

# Bosnian Demonitizing Punches – a Question

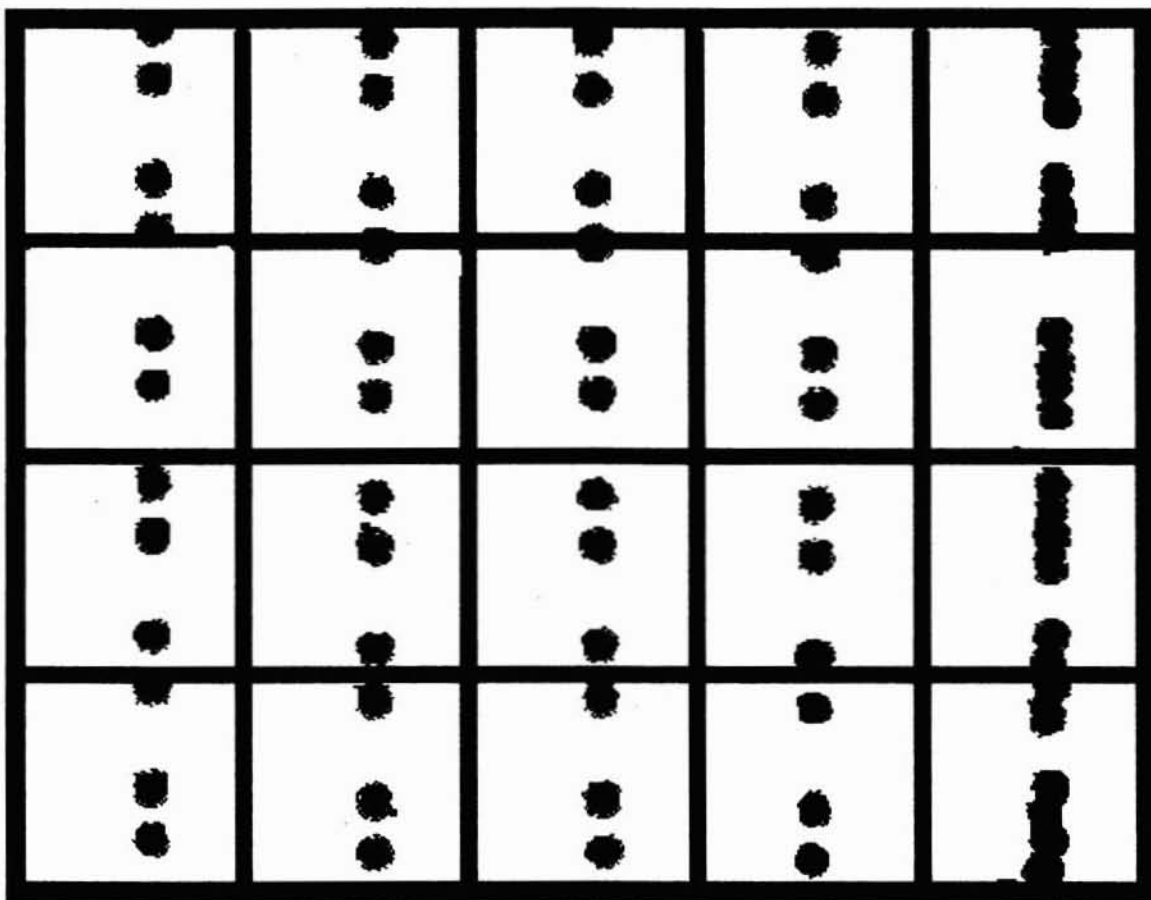
Paul Mistretta (LM#111)

In next month's Bulletin I anticipate running at least the beginning section (of 3) of the final product of the Bosnia Study Group's research (*The Perfins Bulletin 59: 75-77.*) into the perfins used in Bosnia

& Herzegovina that Hal Hite has recently sent to me for use in this *Bulletin*. To attempt to refocus on this area, I present a question that I think is unanswered at present.

My introduction to the demonitized-defaced issues of Bosnia-Herzegovina came only relatively recently with the publication of John Nussbickel's article in *The Perfins Bulletin* (58: 81-84). Despite collecting worldwide stamps and worldwide perfins I had never stumbled onto these items. My speculation actually will fall more into a series of questions about what I have observed in the intervening year.

First, to set the stage, I show below an illustration of the hole pattern seen in the block of 20 stamps shown in Hal Hite's article. The lines represent the location of the perforations between stamps in that multiple. The head that punched these holes was oriented (in all examples that I have seen) to punch a column of stamps in the sheet.



Nussbickel reported that the perforator used had 12 pairs of pins in a line. Both the sheet of 50 (5 x 10 commemorative stamp format) and block of 18 (3 x 6 stamps from a sheet of the 5 x 10 commemorative stamps) reported by Chris Rueger from Nutmeg's Baby #27 Auction (Auction Watch, *TPB* 59: 82) confirm this pin alignment. Further (seen above), the vertical shifting of the punch from column to column and the right hand column of stamps, which alone in the illustration is double punched, suggests that the head was a single linear 24-pin head. Adding strength to this observation is the fact that in the sheet pictured in Nutmeg's Baby 27, there are no holes in the selvedge surrounding the stamps. As above, the head was clearly oriented such that it

punched a column of stamps at a time (not a row at a time).

Has speculation or research given rise to the answer "For what size stamp, or for what other purpose, was a 12 pattern head *in this spacing* designed?" The illustration above, and the lots in Baby 27, show stamps with 2 or 3 complete holes, or with some mix of holes and partial holes - 2 plus a partial, 3 plus a partial or 2 plus 2 partial holes. Had the head been designed to punch stamps of the size in which it was used, there would only be two potential hole counts - 2 holes per stamp or 1 plus 2 partial holes per stamp. Any information or ideas are more than welcome!