

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

219.1

6 December 1944

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

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

1. On 6 December 1944, thirty one (31) of thirty two (32) scheduled B-24 a/c took off starting at 0742A hours to bomb the primary target named in Operations Order No. 272. Take off was delayed twenty three (23) minutes due to an accident by an a/c of the 465th Group at the end of the 464th Group runway.

One (1) a/c failed to take off. A/C No. 42-51178 due to No. 4 engine running rough and dropping 400 RPM on one magneto when the pilot checked in take off position.

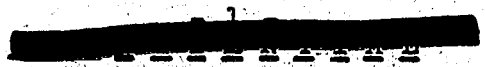
The thirty one (31) a/c formed into two (2) attack units, the first being led by Colonel A. L. Schroeder, Group Commander, and the second by Captain Walter Steves, Flight Leader of the 778th Bombardment Squadron (H).

2. Rendezvous was made approximately six (6) minutes late, due to delay on take off. Form up was made in the 465th Group area. The Group leader called all Groups that wing rendezvous would be made at 0830A hours over Andria. This wing rendezvous was made at 0830A hours over Andria and the wing proceeded on course to the target.

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

(a) A/C No. 42-78590 turned back at (43°41'N-16°28'E) at 0927A hours, landing at 1051A hours due to necessity of feathering No. 4 engine due to low oil pressure, and broken oil line. This a/c jettisoned two and one half (2½) tons of bombs at 0949A hours at (42°47'N-16°15'E) in the Adriatic.

(b) A/C No. 42-51152 turned back at (47°01'N-16°36'E) at 1050A hours due to a runaway prop on No. 4. After feathering could not stay with the formation. This a/c jettisoned two and one half (2½) tons of bombs starting at 1050A hours until 1052A hours at (47°01'N-16°36'E), as had to release bombs individually by hand.



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

Ltr Narr Miss Rpt, contd

4. Upon arriving at the Primary target and finding it completely cloud covered, with both alternate targets also observed to be covered with a complete overcast on the route to the primary, it was decided to bomb the M/Y at Devinska Nova Ves (48°13'N-16°58'E) which was on course.

Twenty six (26) a/c were over the target at 1115A hours, and twenty six (26) a/c dropped sixty one (61) tons of 500 pound GP bombs (.1 nose and non-delay tail fuse), from 22,000 feet.

Three a/c dropped five and three quarters (5 3/4) tons on targets of opportunity as follows:

A/C No 42-52070 dropped 2½ tons on RR and Factory at Vagsellve (48°09'N-17°53'E) at 1133A hours as bombardier had unclutched his sight after finding Primary target cloud covered. Did not drop on Able 11 as did not see target in time, so bombed this target of opportunity.

A/C No 42-78613 dropped 2½ tons on Magyarova (47°53'N-17°17'E) at 1133A hours because bomb bay doors froze over target. Crew claims hit in center of town.

A/C No 42-51903 dropped 3/4 ton of bombs at Fezinok (48°15'N-17°15'E) at 1125A hours and claim hits on fuel storage. Heavy black smoke observed after bombs hit. Three bombs did not release over target due to rack malfunction.

Seven (7) a/c jettisoned ten and three quarters (10 3/4) tons as follows:

A/C No 42-78590 jettisoned two and one half (2½) tons- see paragraph No.3(b) early return.

A/C No 42-51152 jettisoned two and one half (2½) tons- see paragraph No.3(b) early return.

A/C No 44-49028 jettisoned one half (½) ton at 1350A hours at (42°55'N-15°03'E) due to rack malfunction.

A/C No 42-78433 jettisoned one half (½) ton at 1118A hours at (48°19'N-17°17'E) due to improper release had to salvo.

A/C No 44-41339 jettisoned one and three quarter (1 3/4) tons at 1101A hours at (48°12'N-17°38'E) due to faulty intervalo-

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

Ltr Narr Miss Rpt, contd

meter and toggle switch.

A/C No 42-78618 jettisoned one half ($\frac{1}{2}$) ton at 1125A hours at ($48^{\circ}15'N-16^{\circ}58'E$) due to rack malfunction.

A/C No 42-78671-this a/c jettisoned one and one half ($1\frac{1}{2}$) tons at 1200A hours at ($47^{\circ}16'N-17^{\circ}24'E$) and one (1) ton at 1354A hours at ($43^{\circ}03'N-15^{\circ}55'E$) because bomb bay doors jammed over the target.

Recapitulation of Bombs

Dropped on target	61 tons
Targets of opportunity	$53\frac{1}{4}$ tons
Jettisoned	<u>$103\frac{1}{4}$ tons</u>
Total bombs dropped	<u>77 $\frac{1}{4}$ tons</u>

Bomb strike photos show hits on Devinska Nova Ves Marshalling Yard, a target of opportunity, approximately ten (10) miles due west of the primary target. Six (6) bomb strikes are on the railroad tracks in the east central portion of the yard. Two columns, totalling approximately thirty freight cars, were present in the yard at the time but received no direct hits. Two near misses may possibly have caused some damage to rolling stock. A heavy concentration of hits fell adjacent of the east edge of the yard and immediately south of a large unidentified industrial plant. Further south, numerous hits were in the residential areas on either side of the south choke point. At least thirty additional bomb strikes were beyond the target, to the west. Most of these were in the river 3500 feet west of the marshalling yard.

5. Both the Group Leader, and the leader of the second attack unit used the C-1 automatic pilot on the bomb run.

6. Flak at the target was SIH, and was generally low and behind. The bursts were black, with a few white. Flak was observed at the following points:

Gyor SH
Marchegg ($48^{\circ}17'N-16^{\circ}58'E$) S to MH

7. The formation was attacked by 15/20 ME 109 E/A at 1125A hours at ($48^{\circ}18'N-17^{\circ}00'E$). The attack was made while the formation was on a 90° heading after rally off the target while at 21,000 feet. The attack was pressed against Charlie and Dog boxes.

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

Ltr Narr Miss Rpt, contd

Fighters attacked in company front of 5/7 a/c from six (6) o'clock high to level followed by a breakaway roll over to decoy position at 7/9 o'clock high with subsequent attacks being made by pairs from six (6) o'clock high to level. No low attacks were reported.

Markings on E/A were camouflaged, with a greenish color on top of wings and fuselage with white underside. Some had square and others rounded wing tips.

Claims for this Group are seven (7) destroyed, three (3) probably destroyed and one (1) damaged.

One (1) jet propelled a/c was observed just South of Lake Balaton heading Northeast, travelling at high speed about 3 to 4 miles to the left of the formation.

8. Rendezvous was made with twenty (20) P-38 a/c at 1050A hours at (42°01'N-16°36'E) and last escort was observed at 1220A hours at (45°35'N-17°16'E). Only four (4) crews reported seeing fighter escort before being hit by enemy fighters. Escort was apparently in the vicinity of the area where our formation was attacked, as the Group leader called the fighters and told them of the attack and gave the formation position. The fighters acknowledged the call and the Group lead a/c stated that they observed P-38 a/c shortly thereafter off to the right in the distance.

9. The weather was as follows: 10/10 cirrostratus at take off base 20,000 feet. 2/10 stratocumulus at 4,000 feet.

Over Adriatic 9/10 cirrostratus at 20,000 feet and 7/10 altostratus tops 11,500 feet.

Over Dinarics continuing to Lake Balaton 2/10 cirrostratus at 21,500 feet and 8/10 to 9/10 stratus clouds. Tops 12,000 feet. The latter deck broke at 47°20'N and continued patchy to the target.

At the target, 2/10 cirros and patchy low stratus amounting to 3/10 to 4/10. Visibility 18 Miles.

On return, cirrostratus and increased to 6/10 to 8/10 moving in from the west.

Over Adriatic 6/10 cirrostratus base 18,000 feet and 6/10 multilayer middle clouds, 10-13,000 feet. 3/10 stratocumulus, tops 5,000 feet.

At base on return 7/10 altostratus and 1/10 stratocumulus with an unknown amount of cirrostratus above.

Visibility for route 15-20 miles.

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

Ltr Narr Miss Rpt, contd

10. Four (4) of our a/c failed to return.

A/C No 42-50962 was attacked by E/A at (48°20'N-17°15'E) at 1130A hours. Our a/c was last seen with one (1) engine on fire and losing altitude rapidly. One (1) chute was seen to open.

A/C No 42-78682 was last seen at 1130A hours at (48°18'N-17°06'E) when attacked by F/A. The a/c went into a dive with two (2) engines on fire and a wing came off. One (1) chute was seen to open.

A/C No 42-52504 last seen at 1130A hours at (48°18'N-17°06'E) when it was attacked by E/A. This a/c lost altitude rapidly and was seen to explode at approximately 16,000 feet. Eight (8) chutes were seen to open before the explosion occurred.

A/C No 44-10566 was last seen at 1130A hours at (48°20'N-17°30'E) dropping behind formation with No. 2 engine feathered. The a/c was apparently under control and no chutes were observed.

Six (6) a/c were damaged due to E/A, none of which will be inoperative for more than twenty four (24) hours.

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

<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Altitude</u>	<u>Observation</u>
1145	Papa (47°20'N-17°30'E)	23,000	M/Y with 250 wagons and A/D with 15 S/E A/C.
1040	(47°15'N-17°09'E)	21,000	M/Y with over 500 wagons
1058	Parndorf	21,000	A/D with 15 S/E A/C.

A heavy smoke screen was observed at Vienna.

12. Twenty five (25) a/c landed at this base between 1449 and 1510A hours.

13. Route was flown as briefed to the target with minor deviations due to weather. The return route was flown approximately twenty (20) miles to left of course for part of the way to the Adriatic. Track chart showing route flown inclosed.

14. Six (6) a/c attempted photographs. Selected print inclosed.

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

Ltr Narr Miss Rot, contd

15. A special intelligence report dealing with the enemy fighter attack on todays mission is attached.

For the Commanding Officer:

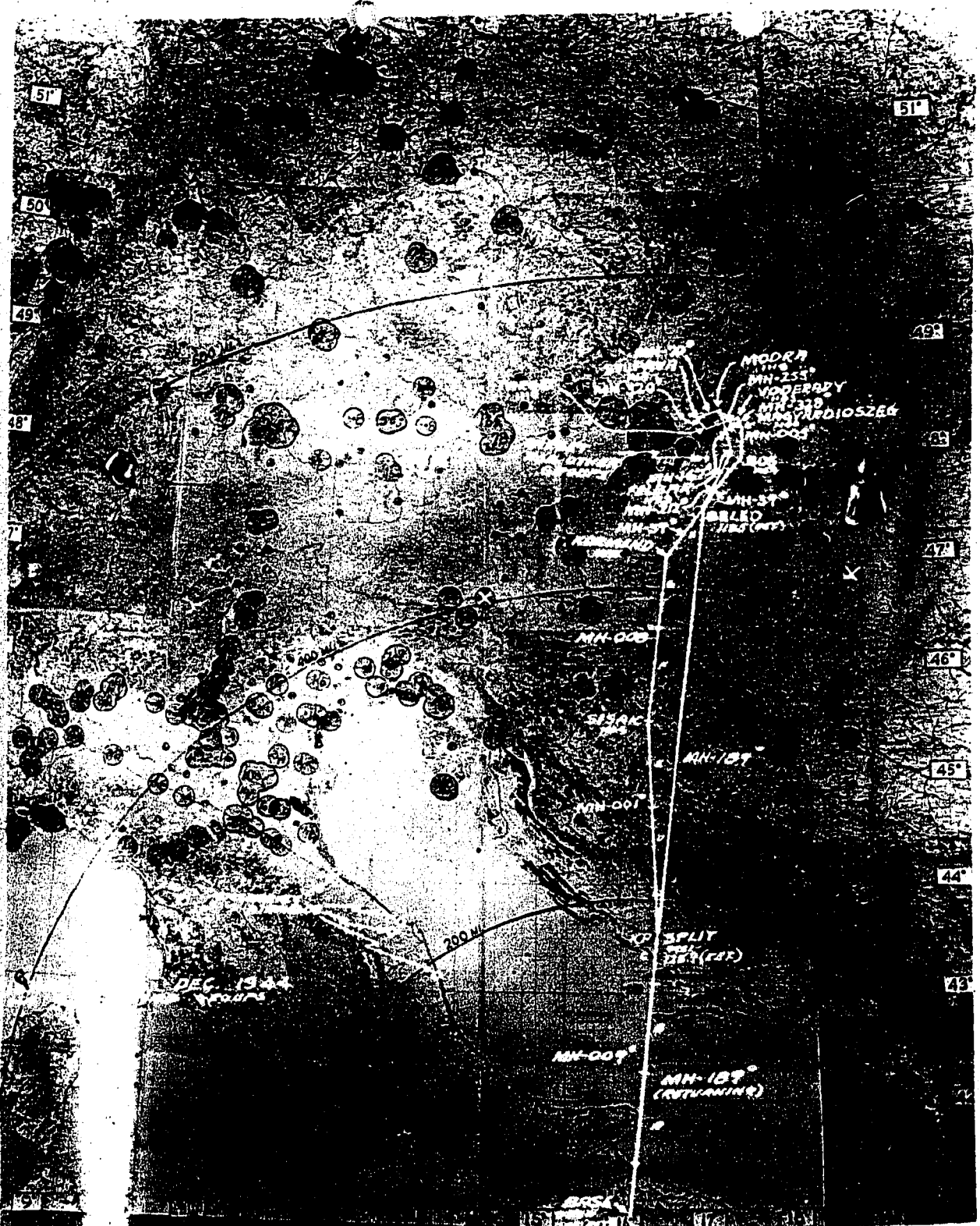
FRANCIS F. ELDER
Major, AC
Intelligence Officer

3 Incls:
Incl 1 - Track Chart
Incl 2 - Selected Print
Incl 3 - Special Intelligence Report

VINSKA NOVA VES 6 DEC

M162:5V3 (12:6:1116) (12:21000) (2610) DEUINSKANOVA VES (778:17)





51

51

50

49

49

48

48

47

47

46

46

45

45

44

44

43

43

MADR
MN-255
VODERAZ
MN-139
ADIOSZEG
MN-005

MN-000

MN-000

SIAK

MN-101

MN-001

MN-009

MN-101
(RETURNING)

SPLIT
1944 (194)

DEC 1944

200 M

400 M

BRSA