

C O N F I D E N T I A L

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

BVB/FFE/hob

319.1

12 October 1944

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

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

1. On 12 October 1944, beginning at 0704A hours thirty six (36) scheduled B-24 a/c and five (5) designated spare B-24 a/c took off to bomb the Stores Depot near Bologna, Italy. The forty one (41) a/c formed in three (3) attack units. The first attack unit was led by Lt. Colonel Clarence G. Poff, Commanding Officer of the 778th Bombardment Squadron (H). The second attack unit was led by 1st Lt Richard R. Price, Flight Leader of the 779th Bombardment Squadron (H). The third attack unit was led by Captain Walter Steves, Flight Leader of the 778th Bombardment Squadron (H).

The Group form up and departure from Spinazzola were executed as prescribed.

2. Four (4) scheduled B-24 a/c returned early for the following reasons: B-24 a/c No. 42-515760 left the formation at 0849 at (41°13'N-15°25'E) when No. 3 engine had to be feathered because of loss of oil pressure. This a/c landed at 0904A hours. B-24 a/c No. 42-95364 left the formation at 1018A hours at (42°45'N-11°06'E) because No. 1 supercharger went out at 15,000 feet and No. 4 supercharger was oscillating excessively. (Ground check revealed faulty pressure controls and amplifiers). This a/c landed at 1250A hours. B-24 a/c No. 42-52504 left the formation at (44°17'N-09°23'E) as all generators were out and the a/c did not carry an auxiliary power unit. This a/c landed at 1250A hours. B-24 a/c No. 42-78472 left the formation at 1105A hours at (44°18'N-10°22'E) being unable to maintain formation position after an oil leak in No. 3 engine necessitated feathering of the engine. This a/c landed at 1320A hours.

3. Thirty seven (37) a/c were over the target at 1127A hours (briefed target time 1130A hours) and thirty two (32) a/c dropped 31.45 tons of 100 pound GP bombs (.1 nose and non-delay tail fusing) from 20,500 feet. Of the thirty two (32) a/c dropping on the target, five (5) a/c returned one-half (½) ton of bombs which failed to release on the target due to rack malfunctions.

B-24 a/c No. 42-51644 returned .05 tons

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B-24 a/c No. 42-78613 returned .25 tons  
 B-24 a/c No. 42-51761 returned .05 tons  
 B-24 a/c No. 42-51563 returned .10 tons  
 B-24 a/c No. 42-50736 returned .05 tons

B-24 a/c No. 42-50843, one of the thirty two (32) a/c dropping on the target, jettisoned .05 ton of bombs at (43°10'N-14°30'E) at 1223A hours when one (1) bomb failed to release at the target and it was considered unsafe to land with it. Five (5) a/c of the thirty seven (37) a/c over the target returned five (5) tons of bombs which were not released at the target for the following reasons. B-24 a/c No. 42-78671 had a rack malfunction; B-24 a/c No. 44-41337 because, as reported by bombardier, the selector lever vibrated out of select position; B-24 a/c No. 44-41339 had a malfunction, the bomb bay doors would not open; B-24 a/c No. 42-78618 did not bomb for the reason that the Box Leader, a/c No. 44-41337, did not release bombs; B-24 a/c No. 41-29394 had a malfunction of the release switch.

Three (3) early returns brought back three (3) tons of bombs while the fourth early return jettisoned one (1) ton of bombs at 1130A hours at (44°30'N-09°45'E) to lighten the load and prevent loss of altitude.

## Recapitulation of Bomb Tonnage

32 a/c dropped on target	31.45 tons
10 a/c over the target returned	5.50 tons
2 a/c jettisoned	1.05 tons
3 a/c (early returns) returned	3.00 tons
Total	41.00 tons

Bombing was visual. The leaders of the first and second attack unit used the C-1 automatic pilot. The leader of the third attack unit used PDI because of proximity to the preceding units.

Bomb strike photos show numerous hits on the western half of target number 24-the Bologna stores depot. Several direct hits were scored on storage warehoused and installations in the western end of the depot. Other direct hits were on two warehouses 800 feet north of the briefed MPI and on a building 600 feet south of the MPI. The bomb pattern started 2,000 feet short of the target. Scattered hits beyond the target extended one mile south of the Bologna-Rimini highway.

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4. Flak at the target of from two (2) to three (3) minutes duration was reported as S to MAH. SAH flak was reported at Imola (44°22'N-11°42'E), and at Argenta (44°37'N-11°50'E). SIH flak was observed.

5. Nine (9) P-38 a/c were first observed at 1129A hours at (44°30'N-12°30'E) and last reported at 1252A hours at (42°07'N-15°30'E). Four (4) P-51 a/c were observed in the target area.

6. Weather: At base 3/10 to 4/10 stratocumulus with tops at 6,000 feet. 2/10 to 3/10 stratocumulus over the Appenines with tops at 8,000 feet. North of Rome to La Spezia, 8/10 to 10/10 stratocumulus tops varying from 10,000 feet to 12,000 feet. From La Spezia to target, 2/10 to 3/10 small cumulus, tops 6,000 feet. At target, 1/10 to 2/10 cumulus tops 6,000 feet with visibility 10 miles in haze. On the return, 3/10 cumulus over land and Adriatic with tops 6,000 to 9,000 feet. Cumulus at Base on return. Visibility was 10 to 15 miles from Rome to the target and 20 to 25 miles otherwise.

7. No observations of importance were reported.

8. Seven (7) a/c received minor flak damage none of which will be inoperational for twenty four (24) hours.

9. The route was flown as briefed. Track Chart showing route flown attached.

10. Thirty seven (37) a/c landed at this base between 1318A hours and 1344A hours.

11. Seven (7) a/c attempted photographs. Selected print attached.

For the Commanding Officer:

FRANCIS F. ELDER  
Major, AC  
Intelligence Officer

2 Inclosures  
Incl 1 - Track Chart  
Incl 2 - Selected Print