

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

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

MCK/FFE/hob

319.1

19 November 1944

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

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

1. On 19 November 1944, twenty eight (28) scheduled B-24 a/c plus three (3) spare B-24 a/c took off at 0740A hours to bomb Linz Benzol Plant at Linz, Austria.

The thirty one (31) a/c formed into two (2) attack units, the first being led by Colonel A. L. Schroeder, Group Commander, and the second attack unit by Captain Walter Steves, Flight Leader of the 778th Bombardment Squadron (H).

2. Group form up and bomber rendezvous was made without incident. Wing rendezvous was made as briefed with the exception that the 460th and 485th Groups were well behind at the point of rendezvous.

3. One (1) a/c returned early: a/c No 42-95332 turned back at (42°26'N-16°02'E) at 0927A hours due to fuel transfer system being out and was unable to transfer fuel.

4. Thirty (30) a/c were over the target at 1154A hours (briefed target time 1200A hours), and twenty nine (29) a/c dropped fifty six and three quarters (56 3/4) tons of 500 pound RDX bombs (.1 nose and .01 and .025 mixed tail fuse) from 22,800 feet.

Two (2) a/c jettisoned three and one quarter (3 1/4) tons: A/C No 42-51644 jettisoned two (2) tons at (48°24'N-13°56'E) at 1147A hours due to rack malfunction.

A/C No 44-41339 jettisoned one and one quarter (1 1/4) tons at (48°02'N-14°45'E) at 1205A hours as select lever was sprung and could not release all bombs over the target. This a/c dropped three quarters (3/4) tons on the target.

The a/c returning early returned two (2) tons to the base (see paragraph No. 3).

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Ltr Narr-Miss Rpt, contd

Recapitulation of Bombs

Dropped on target	56 3/4 tons
Jettisoned	3 1/4 tons
Returned to base	2 tons
Total	<u>62 tons</u>

Bombing was by visual means and PFF was used for navigational purposes only.

There was a very effective smoke screen at the target with smoke generators in groups in a large semi-circle to the west of the target area. The generators appeared to have been in operation for some time as the entire area was well covered. It was impossible to estimate the number or exact location of these generators. Ground wind appeared to be blowing the smoke across the target area from the Southwest.

Bomb strike photos show approximately nine dozen hits in an unpopulated area 8,000 feet north northeast of the Benzol plant. These hits are on both banks of the Danube River at a point one mile east of the Linz Ordnance Depot. Scattered groups of additional strikes extend eastward through open country two and one half (2½) miles east of the target. The target area and practically all of the iron and steel works are obscured by a heavy smoke screen.

5. The Group leader used the C-1 automatic pilot on the bomb run, but the leader of the second attack unit used P.D.I. due to the automatic pilot being inoperative.

6. Flak at the target was reported to be IAH and extremely accurate. Time in flak was from four (4) to five (5) minutes, with the heaviest concentration immediately after the bomb release line and continuing on the rally. Almost no flak was encountered prior to the bomb release line. Bursts were described as black, with a few red and white bursts observed.

7. No fighter escort was observed by this Group either on penetration, target or on withdrawal.

8. The weather was as follows: Clear at take off and generally clear to low scattered to North of Vis. From here to a few miles inland of North Italy Coast, 10/10 stratus, tops 10,000 feet.

Clear over Alps except for stratus lying in valleys.

At target 1/10 low cumulus, visibility 20 miles.

Returning conditions were similar. Visibilities in base area were 15 miles in haze.

Clear at base on return.

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Ltr Narr Miss Rpt, contd

9. One (1) a/c No. 42-25843 landed at Bari. This a/c radioed that the nose gear was shot up and that they had an injured man aboard and was going to land at Bari. This has been confirmed by A-3 of Wing. Sixteen (16) a/c were damaged, four (4) of which will be inoperative for more than twenty four (24) hours.

One (1) crew member suffered a minor flak wound.

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

<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Altitude</u>	<u>Observations</u>
1200A	(48°08'N-14°52'E) Amstetten	22,300	M/Y with 500 wagons.
1137A	(48°00'N-13°38'E)	23,000	Large active factory.
1150A	Between IP and Target	22,700	A/D with lengthened runway.
1150A	Linz	22,700	Eight (8) barges anchored along shore five (5) miles above Linz.
1106A	(46°24'N-13°36'E)	21,100	Twenty (20) to thirty (30) buildings appeared to be ware- houses and barracks along rail- way tracks.
	(46°16'N-13°52'E)		Lots of smoke seen near a lake in a wooded valley. Looked like smoke generators.
1140A	(47°57'N-13°35'E)	23,000	Factory with large smoke stack in a valley.

11. Twenty nine (29) a/c landed at this base between 1445 and 1515A hours.

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

13. Four (4) 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 photograph