

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

FFE/hob

319.1

20 September 1944

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

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

1. On 20 September 1944, at 0725A hours, twenty eight (28) scheduled B-24 a/c and three spare B-24 a/c took off to bomb the Marshalling Yard at Hatvan, Hungary (primary target). The thirty one (31) a/c formed two (2) attack units the first unit led by Major William H. Reddell, Squadron Commander, 776th Bombardment Squadron (H) and the second unit by Captain Albert E. Stoll Jr., Operations Officer, 777th Bombardment Squadron (H).

2. Group assembly and Wing rendezvous were accomplished as ordered and without incident.

3. Two (2) a/c returned early.

A/C No. 42-52537 returned from (42°25'N-16°00'E) after developing a gas leak in manifold to heater line.

A/C No. 42-52504 returned from (46°45'N-18°55'E) with an oil leak and cracked cylinder in No. 4 engine.

4. Twenty nine (29) a/c were over the target at 1148A hours (briefed target time 1200A hours) and twenty seven (27) a/c dropped sixty six and three quarters (66.75) tons of bombs. Fifteen (15) a/c dropped thirty seven (37) tons of five hundred (500) pound RDX bombs (.1 nose .01 tail fusing) and twelve a/c dropped twenty nine and three quarters (29.75) tons of M-17 Incendiaries. Bombing was visual from 13,000 feet and target visibility was excellent.

Five (5) a/c returned ten and one quarters (10.25) tons of M-17 incendiaries to the base. Two (2) a/c returning early returned two and one half (2.50) tons each and two (2) a/c were over the target returned two and one half (2.50) tons due to rack malfunction preventing the Dog Box leader from dropping and leader of the second element in Dog Box did not drop because the leader did not. One (1) a/c returned one quarter (.25) ton due to rack malfunction. Two (2) a/c jettisoned a total of one half (.50) ton of five hundred (500) pound RDX bombs due to rack

[REDACTED]

Ltr Narr Mission Rpt, contd

malfunctions. One (1) bomb at (42°40'N-17°40'E) and one (1) bomb at (41°30'N-16°10'E).

Recapitulation of Bomb Tonnage

Dropped on target	(REX)	37.00 tons
Dropped on target	(M-17)	29.75
Returned to base	(REX)	00.00
Returned to base	(M-17)	10.25
Jettisoned	(REX)	.50
Jettisoned	(M-17)	00.00
Total		77.50 tons

Bomb strike photographs show a heavy concentration of incendiary bomb strikes running down the marshalling yard from the northeast choke point, in the yard 2000 feet southwest of the briefed MPI. These strikes are best shown on an oblique photo taken after the formation passed over the target. Incendiary bombs were dispersed over fifteen solid columns of freight cars in the yard. Numerous 500 pound bomb strikes were among railroad tracks in the marshalling yard located 3000 feet north of the briefed MPI.

5. C-1 Automatic Pilot was used by the leader of the first attack unit. The second attack unit leader used MPI on the bombing run as the C-1 Automatic Pilot was erratic.

6. Fighter escort was first observed at 1141A hours at (47°48'N-19°45'E) and remained in the vicinity of the formation until reaching the Yugoslavian Coast on return at 1341A hours. A few P-38 a/c were sighted first and gradually increased in numbers until a total of thirty (30) to forty (40) were in the area. Markings reported indicate a/c were from the 1st and 14th Fighter Groups. P-51 a/c totaling eight (8) were from the 52nd Fighter Group.

7. 8/10 altostratus and altocumulus at take off, base 13-14000 feet and 5/10 cirrus base 20000 feet, cloud cover continuing over route to Dinarics.

Over Dinarics 8/10 cirrostratus, base 18-20000 feet with stratus in valleys.

Generally clear from Dinarics to target.

Clear at target, visibility 30 miles.

On return, 2/10 cumulus over Dinarics and 6/10 cirrostratus, little change over Adriatic, at base 8/10 altostratus, base 13000 feet with 3/10 to 4/10 stratocumulus at 6000 feet. Visibility 20 miles to unlimited for route.

[REDACTED]

Ltr Narr Mission Rpt, cont'd

8. The following observations of importance were reported.

TIME	PLACE	ALT.	OBSERVATIONS
1009A	Frijedor	14,600	M/Y 400/500 wagons
1056A	(46°37'N-18°52'E)	14,000	Five (5) float type planes. Description indicates FW-189 converted. Seven (7) tankers in Danube.
1110A	(46°55'N-19°10'E)	13,000	A/D runway being lengthened.
1120A	Kecsemet (47°50'N-20°25'E)	13,000	Fifty (50) barrack type buildings.
1136A	(47°52'N-20°13'E) Virpelet	13,400	M/Y 600 wagons

Considerable traffic in Hungary on east-west railroads. No activity on north-south lines. In Yugoslavia a concentration of approximately five hundred (500) wagons was reported on the tracks between Novska (45°16'N-17°00'E), Rujic (45°18'N-17°07'E) and Okwosni (45°16'N-17°13'E). The M/Y at Novska completely filled.

9. Twenty nine (29) a/c landed at this base on return between 1439A and 1505A hours.

10. Route was flown as briefed. Track chart of route as flown attached.

11. Eight (8) a/c attempted photographs. Selected strike photograph attached.

For the Commanding Officer:

FRANCIS F. ELDER
Major, AC
Intelligence Officer

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