

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

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

FFE/hob

319.1

20 November 1944

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

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

1. On 20 November 1944, beginning at 0730A hours, twenty eight scheduled and one (1) spare B-24 a/c took off to bomb Blechhammer South O/R, Germany. The twenty nine a/c formed two attack units the first unit led by Lt Colonel Elvin E. Goodyear, Deputy Group Commander and the second unit by 1st Lt Harry F. Heineman, 779th Bombardment Squadron (H).

2. Group assembly and rendezvous with the 465th Bombardment Group (H) were as prescribed and the two groups arrived over Spinazzola one (1) minute early. The 485th and 460th Bombardment Groups (H) were approximately twelve miles to the rear as the Wing formation proceeded on course pulled up into proper position at the first TP (42°00'N-16°20'E).

3. Twenty eight (28) a/c were over the target at 1228A hours (briefed target time 1215A hours) and twenty six (26) a/c dropped 51.5 tons of 500 pound RDX bombs from 22,000 feet. Fusing was .1 nose and mixed .01 - .025 tail on 75% of the load and 25% fused with 6 to 72 hour delay. One a/c No. 44-78590 was a prior return. Leaving the formation at 1129A hours (48°14'N-17°31'E) when No. 2 engine had to be feathered and proceeded to bomb flak installations on the west side of Gyor, Austria at 1139A hours, altitude 17,000 feet, heading 195°, two (2) tons dropped. Results were unobserved and no photographs were attempted. A/C No. 42-51886 jettisoned .5 ton between IP and target when the navigator accidentally hit salvo lever. The balance of the bomb load of this a/c was released on the target. A/C No. 44-10566 jettisoned 2 tons at 1243A hours (50°00'N-18°35'E). This action was necessary as the select switch would not function over the target and the a/c was low on gas. A/C No 44-48880 jettisoned 2 tons at the IP when select lever was pushed beyond the select position due to jolt caused by prop wash.

Bombing was visual and observation of the target was only slightly restricted due to a smoke screen which was described as ineffective. The Wing leader upon reaching the PFF IP (Zuckmantel) executed a 360° left turn and took up the bomb run from the visual IP (Ober Glogau). The axis of attack was 72° (briefed axis 102°).

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Ltr Narr Miss Rpt, contd

Bomb strike photos show several dozen hits 3,500 feet Northwest of the briefed MPI, in the labor camp and rail sidings areas. Numerous hits are among buildings in the labor camp. Approximately eight other strikes are in the storage areas at the southern end of the refinery. Nineteen hits are in the wooded area one-half mile east of the plant.

4. The leader of the first attack unit bombed on PDI as the C-1 automatic pilot was inoperative and the leader of the second attack unit also bombed on PDI.

5. Flak at the target was IAH and of five (5) minutes duration. A/C No. 44-78590 attacking Gyor, Austria encountered MAH for two (2) minutes. Flak was observed as follows:

SIH (47°42'N-17°26'E)
S-H Knin (44°02'N-16°12'E)

6. Four (4) ME 109 a/c were observed at 1243A hours at (49°42'N-18°44'E) at an altitude of 16,000 feet directly under the formation and on an opposite heading. Formation at 22,000 feet.

7. Forty five (45) P-38 a/c of the 1st Fighter Group were first observed at 1055A hours (46°43'N-16°48'E) and escorted the formation to the target. Thirty (30) P-51 a/c group markings not reported were in the target area and both types of escort were with the formation on withdrawal until 1500A hours (43°57'N-16°26'E). The escort was described as excellent.

8. The following weather was reported:
3/10 morning altostratus at 11,000 feet at take off.

1/10 stratocumulus, tops 6,000 feet and 3/10 to 4/10 altostratus at 10,000 feet over Adriatic.

From Vis to (45°00'N-16°00'E) 9/10 stratocumulus and 2/10 to 3/10 cirrus at 22,000 feet.

Patchy altostratus in target area and 7/10 cirrus at 21,000 feet. Visibility was 20 miles.

Similar conditions on return. 5/10 cirrus at base on landing.

Visibility for the route was variable, 15-20 miles.

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

Ltr Narr Miss Rpt, contd

9. One of our a/c is missing. A/C No. 42-51625 called the group leader and advised that two (2) engines were inoperative and that a third was acting erratically. Position of the a/c was given at (43°30'N-16°30'E) at 1518A hours. A heading for Vis was requested and given. Two (2) of our a/c landed at Vis.

10. Ten (10) a/c received flak damage one of which will be inoperational for more than twenty four (24) hours.

11. The following observations were made:

<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Altitude</u>	<u>Observation</u>
1131A	(48°22'N-17°35'E)	21,800	Large O/R
1145A	(49°22'N-17°21'E)	22,400	64 Prefabricated barracks type buildings
1208A	(50°16'N-17°42'E)	22,300	Large factory, smoke screen
1231A	(50°26'N-18°26'E)	22,000	30/40 large barracks type buildings
1330A	Szombathley	15,000	M/Y 400 wagons very active.
1337A	(47°25'N-17°20'E)	17,000	6,000 ft. landing strip newly lengthened unoccupied
1342A	(47°15'N-17°10'E) Czellodomok	17,000	M/Y 800 wagons - Sidings 300 wagons

12. Twenty five (25) a/c landed at this base between 1600A hours and 1630A hours.

13. These were two (2) deviations from the briefed course. From Vis to the Hungarian border the formation was twenty five (25) miles to the left of course and at the PFF IP a 360° degree turn to the left ending at the visual IP was made. The balance of the route was flown as briefed. Track chart showing route flown and briefed attached.

14. Four a/c attempted photographs. Selected strike photograph and K-20 photograph attached.

For the Commanding Officer:

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

FRANCIS F. ELDER
Major, AC
Intelligence Officer