

HEADQUARTERS  
464TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)  
APO 520 U S Army

OFF/FFE/100

319.1

2 September 1944

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

TO : Commanding Officer, 55th Bombardment Wing (H),  
APO 520, U S Army

1. On 2 September 1944, twenty eight (28) scheduled B-24 a/c and three (3) spare B-24 a/c took off at 0710<sup>00</sup> hours to bomb supvac RR Bridge, Yugoslavia.

The thirty one (31) a/c formed into two (2) attack units, the first being led by Lt Col Elvin E. Goodyear, Squadron Commander of the 779th Bombardment Squadron (H), and the second by Captain Robert H. Fowler, Asst Operations Officer of the 778th Bombardment Squadron (H).

The three (3) spare a/c flew the entire mission.

2. Form-up was executed without incident. In effecting the line rendezvous with the 460th Group, the 460th Group at 0815<sup>00</sup> hours was heading south from Andria to Corato. A right turn was made instead of a left to effect the rendezvous. The 460th Group did not pass over Spinazzola on course at the prescribed time due to being late for rendezvous. The 460th and 464th Groups passed over Spinazzola at 0826<sup>00</sup> hours and joined the 460th ten (10) miles east of Spinazzola.

3. The thirty one (31) a/c bombed the target by boxes in column. (Briefed target time 1015<sup>00</sup> hours) Target times of the four (4) boxes were as follows: A-1019<sup>00</sup> hours, B-1020<sup>00</sup> hours, C-1020<sup>00</sup> hours, D-1020<sup>00</sup> hours. Twenty nine (29) of the thirty one (31) a/c over the target dropped seventy two (72) tons of 1000 pound RDX bombs fused .1 nose and non-delay tail, from the following altitudes: A-18,500, B-19,100, C-18,000, D-19,180.

Two (2) of the thirty one (31) a/c over the target returned three (3) tons of bombs to base; one a/c returned two and one half (2½) tons of bombs because of rack malfunction, the other a/c returned one half (½) ton of bombs because of rack malfunction.

[REDACTED]

Ltr Narrative Mission Report, contd

One (1) of the thirty one (31) a/c over the target accidentally released two and one half (2.5) tons of bombs at 43°28'N-21°37'E.

Recapitulation of Bombs:

29 a/c Dropped on target	72.00 tons
2 a/c Returned to base	3.00 tons
1 a/c Jettisoned	<u>2.50 tons</u>
Total tonnage of 31 a/c	77.50 tons

Bomb strike photos show a direct hit on the railroad tracks at the eastern end of Suprovac railroad bridge and numerous additional hits extending 2600 feet along the eastern approach to the bridge. Several near misses were scored at both the north and south edges of the bridge, and smoke from these obscures possible direct hits. The railroad line was also hit at a point 3,000 feet northwest of the bridge. A few bombs fell in the populated area 4,000 feet southeast of the target.

4. The leader of Able Box used C-1 Automatic Pilot on bomb run; the leader of Baker Box made a PDI run because C-1 Automatic Pilot was inoperative due to faulty tubes; the leader of Dog Box used C-1 Automatic Pilot on the bomb run.

5. Scant Heavy flak of undetermined accuracy was observed on the rally at His. Ten (10) to twelve (12) bursts were reported.

6. Rendezvous with fighter escort consisting of thirty (30) P-51 a/c identified as 325th and 52nd Fighter Groups was effected at 09238 hours at 42°50'N-18°03'E. These a/c covered the formation at the target and were last seen at 11203 hours at 41°48'N-19°08'E.

7. Weather at base was clear, visibility 10/15 miles. Generally clear to Deligrad except for patches of altostratus and stratocumulus over the Dinaric Alps.

At Deligrad pronounced vapor trails were noted at 19000 feet and o/10 altostratus, base 18,500 feet was encountered.

[REDACTED]

Ltr Narrative Mission Report, contd

At target, 3/10 to 4/10 altostratus at 10,000 feet compelled formation to drop down from briefed altitude. Visibility at target was 3/10 miles in heavy haze.

On return, conditions were similar except for a few scattered cumulus over the Dinaric Alps and 2/10 strato cumulus over the Adriatic.

Visibility for entire route was 10/15 miles in haze.

c. The following observations were reported by returning crew members:

<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Altitude</u>	<u>Observation</u>
1003B	43°44'N-20°45'E	10,000 ft	Two (2) unidentified e/a on A/D.
1004B	43°44'N-20°45'E	19,600 ft	A/D unoccupied.

9. Thirty one (31) a/c landed at this base from 12153 hours to 12353 hours.

10. Route was flown as briefed. Track chart showing route flown is inclosed.

11. Eight (8) a/c attempted photographs. Selected print inclosed.

For the Commanding Officer:

FRANCIS F. ELDER  
Major, AC  
Intelligence Officer

2 Inclosures:

Incl 1 - Track chart  
Incl 2 - Selected print