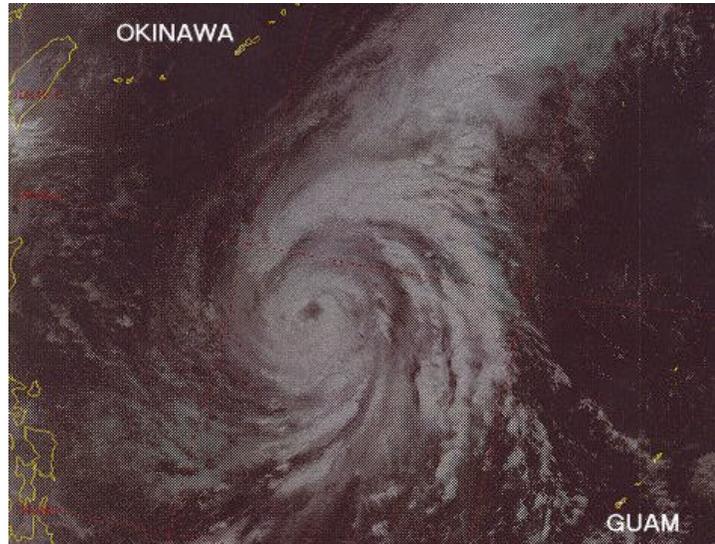


## TYPHOON OPAL (08W)

The disturbance that was to become Typhoon Opal (08W) was first mentioned on the Significant Tropical Weather Advisory (ABPW) on 12 June as an area of persistent convection about 150 nm (278 km) southwest of Guam. The disturbance was slow to develop as it moved to the west-northwest at 6-8 kt (11-15 km/hr). However, by 14 June at 2030Z, the system had organized sufficiently to warrant the issuance of a Tropical Cyclone Formation Alert (TCFA). The first warning on Tropical Depression 08W was valid at 0000Z on the 15th. One day later, the depression attained tropical storm strength (35 kt or 18 m/sec).



**Figure 3-08-1.** Opal reaches its peak of 90 kt (47 m/s) while moving on a north-oriented track (171059Z June low-light visible DMSP imagery).

Twelve hours later, Typhoon Opal was at its maximum intensity of 90 kt (47 m/sec), which it maintained for 36 hours (Figure 3-08-1). As Opal approached 20N latitude, it accelerated to speeds ranging from 14-17 kt (26-31 km/hr). By 0000Z on 18 June, westerlies from a trough to the northwest began to impinge upon Opal's outflow. This can be seen in Figure 3-08-1. As Opal neared 30N latitude, it began to turn to the northeast, subsequently accelerating and weakening. Opal made landfall near Shionomisaki, Japan (WMO 47778) at 2200Z on 19 June with an intensity near 65 kt (33 m/sec). A minimum pressure of 980.3 mb was observed during the passage. Six hours after making landfall, Tropical Storm Opal (08W) passed about 50 nm (93 km) northwest of Tokyo, and at 1500Z on 20 June, Opal exited Honshu on an east-northeast track with 55 kt (29 m/sec) winds. The final warning was issued at 0600Z on the 21st as the system became extratropical near 42N 167E while maintaining 40 kt (21 m/sec) winds.

Opal was one of three typhoons to develop in June. This level of activity has not been seen in the western North Pacific in June since 1965. It was the first tropical cyclone of 1997 to strike Japan.

As Opal approached south central Japan, a fisherman drowned while tying his boat to a pier. Opal caused only minor damage in Yokohama and Tokyo. Transportation was disrupted throughout eastern Japan, and 70 domestic flights were canceled.

