

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

JFP/PFE/Hob

319.1

10 September 1944

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

TO : Commanding Officer, 89th Bombardment Wing (H),
APO 520, U S Army

1. On 10 September 1944, twenty eight (28) scheduled B-24 a/c and four (4) spare B-24 a/c took off at 0925 hours to bomb Österreichische Saurerwerke, Austria.

The thirty two (32) a/c formed into two (2) attack units, the first attack being led by Major William H. Reddell, Commanding Officer of the 770th Bombardment Squadron (H) and the second by Captain Robert L. Wingfield, Flight Leader of the 779th Bombardment Squadron (H).

One (1) spare a/c made a normal return leaving the formation at 43°00'N-15°57'E and landed at this base at 0945 hours, returning two and one half (2½) tons of bombs to base.

Four (4) of the original twenty eight (28) a/c scheduled to fly this mission returned before reaching the target as follows:

(a) A/C No 42-95332 left the formation at 45°15'N-14°58'E at 0938 hours and returned to base and landed at 1115 hours because of the loss of oil pressure in #1 engine, requiring the feathering of this engine. This a/c returned two and one half (2½) tons of bombs to base.

(b) A/C No 42-51000 left the formation in the assembly area and landed at this base at 0900 hours because of the following difficulties, voltage regulator cut, oxygen leaks, left landing gear when retracted would not remain locked. This a/c returned two and one half (2½) tons of bombs to base.

(c) A/C No 41-29441 left the formation at 42°45'N-15°49'E and returned to base and landed at 0930 hours because of the loss of #3 engine. This a/c jettisoned two and one half (2½) tons of bombs at 42°54'N-16°02'E because of the loss of #3 engine with a full gas load.

Ltr Harr Miss Rpt cont'd

(1) A/C No 42-95005 left the formation at 41°42'N-10°12'E and returned to base and landed at 082034 hours because of the loss of #3 engine. This a/c jettisoned two and one half (2½) tons of bombs at 41°42'N-10°12'E because of the loss of #3 engine with a full gas load.

2. Group formation, line and wing rendezvous was executed as planned.

3. Twenty seven (27) a/c were over the target at 10435 hours (prior target time 10405 hours) and dropped sixty seven and one half (67½) tons of 500 lb BOMX, fused .1 nose and .01 tail iron 22,000 feet.

Two (2) a/c returned five (5) tons of bombs to base turning back at the locations and for the reasons stated in paragraph 1 (c), (o).

Two (2) a/c jettisoned five (5) tons of bombs at the locations and for the reasons stated in paragraph 1 (c), (d).

One (1) spare a/c returned two and one half (2½) tons of bombs to base.

Recapitulation of Bombs

	# a/c	tons
Dropped on target	27	67½
Jettisoned	2	5
Returned to Base	3	7½
Total	32	80

4. Some strike photos show numerous hits of this group in a wooded area midway between the Donau Canal and the Danube River. This area is approximately 7000 feet due north of the primary target. Some away photos from both attack units would indicate that the main point of impact for this group was in the above described area. There were no hits either on or in the immediate vicinity of the primary target.

5. The Group Leader used the C-1 automatic pilot on the bomb run, in conjunction with PFF. The leader of the second attack unit did not use automatic pilot because of a toggle on A box which was using PFF.

6. I A H flek lasting for 10-12 minutes was encountered at the target. Black, red and white bursts were observed.

[REDACTED]

Ltr Narr Miss Rpt, contd

The red and white bursts were reported to be above the formation. Some of the white bursts were exceptionally large bursts.

7. Rendezvous was made with fighter escort at 43°37'N-15°37'E when twenty five (25) P-38 a/c of the 14th fighter group were observed. At 43°40'N-15°15'E, ten to fifteen (10/15) P-51 a/c of the 325th fighter group were also observed.

Good fighter cover was given on penetration, over target and withdrawal, escort of P-38 a/c were last observed at 1238 hours at the Yugoslavian Coast, and the P-51 a/c were last observed at 44°00'N-16°48'E at 1215 hours.

8. Clear at take-off and generally clear over Adriatic. Few strato cumulus over Dinaric Alps which merged into a 10/10 altocumulus layer, tops 14,000 feet on far side of mountains.

Near Graz, 6/10 to 8/10 cirro stratus appeared and continued to near target. Base of these clouds was about 20,000 feet.

At target, altocumulus layer broke to 5/10 coverage. Visibility was 25 miles.

On return, alto cumulus layer had broken up somewhat, becoming 4/10 to 6/10 all the way to Dinarics and few scattered over Dinarics.

Clear over Adriatic and at base on return. Visibility was 20/25 miles or better entire route.

9. One (1) of our a/c received a direct hit by flak in bomb bay. A/C took fire and exploded. Two (2) chutes seen to open. This incident occurred at 48°10'N-16°30'E.

Fourteen (14) a/c were damaged by flak, two (2) of which will be non operational for more than twenty four (24) hours.

1st Lt. Thomas F. McGovern, Bombardier was killed by flak over the target, when he suffered a hit in the head after removing his flak suit, apparently thinking formation was clear of flak.

Four men were wounded as a result of flak, two (2) of which were given emergency treatment and returned to duty. Two of which were hospitalized.

[REDACTED]

Ltr Narr Miss Rpt, contd

10. Twenty six (26) a/c landed at this base between 1325 R hours and 1410B hours.

11. The route was flown as briefed to Hieflek to 43°14'N-15°58'E then over target on 122°. Axis of attack then as briefed back to 44°25'N-16°40'E to 44°20'N-16°20'E to 44°00'N-16°08'E to 43°40'N-16°40'E to 43°25'N-16°34'E to base.

Track chart showing route as briefed and as flown inclosed.

12. Four a/c attempted photographs. Selected print attached.

For the Commanding Officer:

FRANCIS F. ELDER
Major, AC
Intelligence Officer

2 Incls:
Incl 1 - Track Chart
Incl 2 - Selected Photograph