

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

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

HH/FFE/jmm

319.1

12 December 1944

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

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

1. On 12 December 1944, the four (4) scheduled PFF B-24 type a/c designated below took off at the hour indicated to bomb Blechhammer South O/R, as specified in Operations Order No 281. Weather prevented flying in elements of two (2). Each a/c proceeded individually.

A/C No 42-52071 (Y/A), 2nd Lt Philip J. Savage,
Pilot, at 0725A hours.

A/C No 42-50533 (R/H), 1st Lt Forrest Robbins, Pilot,
at 0727A hours.

A/C No 44-40932 (W/B), 2nd Lt John E. Marsh, Pilot,
at 0738A hours.

A/C No 44-49402 (B/Y), Capt Joseph A. Shymanski,
Pilot, at 0750A hours.

2. a. A/C No 42-50533 proceeded on course to $49^{\circ}43'N-17^{\circ}50'E$ at 1036A hours where overcast appeared to dissipate. Believing the primary and alternates were open, an early return landing was made at 1405A hours. The entire bomb load of this a/c (6 x 500 lb GP, fusing .1 x .01 & .025, plus 2 x 500 lb delayed) was jettisoned at 1047A hours at $49^{\circ}22'N-18^{\circ}16'E$, to assure more power and maneuverability in event of attack by e/a in the dissipating cloud cover.

b. A/C No 42-52071 was the only one of the four to attack the primary target. The full bomb load of this a/c (6 x 500 lb GP, fusing .1 x .01 & .025, plus 2 x 500 lb delayed) was dropped by PFF on the Blechhammer South O/R from 24,000 feet on an axis of attack of 125° , at 1114A hours. PFF Navigator reported equipment in good condition. Target was picked up in scope forty (40) miles away. Five (5) sight angles were given, 70° , 65° , 60° , 50° , and 40° . Three (3) course corrections given, last correction 3° when ten (10)

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miles from target. Complete overcast prevented observation of bombing results.

c. A/C No 44-40932 attacked the second alternate, when upon nearing the primary the overcast appeared to be dissipating. The full bomb load of this a/c (6 x 500 lb GP, fusing .1 x .01 & .025, plus 2 x 500 lb delayed) was dropped by PFF on Moravska Ostrava (Privoz) O/R from 22,600 feet, on an axis of attack of 87°, at 1102A hours. PFF equipment satisfactory. Four (4) range readings given and one (1) course correction, last correction 4°. Overcast prevented observation of results.

d. A/C No 44-49402 attacked the Graz M/Y as a target of opportunity, when the cloud cover appeared to be dissipating too much to hazard an attack upon the assigned targets. The entire bomb load of this a/c (6 x 500lb GP, fusing .1 x .01 & .025, plus 2 x 500lb delayed, and one leaflet bomb) was dropped by PFF from 20,100 feet, on an axis of attack of 260°, at 1201A hours. PFF equipment satisfactory. Five (5) range readings were given and two (2) course corrections, last correction 2°. Overcast prevented observation of results.

3. Recapitulation of disposition of bomb tonnage:

	500 lb GP .1x.01 & .025	500 lb Delayed	Leaflet
Dropped on P/T	1.5 tons	.5 tons	
Dropped on 2nd Alternate	1.5 "	.5 "	
Dropped on T/O	1.5 "	.5 "	1 bomb
Jettisoned (early return)	1.5 "	.5 "	

4. a. SIH flak was encountered at Blechhammer, observed to increase in intensity as a/c left the target area, indicating delayed detection of the bomber's presence.

b. S-MAH encountered at Moravska Ostrava.

c. SH was observed at Cieszyn (49°43'N-18°39'E), briefed as a crew reported flak area.

d. SIH encountered at key point Baja, 46°11'N-18°58'E, behind the Russian line; however, existing overcast should have prevented recognition of this aircraft.

5. Weather at base on take-off was 3/10 to 5/10 strato-cumulus, base 5,000 feet: 5/10 to 7/10 middle clouds at 8,000 feet and scattered cirrus at 20,000 feet. Visibility was 20 miles.

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Route out, multilayer clouds from 8,000 feet to above 20,000 feet. North of Budapest clouds appeared to thin and break up, a fact which caused three (3) of the four (4) a/c to proceed to alternate targets. One a/c, however, remained in clouds to Belusa, breaking out at 20,000 feet. From Belusa to Blechhammer upper clouds disappeared rapidly giving the appearance of a large hole in target region. Below was 10/10 altocumulus with tops at 12-14,000 feet.

Weather over Primary and Alternates:

Blechhammer, 10/10 altocumulus, tops 12-14,000 feet and thin cirrus. 10/10 multilayer to west, visibility was 20 miles.

Moravska Ostrava, 1/10 to 3/10 cirrus from 22,000 feet to 24,000 feet. 10/10 altocumulus tops 18,000 feet. Visibility 20 miles.

Graz, 10/10 altocumulus, tops 15,000 feet. Clear above.

Similar conditions were encountered on return with high clouds dissipating in northern part of route. 10/10 stratus at 3,000 feet at base on return with intermittent rain.

6. The one (1) a/c attacking the second alternate received slight flak damage.

7. Return landings of the three (3) remaining a/c were made between 1440A and 1528A hours.

8. Routes were flown as briefed except for the a/c attacking the primary, which varied from briefed axis of attack because of wide turn made to insure positive identification of target.

9. One (1) a/c attempted scope photograph.

For the Commanding Officer:

FRANCIS F. ELDER
Major, AC
Intelligence Officer

1 Inclosure
Incl 1 - Track Chart