

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

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

hh/FFE/hob

319.1

20 December 1944

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

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

1. (a) On 20 December 1944, commencing at 0805A, twenty two (22) B-24 type a/c (including three (3) spares) of twenty seven (27) scheduled, took off to bomb the primary target designated in Operations Order #295.

(b) The five (5) a/c listed below failed to take off for the reasons indicated:

A/C #42-51760, brake malfunction
A/C #42-51152, power cable burned out
A/C #44-49028, mechanical difficulty
A/C #44-41213, repair of mechanical difficulty
delayed take off until field weathered in.
A/C #42-95332, same.

(c) Forming into two attack units, the first was led by Capt. Harry S. Wilson, Assistant Operations Officer, 464th Bombardment Group, and the second by First Lieutenant Wayne G. Shearer, Flight Leader, 777th Bombardment Squadron.

2. (a) Form up and assembly was accomplished as prescribed without incident.

(b) Bomber rendezvous was not made as ordered. Unable to locate the 465th Bomb Group, the 464th formation fell in behind the 47th Wing.

3. There were five (5) early returns made by the a/c listed below for the reasons indicated.

A/C #44-49415 lost side blister window before leaving form up area and landed at 0836A.
A/C #41-29453 proceeded to 42°25'N-16°10'E, lost #3 engine, and made return landing at 1050A.
A/C #44-10610 proceeded to 43°16'N-15°45'E, syphoning gas, and made return landing at 1205A.

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Ltr Narr Miss Rpt, contd

A/C #42-52068 proceeded to 43°55'N-15°25'E, lost formation in weather, and made return landing at 1105A.

A/C #44-48768 proceeded to 44°50'N-14°53'E, lost formation in weather, and made return landing at 1210A.

4. Adverse weather preventing rendezvous with the 55th Wing, the 464th Group, following the 47th Wing, proceeded to the IP for the 4th alternate target, Villach M/Y, which was attacked by PFF. Seventeen (17) a/c were over the target at 1212A and dropped 33.75 tons of 500 lb. RDX bombs (.1 x .01 and .025) from 24,000/23,000 feet, on an axis of 312°.

A/C #42-78488 jettisoned .25 ton of bombs in the Adriatic at 1310A at 48°33'N-15°15'E, because of rack malfunction at target.

A/C #41-29453, one of the early returns, jettisoned 2 tons of bombs at 1010A at 41°35'N-16°10'E, after losing #3 engine.

The remaining four (4) early returns brought back eight (8) tons of bombs.

Recapitulation of Bomb Disposition:

17 a/c dropped on 5th A/T	33.75 tons
2 a/c jettisoned	2.25
4 a/c returned	8.00
Total	<u>44.00 tons</u>

5. Solid overcast prevented an observation of bombing results. Of the three PFF a/c, the lead PFF navigator reported variation in appearance of target on scope, divided instead of solid. Another reported flux gear compass out, and the other satisfactory.

Bombs away photos taken over Villach show a 10/10 overcast with no terrain features visible, preventing determination of impacts.

6. One crew reported observation of 2 ME 110s in Villach area at 1214A, which disappeared into clouds at 15000 feet without making any passes.

7. Rendezvous was made at 1038A with 15/20 P-38s at 44°00'N-15°20'E, which remained in sight for only a few minutes; and at 1041A with 10/16 P-51s at 45°58'N-14°18'E, which departed at 1420A.

8. Weather - Base at take off, 3/10 to 4/10 stratus and stratocumulus; base 1500 feet, top 5-6000 feet with ground fog moving in from west.

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Ltr Narr Miss Rpt, contd

Route - 9/10 to 10/10 stratus over Adriatic, top 12-14000 feet. 9/10 stratus, top 12000 feet over Dinarics and Alps. On return, 7/10-8/10 stratus, top 10,000 feet over Yugoslavia. Over Adriatic 6/10 thin altostratus, base 13000 feet and 7/10 stratus, top 6,000 feet. At 43008'N-15020'E ship ran into overcast cumulus and cumulonimbus, base 3,000 feet and tops 20-25000 feet with many thunderheads over Spur. Visibility 3-6 miles in heavy haze beneath clouds.

Target - (Villach) 10/10 altostratus, top 13,000 feet. Visibility air to air 20 miles.

Base on return - 4/10 cumulus, base 3,000 feet tops 8,000 feet, visibility 3-5 miles in heavy haze.

9. Fourteen (14) a/c landed at this field between 1420 and 1510A. Remaining three (3) a/c (44-41337, 42-51563, and 44-49363) landed at the field of the 459th Group because of closing in weather at home base.

10. Following observations were reported:

Place	Time	Alt	Observation
Trieste Harbor	1226A	20,000	8 M/V and possible submarine
Trieste	1228A	21,000	A/D apparently now, under construction
Fiume Harbor	1236A	21,000	1 M/V

For the Commanding Officer:

FRANCIS F. ELDER
Major, AC
Intelligence Officer

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