear guard. Counter attack from **Metlika** was destroyed before it was even formed correctly.

Food was very scarce in that period of spring 1943, so every source of food was very important. In that spring women "charged" to harvest the wheat fields, sometimes during the night or very close to enemy bunkers. The other reason was to deny food to the enemy. This was also a time of strong political activities and resistance movement was getting stronger.

On September 8, Italian military capitulated. News did not reach the units in **Črnomelj**, so on they were still shelling the political gathering on **Mavrlen**. The next day the disarmament started, there were no bigger incidents. In Vinica seven partisans disarmed the column of 700 Italian soldiers. With Italian capitulation the most important partisan period of Bela krajina started. Bela krajina became liberated region until the end of the war (with exception of a few days). Liberation Front started with mobilization of all able men. Due to the influx of men new brigade was created, the 15th Bela krajina brigade. Brigade proved its bravery in German offensive to Bela krajina.

After Italian capitulation German response was expected. The German Army was well equipped and battle hardened. On October 3, 1943, they bombed **Črnomelj**, 12 civilians died. On October 21, Germans took Novo mesto and advanced to Bela krajina. The attack was two pronged, they also attacked from Croatian side in **Griblje** and **Vinica**. Partisans in

Vinica held out until they were almost surrounded from German forces advancing from **Črnomelj**, then they were forced to retreat. German Army was able to advance through Bela krajina. On November 10, German Army started an offensive in Dolenjska region. They concentrated heavy motorised units. Partisan forces offered good resistance but they were often under equipped to face armoured units. This was a brutal and bloody campaign, but they were not able to set a foothold, all the bases and strong holds were quickly destroyed by local partisan forces. After that Bela krajina was free from enemy occupation for good.

On February 19, 1944, in Sokolski dom in **Črnomelj** SNOS or Slovenian National Liberation Council was organised. This was an important corner stone in Slovenian resistance and even in creation of Slovenian state. Bela krajina became the centre of Slovenian resistance and **Črnomelj** was partisan capital. In December, 1944, Slovenian partisan command moved from Base 20 in Rog forests to **Črnomelj**. Bela krajina became a main logistical base for partisan operation in Slovenia, most of the logistical support of the soldiers was done without motorization. Informational warfare, or as they called it propaganda, had also its centre in **Črnomelj**. OZNA or Partisan Intelligence and Security Unit also moved to Bela Krajina, to **Stražnji vrh**.

Nevertheless, the war in Bela krajina was still not over. During elections on April 30, 1944, **Vinica** was bombed by eleven German bombers. On May 5, **Dragatuš** was bombed under assumption the partisan military command was there. On the June 29, 1944, Cankar brigade with 12th brigade and Croatian partisan attacked German and Croatian ISC (NDH) strong point in Bosiljevo. German forces suffered many casualties (200 deaths, 100 wounded). Germans executed revenge attack on **Vinica** one month later.

From 10th to 17th of July, **Metlika** was attacked by big German and Croatian ISC (NDH) forces (8000 soldiers). The goal was to connect its territory with the German controlled territory in the north. Germans were able to enter **Metlika** for just a short period. In that break through many civilians were killed. In the counter attack partisans pushed them back deep into the ISC territory.

Bela krajina became a grave of partisan general Franc Rozman-Stane in tragic accident in **Lokve** on November 7, 1944.

On November 14, 1944, a considerable force assembled in Kočevje and advanced towards **Črnomelj**. The Partisan forces stopped them on the hills surrounding **Črnomelj**, in **Bistrica**, **Maverlen** and **Dobliče**, the battle was fierce and personal. But other than harassment, this forces were not able to do anything significant. The last attack on Bela krajina was a push of German and ISC forces in **Adlešiči** on March 21, 1945. The company of 18 local partisans made their last stand to defend their homes. They all laid their lives but the enemy was too numerous. The push was stopped with partisan reaction forces from **Bistrica**.

It also had two military air strips in **Otok** and **Krasinec**. They were used by Soviet, British and American transport planes for transportation of wounded and supplies. 800 downed American and British pilots were evacuated from this air strips. The record number of landings was 36 in one day.

Bela krajina paid a massive price for its liberation. 594 partisan died in action, 656 people died in concentration camps, 1100 became war invalids, all public buildings were damaged

or destroyed, all bridges were destroyed, 2590 houses were burned. Staggering numbers for such a small region.

NATIONAL HEROES

In those hard times many showed bravery and honour. Some were distinguished from others with their exceptional actions against all odds. They were declared as national heroes by partisans. This would be equivalent to receiving a medal of honour. More than half of the recipients lost their lives in the war or as a result of involvement in the war. In Bela krajina national heroes were: Jože Mihelčič, Franc Kočevar-Ciril, Ivan Stariha-Janko, Ilija Badovinac, Milka Šobar-Nataša, Drago Jerman, Albina Mali, Janko Brodarič, Martin Južna. Stories of each of them are inspiring and filled with bravery and skill.

SLOVENSKI PREVOD

UVOD

Druga svetovna vojna je temačen in brutalen del belokranjske zgodovine. Zgodovine, ki je polna krivic, bolečin, nasilja, uničevanja, konfliktov, trpljenja, represije in delitev. Diskurz vezan na dogodke iz tistih časov je še vedno buren in kontroverzen. Tukaj se tako postavi vprašanje zakaj izbrati to temo, zakaj odpirati stare rane, zakaj bi nekdo analiziral to grozno preteklost? Tudi v najtežjih trenutkih, ko se je vse zdelo izgubljeno, številni Belokranjci niso ostali brez upanja. Njihove zgodbe so polne poguma, inspiracije, predanosti in kljubujejo verjetnemu. Pogumni možje in žene in njihova dejanja si zaslužijo, da se jih spomnimo in zahtevamo spoštovanje. Njihove zgodbe pa so vredne poslušanja, če ne drugo, kot opomnik vsem tistim, ki jim je mir nekaj samoumevnega.

Za popolno razumevanje vseh dogodkov, ki so se zgodili v Beli krajini, med leti 1941 in 1945, je pomembno, da smo seznanjeni z širšim kontekstom, vendar zaradi omejitev v tej seminarski, se bom osredotočil na dogodke, ki so se zgodili v relativno majhnem prostoru. V prvem delu bom povzel pomembne dogodke, s poudarkom na vojaški zgodovini. V drugem delu pa bom predstavil enega izmed načinov, kako lahko obiskovalec v Beli krajini izve več o teh dogodkih.

KRATEK POVZETEK POMEMBNIH DOGODKOV

13. aprila 1941 nemška vojska vstopi v Črnomelj brez, da bi naletela na upor, v mestu je ostala samo dva tedna. Z dogovorom, med Italijo in Nemčijo, Bela krajina postane del tako imenovane Ljubljanske pokrajine, s tem nadzor nad pokrajino prevzamejo italijanske sile. Bela krajina je spadala pod območje, kjer je delovala divizija Isonzo. 6000 vojakov je bilo razporejenih v Črnomlju, Metliki, Semiču, Vinici in Starem trgu.

Napad na Italijanski oddelek, na progi Črnomelj-Vranoviči, v noči 11. avgusta 1941, predstavlja začetek oboroženega upora. To je bila ena izmed prvih akcij osvobodilnega gibanja v Sloveniji. Te prvi napadi so bili predvsem simbolnega pomena. Skupina, ki je delovala v teh začetnih akcijah je imela tabor v Miklarjih. Oblikovala se je prva partizanska skupina, to pa je pospešilo aktivnosti osvobodilne fronte (OF). Podobne skupine so nastale v Metliki, Semiču in Gradcu.

Skupine so bile v začetku osredotočene na sabotaže in informacijsko vojskovanje, z nekaterimi manjšimi napadi na italijanske patrole in oskrbovalne enote. Ena izmed takšnih akcij je, med drugim, bila kraja 260 kg dinamita iz rudnika v **Kanižarici**, 26. avgusta 1941. Napad, ki je v prvi fazi močno dvignil moralo, je bil napad na italijansko patrolo med **Črnomljem in Gribljami**, 6. septembra 1941. Napad je imel tudi velik simbolični pomen, ker se je zgodil med obiskom visokega komisarja Ljubljanske regije.

Italijanska vojska ni imela direktnega odgovora na takšno asimetrično, gverilsko vojskovanje, zato so poskušali izsiliti svoj mir z civilnimi talci, hkrati pa so zbirali informacije s pomočjo kolaborantov. Takšni ukrepi Italijanske vojske so bili za partizane pogosto bolj smrtonosni kot pa neposredni boji.

Prva Belokranjska četa je nastala, 30. oktobra 1941, na hribu Smuk nad Semičem. Bili so lahko oboroženi z puškami in samo enim mitraljezom. Niso imeli uniform ali pa so imeli stare jugoslovanske uniforme. Poveljstvo NOV je ukazalo premik čete v Bučko (Dolenjska). Cilj premike je bil organizirati upor proti preselitvi Slovenskega prebivalstva iz tega področja. Na poti do Bučke niso mogli prečkati visoke Krke in so bili prisiljeni, da se v snežnem neurju vračajo proti Lazam. To je bila usodna napaka, v tem premiku so jim sledile Italijanske motorizirane in konjeniške enote. Četa se je odločila prenočiti v **Gornjih Lazah**, tam so jim Italijanske enote pripravile zasedo. 19 partizanov je padlo in dva sta bila ujeta. Jože Mihelčič, komisar čete, je bil prvi Slovenec obsojen na smrt pod Italijansko okupacijo. Lokalni kolaboranti so masakrirali trupla padlih. Ta dogodek je bila velika tragedija za upor v Beli krajini. Dva izmed ujetih sta na žalost izdala tudi nekaj pomembnih informacij na podlagi katerih so Italijani aretirali številne aktiviste. Večina aretiranih ni dočakala konec vojne. Tako so ob koncu leta 1941 skoraj vsi prvi partizani bili mrtvi ali pa zajeti. Še vedno pa je pomen tega prvega upora velik. To je bila iskra, ki je zanetila ogenj.

Partizansko poveljstvo se je odločilo 30. marca 1942 reorganizirati strukturo partizanskih oddelkov. Tretja skupina odredov je bila sestavljena iz Belokranjskega odreda, Dolenjskega in Notranjskega odreda. Prostovoljci iz ostalih belokranjskih skupin so se priključili Belokranjskemu odredu. Prostovoljci iz **Vinice** so imeli pred odhodom v odred veliko zabavo, ko pa so se premikali mimo **Črnomlja** jih je opazil stražar. Eden izmed njih je bil zadet v nahrbtnik, le tega je razneslo a partizan je ostal brez praske. Nekaj podobnega se naj bi zgodilo Dimnjičaru v Kapelskih kresovih. Ta novo nastala enote je taborila v **Popovičih**. S pomočjo Dolenjskega odreda so formirali bataljon (dve četi po 40 mož).

Partizani so se veliko naučili iz dogodkov v Gornjih Lazah. Njihova primarna naloga je bilo izogibanje detekciji. Partizanske enote niso imele logistične podpore, kot jo vidimo v operacijah klasičnih vojaških enot. Bili so popolnoma odvisni od podpore lokalnega prebivalstva. Nekateri ljudje pa so sodelovali z okupacijskimi silami in so poročali o premikih partizanskih enot. Odziv partizanov na takšna dejanja je bil hiter in brutalen, če so uspeli izvedeti. Čeprav so bili oboroženi spopadi redki je bila vojna z informacijami konstantna.

Druga četa, ki je imela tabor na Talčjem vrhu, se je povezala s partizani iz Kočevja. Dogovorili so se za skupno akcijo proti italijanski postojanki v **Starem trgu**, ki je terorizirala to mirno dolino. 31. maja 1942 je 120 partizanov iz Bele krajine in Kočevja napadlo Stari trg. Posadka v Starem trgu je bila na utrjenih položajih. Hrvaški partizani so slišali napad in so se mu pridružili, to je bilo prvič, ko so se hrvaški in slovenski partizani borili skupaj. Za uspešen napad je bilo ključnega pomena zaustaviti italijanske okrepitve iz Vinice in Črnomlja. Okrepitevam iz Vinice se je uspelo izogniti partizanski zasedi in so se vključili v

boj. Partizani so bili prisiljeni k umiku. Vseeno pa je šlo za uspešen napad. 36 italijanskih vojakov je umrlo in več jih je bilo ranjenih. Medtem so partizani imeli le nekaj žrtev, čeprav so napadali utrjene položaje. Italijanska vojska na ta napad odgovorila z dodatnim utrjevanjem položajev in dodatno previdnostjo med premiki.

Prva četa, ki je imela tabor na Brezovi Rebri, je bila prav tako aktivna pri oteževanju aktivnosti nasprotnika. 19. junija 1942 so napadli italijanske bunkerje, ki so varovali železnico v okoli Semiča. Napad jr bil uspešen in uspelo jim je uničiti tire na več mestih in dva italijanska oddelka, odnesli so tudi njihovo oborožitev. Takšni napadi so dvigovali moralo, hkrati pa so partizani tako prišli do vojaškega orožja. Železnica pa je bila ključna za logistično oskrbo italijanskih sil.

Belokranjski bataljon je sodeloval tudi pri napadu na vojaško postojanko v **Zajcu**, 2. julija 1942. To je bila za partizane pomembna zmaga, saj je onemogočila kontrolo te pomembne prometnice. Pomembna pa je bila tudi zato, ker je v tej bitki prave barve pokazal »Štajerski bataljon«. Ta je v napadu sodeloval z nasprotnikom in napadel partizanske enote iz hrbita. To je bilo hkrati tudi obdobje, ko se je partizanom priključilo veliko prostovoljcev, tako so se formirala dva bataljona, ki sta imela tabore v **Zagradcu**, **Kleču**, **Vimolju**, **Mirni gori**. Gre za obdobje, ko so bile pogoste sabotaže, spopadi z manjšimi italijanskimi enotami pa niso bili več redki. Partizani so uspeli celo nadzirati določene prometnice (Miklarji-Kočevje) in so potisnili Italijane v njihove bunkerje. Še vedno pa so bili slabo oboroženi, uniforme so bile redke, živeli pa so v zahtevnih terenskih pogojih. Kljub temu je morala bila visoka. 22. julija so napadli postojanko na **Hrast pri Suhorju**, po začetnem uspehu, so se umaknili zaradi zračne podpore.

16. julija 1942 se začne Roška ofenziva. Italijani so zbrali močne sile in jih koncentrirali v Ljubljanski regiji. Ofenziva je bila načrtovana v več stopnjah. V eni od stopenj so prečkali tudi Belo krajino. Cilj ofenzive je bil popolno uničenje partizanskih sil. Razmerje sil je bilo 1.26 v korist Italijanov. Ofenziva ni imela samo vojaške cilje, želja je bila zatreti že samo misel o upor. Italijanske sile so požigale, divjale in pobijale. Noč med 25. in 26. julijem je v **Črnomlju** poimenovana »noč terorja«. Drugi primer kako je potekala ta ofenziva pa je »krvavo jutro« v **Zapudju**. Tam so bili pobiti vsi moški, vse hiše pa požgane. Eden od vaščanov se je zadr »naj živi svoboda« in padel šele, ko je bil večkrat ustreljen.

Partizani niso poskušali ustaviti te ofenzive v nesporednem vojaškem spopadu in niso bili sposobni ustaviti napredovanje nasprotnika. Primarna naloga partizanov je bila izogibanje in preživetje. Z spretnimi manevri, pametnimi spopadi, delitvami v manjše in mobilne enote so se uspeli izogniti obkolitvi. V Beli krajini tako ni bilo večjih spopadov, in italijanske silo niso uspeli vstopiti v stik z jedrom partizanskih sil, še vedno pa so bili številni ujeti. Zaradi tega udarca v prazno, se je jeza vojakov sprostila nad civilnim prebivalstvom. 20. avgusta 1942 so se partizani ponovno zbrali na **Toplem vrhu** in oblikovali bataljon.

16. septembra 1942 je četrta Kordunska brigada prečkala **Gorjance** in vstopila v Belo krajino, premaknili so se v smeri **Mirne gore**. V brigadi je bilo več kot 700 vojakov. Stopili so v stik s poveljstvom belokranjskih sil. Skupaj so organizirali napade na **Črnomelj**, **Kanižarico on Rožni Dol**. V Kanižarici in Rožnem Dolu so bili uspešni. Popolnoma so zaustavili delovanje rudnika (22. september) in uničili so veliko vlakovno kompozicijo pri Rožnem Dolu. Napad na Črnomelj ni bil uspešen, saj jim ni uspelo prebiti utrjenega obrambnega obroča. So pa uspeli popolnoma uničiti okrepitve, ki so prišle iz Vinice. Napadli so jih v bližini **Tanče Gore**. Italijani so imeli velike izgube. 25. decembra Kordunska brigada zapusti Belo krajino.

Med operacijami Kordunske brigade, so v teritorij Bele krajine vstopili tudi Tomšičeva in Cankarjeva brigada. Tako lahko v tem obdobju opazujemo veliko koncentracijo partizanskih sil. Fokus italijanskih sil se je tako premaknil iz Gorjancev v Belo krajino. 25. septembra 1942 so Tomšičeva in Cankarjeva brigada in Belokranjski odred pripravili zasedo za Italijanske sile, ki so skozi **Planino, Koprivnik in Sredgoro** napredovale proti Beli krajini. Italijanske enote so opustile napredovanje. V oktobru je Zahodno dolenski odred združil sile z hrvaškimi partizani v bojih okoli Žužemberka.

Organiziranost partizanskih sil je v tem obdobju doživela številne spremembe. Partizanska vojska je bila oblikovana v kratkem obdobju, praktično iz nič. Skozi čas se je pridruževalo več ljudi, izvajati so začeli taktično zahtevnejše operacije, te in drugi faktorji so zahtevali spremembe. Zaradi konstantnih sprememb in pomanjkanja standardizacije je včasih težko spremljati razvoj partizanskih enot. V avgustu je peta skupina odredov razdeljena v zahodni vzhodni Dolenski odred. Iz Bele krajine se je veliko prostovoljcev pridružilo Cankarjevi brigadi. Decembra 1942 so bile v Zahodno dolenskem odredu formirane štiri čete Gorenjska, Črnomaljska, Dušanova in Roška.

Med roško ofenzivo so uspele italijanske sile organizirati in oborožiti njihove kolaborante. Oblikovali so tri bataljone. Tretji je imel svojo postojanko v **Suhorju in Radovičih**. 26. novembra je 13. proletarska brigada v sodelovanju s Cankarjevo brigado napadla postojanko na Suhorju. Po 11 urah borbe je bila postojanka z več kot 200 vojaki uničena. Vse poskuse, da bi okrepili postojanko je odvrnila partizanska zaledna straža. Proti napad iz **Metlike** je bil zatret v samem začetku.

Hrana spomladi 1943 ni bilo veliko, tako je vsak vir hrane bil zelo pomemben. Spomladi so ženske »jurišale« na žitna polja, velikokrat ponoči v neposredni bližini bunkerjev. Razlog je bil zagotavljanje **hrane** za partizanske sile. To je tudi obdobje močne politične aktivnosti OF, ki je postajala močnejša.

8. septembra 1943 italijanska vojska kapitulira. Novica o tem je potovala relativno počasi in enota v **Črnomlju** je še ta dan granatirala politično zborovanje na **Mavrlenu**. Naslednji dan se je začela razorožitev, to je potekalo brez večjih incidentov. V **Vinici** je sedem partizanov razorožilo kolono 700-tih vojakov. S kapitulacijo se je začelo pomembno obdobje partizanskega delovanja v Beli krajini. Ta postane osvobojeno območje in to ostane do konca vojne (z izjemo nekaj dni). OF je začela mobilizirati v partizansko vojsko. Zaradi pritoka novih vojakov je bila formirana nova enota 15. belokranjska brigada. Ta je pokazala svoj pogum v nemški ofenzivi v Belo krajino.

Po italijanski kapitulaciji je bilo pričakovati nemški odziv. Nemška vojska je bila dobro opremljena in izkušena. 3. oktobra 1943 so bombardirali **Črnomelj**. Umrlo je 12 civilov. 21. oktobra so Nemci zavzeli Novo mesto in se začeli premikati proti Beli krajini. Napad je bil izveden iz dveh smeri, napadli so tudi iz hrvaške strani v **Gribljah in Vinici**. Partizani v Vinici so zdržali napad in so bili prisiljeni k umiki šele s prihodom nemških sil skozi Črnomelj. Nemška vojska je tako uspela napredovati skozi Belo krajino. Ofenziva se je na Dolenskem začela 10. novembra. Nemška vojska je koncentrirala močne motorizirane enote. Partizanske enote so se močno upirale, a so bile velikokrat nemočne v boju z oklepnimi enotami nemške vojske. To je bila krvava ofenziva, a Nemcem ni uspelo vzpostaviti postojank v Beli krajini, vsi poskusi so bili hitro uničeni. Po tem je bila Bela krajina resnično osvobojeno ozemlje.

19. februarja 1944 je v Sokolskem domu v **Črnomlju** potekal SNOS. Ta predstavlja pomembno točko slovenskega upora in nastanka slovenske države. Bela krajina je postala center slovenskega upora in Črnomelj je bil partizanska prestolnica. V decembru 1944 se je partizansko poveljstvo premaknilo iz baze 20 v Črnomelj. Bela krajina je tako postala tudi glavna logistična baza za partizanske operacije po Sloveniji. Večina logistične podpore so naredili brez motorizacije. Informacijsko vojskovanje ali, kot so ga imenovali takrat, propaganda je prav tako imela center v Črnomlju. OZNA je tako delovala na **Stražnjem vrhu**.

Kljub vsem dosežkom vojne v Beli krajini še ni bilo konec. Med volitvami 30. aprila 1944 je bila bombardirana **Vinica**. 5. maja so bombardirali **Dragatuš**, zaradi informacij, da naj bi tam bilo partizansko poveljstvo. 29. junija 1944 so Cankarjeva brigada z hrvaškimi partizani napadla Nemško in NDH postojanko v **Bosiljevu**. Nemške sile so utrpeli velike izgube (200 mrtvih, 100 ranjenih). Nemci so iz maščevanja en mesec pozneje napadli **Vinico**.

Nemška vojska je v sodelovanju z vojsko NDH, 10. julija 1944, napadla **Metliko**. V napadu je sodelovalo okoli 8000 vojakov. Nemcem je uspelo za kratek čas celo vstopiti v Metliko. V tem preboju so ubili nekaj civilov. V proti napadu pa so jih partizani potisnili daleč na ozemlje NDH.

Bela krajina je 7. novembra 1944 postala grob generala Franca Rozmana-Staneta v tragični nesreči na **Lokvah**.

14. novembra 1944 se v Kočevju zberejo močne domobranske enote, ki so želele prodreti proti **Črnomlju**. Partizani so jih zaustavili na hribih pred Črnomljem v **Bistrici**, **Mavrlenu** in **Dobličah**. Boji so bili bližinski in siloviti. Razen provociranja te napadi niso dosegli nič omembe vrednega. Zadnji napad na Belo krajino je bil vpad nemških in NDH sil v **Adlešičih**, 21. marca 1945. Skupina 18 partizanov se je borila do zadnjega moža, da bi obranili svoje domove. Preboj so zaustavile partizanske okrepitve iz **Bistrice**.

Bela krajina je imela tudi dva letališča na **Otoku** in **Krasincu**. Uporabljala so jih sovjetska, britanska in ameriška letala, ki so dovažala zaloge in evakuirala ranjene in civile. 800 ameriških in britanskih pilotov je bilo evakuiranih iz omenjenih letališč. Rekordno število pristankov je 36 v enem dnevu.

Bela krajina je za osvoboditev plačala veliko ceno. 594 partizanov je padlo v bojih, 656 ljudi je umrlo v taboriščih, vse javne stavbe so bile uničene ali poškodovane, vsi mostovi so bili porušeni, 2590 hiš je bilo porušenih in zažganih. Te številke so za tako malo regijo grozne.

NARODNI HEROJI

V teh težkih časih so mnogi pokazali izjemen pogum in čast. Nekateri pa so se še posebno razlikovali od drugih po svojih izjemnih dejanjih. Te posameznike so partizani razglasili za narodne heroje. To bi bil nekakšen ekvivalent medalji »Medal of honour« . Več kot polovica prejemnikov je padlo v bojih ali pa so umrli od posledic vojne. V Beli krajini so narodni heroji bili: Jože Mihelčič, Franc Kočevar-Ciril, Ivan Stariha-Janko, Ilija Badovinac, Milka Šobar-Nataša, Drago Jerman, Albina Mali, Janko Brodarič, Martin Južna. Zgodba vsakega od njih je polna neverjetnih dejanj.

II. TURISTIČNI PRODUKT

“Spomeniki in spominske plošče ... širom po Beli krajini stojijo kot odprta knjiga, v katero se bodo ozirala kasnejša pokolenja.” Vitkovič Janez

V Beli krajini resnično najdemo številna obeležja, ki označujejo pomembne dogodke druge svetovne vojne pri nas. Vendar ta obeležja danes povprečnemu obiskovalcu ne povejo veliko. Za njihovo razumevanje moramo dobro poznati zapleteno zgodovino in prebrati kar nekaj literature, večina zgodb je namreč še vedno “skritih” v knjigah in jih ne najdemo na spletu. Največkrat te zapisi niso namenjeni turistom. Obiskovalci se tako, razumljivo, tega zanimivega dela zgodovine Bele krajine dotaknejo zelo površno ali pa sploh ne.

V **Mestni muzejski zbirki Črnomelj** in v zbirki **Belokranjskega muzeja** si lahko obiskovalec ogleda nekaj predmetov iz tega obdobja, ki pritegnejo pozornost in so tako dobro izhodišče za razlago dogodkov, možen je tudi ogled slikovnega gradiva, ki nas najbolj plastično vrne v tisti čas.

Najbolj impozanten “muzejski eksponat” je nedvomno **letalo DC-3 Dakota**, ki je razstavljeno na **Otoku**. Letalo buri domišljijo in misli kliče v čas, ko so nad Belo krajino leteli ti glasni transporterji. Okoli letela so postavljene edukativne plošče s ključnimi podatki o delovanju partizanskih letališč in spuščališč, nekaj je tudi slik. Za letalo skrbi Vojaški muzej Slovenske vojske.

V bližnji prihodnosti bo postavljena tudi stalna razstava v **Kulturnem domu Črnomelj**, ki bo obeleževala zasedanje SNOS. Že sama zgradba je imela pomembno vlogo za Narodno osvobodilno gibanje, hkrati razstava obljublja tudi interaktivne eksponate.

Manj poznana zbirka je zagotovo **zbirka orožja in vojaške opreme Alfonza Baškoviča v kraju Praproče pri Semiču**. Kot pravi sam: »vsak kos ima neko zgodbo«. Veliko eksponatov je prav iz obdobja druge svetovne vojne in nekaj jih je vezano na Belo krajino.

Vsa obeležja, ustanove in pomembne kraje lahko obiščemo z avtomobilom. Vendar pa si upam trditi, da človek veliko bolj občuti naravo, lastnosti pokrajine, njene zgodbe in zgodbe njenih ljudi, če gre po njej peš. Da bi vso pot prepotovali peš, bi bilo potrebno zelo veliko časa in napora. Zatorej se mi zdi obisk teh točk s kolesom idealna rešitev. Gre za koncept, ki se lahko uporabi tudi za druga turistično tematsko zanimiva področja v Beli krajini. Nekatere kolesarske poti imamo že zarisane, vendar te niso tematsko razdelane.

S KOLESOM SKOZI ZGODOVINO BELE KRAJINE/CYCLING THROUGH HISTORY OF BELA KRAJINA

KOLESARSKA POT: BELA KRAJINA MED 2. SVETOVNO VOJNO

Predstavil bom eno izmed možnosti za zgodovinsko kolesarjenje, ki kolesarja popelje v čas druge svetovne vojne v Beli krajini. Točke poti zajemajo zgoraj opisane dogodke. Predstavljena pot se začne in zaključi na železniški postaji, kar omogoča njeno fizično, ekološko in cenovno dostopnost najširšemu krogu interesentov. V celoti je primerna za izkušene kolesarje, v odsekih tudi za manj izkušene. Kolesarske infrastrukture v Beli krajini je zelo malo, kljub temu pa neprometne lokalne ceste omogočajo prijetno kolesarjenje, kar nekaj je tudi lepo urejenih makadamskih poti. Pri načrtovanju poti sem izbral prometno mirnejše ceste skozi slikovito pokrajino. Najprimernejša je za treking ali gravel kolo. Možno

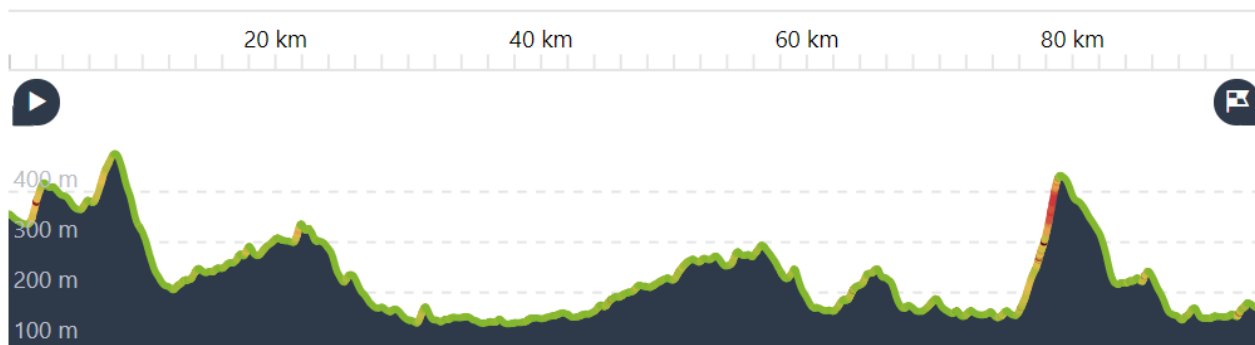
bi bilo organizirati tudi izposajo električnih koles, kar omogoči daljše ture tudi manj izkušenim.

Načrt poti:



Elevacijski profil s podatki:

🕒 06:19 ↔ 94.6 km ⌀ 15.0 km/h ↗ 1,210 m ↘ 1,390 m



Točke ogleda in postajališča:

Pričetek: železniška postaja Rožni dol,

1. točka: Obeležje Gornje Laze. Gre za kraj kjer je bila razbita prva Belokranjska četa.
2. točka: Železniška proga kot cilj več napadov. Železniška proga je bila ključna za oskrbovanje enot, zato so bile sabotaže zelo pomembne. Tukaj je tako potekalo več spopadov in napadov.
3. točka: Partizanska bolnica Črešnjevce. Bolnica je bila ključnega pomena za evakuacijo ranjencev na letališčih Otok in Krasinec.
4. točka: Zbirka orožja Praproče. Zbirka vsebuje veliko opreme in orožje, ki so jo uporabljali v tistem času.
5. točka: Tabor Brezova Reber. Partizani so taborili na odročnih in težko dostopnih krajih. Brezova Reber je primer enega takega tabora.
6. točka: Suhor prizorišče bitke. Suhor je imel zaradi svoje pozicije ob prometni komunikaciji pomembno vlogo. In je prizorišče večjih bitk v Beli krajini.
7. točka: Metlika, obeležja in muzej, prizorišče bitke. Eden lepših parkov in spomenikov, delo Gizele Šuklje. Muzej ima del zbirke, ki je posvečena drugi svetovni vojni.
8. točka: Otok, letalo DC-3. Zavezniška pomoč je bila izjemnega pomena za partizanski odpor. Prav tako pa gre za edinstven primerek pri nas, ki govori zanimivo zgodbo aviacijske zgodovine.
9. točka: Letališče Krasinec. Priča o iznajdljivosti partizanskih enot, pri vzdrževanju letališča in recikliranju padlih letal.
10. točka: Adlešiči, "Last stand". Tukaj poteka zadnja bitka na ozemlju Bele krajine. V tej bitki se četa lokalnih partizanov, kljub premoči nasprotnika, ni želela umakniti.

11. točka: Vinica, številni spopadi, Albina Mali, obeležja. Zaradi mostu je bila taktično pomembna in je bila prizorišče napetih spopadov. Rojstni kraj Albine Mali, narodne herojinje z zanimivo zgodbo.
12. točka: Dragatuš, bombardiranje. Priča o izgubljeni dediščini in materialnem uničenju, ki so ga doživele Belokranjske vasi.
13. točka: Zapudje, pomor. Vas, kjer izvemo kako je med vojno trpelo civilno prebivalstvo.
14. točka: Tanča gora, bitka Kordunske brigade. Lep primer, ko je partizanskim silam uspelo popolnoma uničiti in dominirati nasprotnika.
15. točka: Kvasica, obeležje. Spomenik Jakoba Savinška.
16. točka: Kanižarica, rudnik, bolnica. Rudnik je Italijane oskrboval z nujnim premogom. Zaustavitev njegovega delovanje je bila prioriteta. Zato tukaj potekajo sabotaže in spopadi. Tu je delovala tudi civilna bolnica v kateri je bil, med drugim, operiran tudi Franc Rozman-Stane.
17. točka: Črnomelj, Kulturni dom, Griček, spominske table in obeležja, lokomotiva, stavbe kjer so delovale pomembne ustanove, bombardiranje. Kulturni dom je lep spomenik, z delom Jakoba Savinška, kjer je potekal SNOS. Griček ima monumentalno obeležje, ki spominja na številne padle. Črnomelj je bil nekoč »slovenska prestolnica« zato so bile številne stavbe sedež pomembnih institucij. Muzej ima del zbirke, ki je posvečen drugi svetovni vojni.

Zaključek: železniška postaja Črnomelj.

VIRI IN LITERATURA

- Ambrožič, Lado. Pohod štirinajste: vojno-zgodovinska študija o pohodu XIV. divizije NOV in POJ iz Suhorja v Beli krajini skozi Hrvaško na Štajersko in o njenih bojih od 6. I do 26. II 1944. Ljubljana: Partizanska knjiga, 1978.
- Jarc, Janko, Jaka Slokan. Črnomelj in okolica v osvobodilni vojni in revoluciji; Spomeniki in spomska znamenja v Črnomlju in okolici; Spomeniško varstvo v Beli krajini. Ljubljana: Komunist, 1981.
- Kamoot. <https://www.kamoot.com/tour/207789833/print>.
- Polič, Radko, Štimac Vladimir. Belokranjski odred. Ljubljana: Partizanska knjiga, 1975.

- Rus, Zvonko. Partizanska letališča in spuščališča v Beli krajini: ob 35-letnici letališč v Otoku in na Krasincu. Metlika, 1979.
- Rus, Zvonko. Vodnik po belokranjskih partizanskih poteh. Metlika: Belokranjski muzej, 1984.
- Vitkovič, Janez. Bela krajina: skozi viharje k svobodi. Ljubljana: Zavod Borec, 1961.
- Weiss, Janez. Črnomelj : 600 let, bilten ob 600-letnici prve omembe Črnomlja kot mesta. Črnomelj: Občina Črnomelj, 2007.
- Weiss, Janez. Od daleč je videla, kako so padale bombe na mesto : memento ob 70-letnici bombardiranja Črnomlja 3. oktobra 1943. Črnomelj: Občina Črnomelj, 2013.