

CONFIDENTIAL

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

MCA/FFR/PCM

319.1

31 January 1945

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

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

1. On 31 January 1945, twenty (20) of twenty one (21) scheduled B-24 a/c comprising the Red Force took off starting at 0610A hours to bomb Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery.

A/C No 42-52557, W:K, failed to take off because two (2) turrets were inoperative and the crew took off in a/c No 42-94870, B:W, but was too late to join the formation. This a/c joined the Blue Force.

Red Force of twenty (20) B-24 a/c was led by Lt Colonel Elvin E Goodyear, Group Operations Officer.

2. Group form up was as planned. Rendezvous with 405th was made five (5) miles short of Andria and turned for Spinazzola. Arrived at Spinazzola at 0922A hours and this Group made an S turn and came back over Spinazzola on course at 0926A hours.

3. Nineteen (19) a/c were over the target at 1017A hours (briefed target time 1009A hours) and sixteen (16) a/c dropped thirty and one half (30½) tons of 500 lb GP bombs (.1 nose and .01 and .025 mixed tail fuse) from 24,500 feet on a heading of 250°.

One (1) a/c dropped two (2) tons on target of opportunity due to bomb doors not opening over primary target. Railroad round houses at Nagykaniza (4627N-1659E) was bombed. Crew reports six (6) hits on the single track railroad and two (2) hits near a round house or turntable.

Four (4) a/c jettisoned five and one half (5½) tons: A/C No 44-40928 jettisoned one and one half tons (1½) at 4730N-1750E at 1255A hours due to trouble with #3 and #4 turbos, jettisoned to lighten load.

A/C No 44-49514 jettisoned two (2) tons at 1320A hours three (3) minutes after target - due to the fact that salvo lever would not function. Pilot used his salvo lever to jettison.

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

Lt M. R Miss Rpt, contd.

A/C No 44-48880 jettisoned two (2) tons at 1352A hours at 400(N-1,15E due to bomb bay doors not opening over the target.

A/C No 44-49190 jettisoned one half (½) ton at 1340A hours at 4115N-1550E. These two (2) bombs hung up due to rack malfunction.

The disposition of the bomb load of one (1) a/c missing is unknown.

Recapitulation of bombs

Dropped on target	30½ tons
Jettisoned	5½
Dropped on target of opportunity	2
Missing a/c	2
Total	<u>40 tons</u>

Bombing was by PFF. The mickey operator in the lead a/c reported interference due to a faulty inverter. Target was picked up thirty five (35) miles away and the target was identified on the bomb run.

Five (5) sighting angles and two (2) course corrections were made. The last course correction was 2° to the right twelve (12) miles from the target.

The cooperation between the bombardier and the Mickey operator was very good on the bomb run.

On return the inverter blew out and the Mickey operator had to change inverters, in the meantime the DR Navigator took over on DR until repairs were made.

Bombs away photos from Red Force show a ten-tenths overcast with neither target nor adjacent terrain detail visible. It is not possible to estimate the area of bomb impacts.

4. All three (3) box leaders used C-1 automatic pilot on the bomb run.

5. Flak at the target was reported to be 3 to 4 MIH. Flak was on both sides behind the formation. Flak was encountered at the following locations:

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

Ltr Narr Miss Rpt, contd

Nagykaniza	(4627N-1659E)	S A H
	(4605N-1605E)	S A H
	(4634N-1617E)	I I H
	(4625N-1645E)	I I H

Varazodin  
Flak was observed at 4805N-1724E as S H and at Maribor S H.

6. Rendezvous was made with twenty five (25) P-51 a/c at 0950A hours at 4537N-1718E and were last observed at 1400A hours at 4230N-1650E. Ten (10) P-38 a/c were seen at 1215A hours at 4744N-1719E and last observed at 1320A hours just after the target. Both P-51 and P-38 a/c were over the target area with the bombers. P-51 a/c were believed to be from the 52nd Fighter Group.

7. One (1) a/c is at a friendly field. A/C No 44-49653 landed at Vis; information being received by telephone from Wing A3.

One (1) a/c is missing. A/C No 42-51423 was last observed at 1255A hours at 4819N-1730E where it turned back with #2 engine feathered. A/C radioed that it was heading back to the base. When last observed a/c seemed to be under control.

One a/c suffered minor flak damage.

8. Due to overcast conditions no military observations were reported.

9. Eighteen (18) a/c landed at this base between 1515A and 1536A hours.

10. Route was not flown as briefed. The course was approximately twenty (20) miles to the right from the Key Point to the turn point at Cifer. After leaving the target the PFF equipment in the lead a/c went out and the route was approximately 2 to 3 miles to the left of course to Nagykaniza 4627N-1659E where the route was flown as briefed to the base. Track chart showing route flown inclosed.

11. Three (3) a/c attempted photographs. Selected print showing bombs away picture with 10/10 cloud coverage inclosed.

12. The Blue Force, comprising twenty one (21) B-24 a/c plus one (1) a/c of the Red Force took off starting at 0910A hours to bomb Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery.

The Blue Force of twenty two (22) B-24 a/c was led by Lt Colonel William G. Moore Jr, Commanding Officer of the 777th Bombardment Squadron (H).

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

Lbr Marr Miss Int, contd

13. Group formation was as planned. Maneuvering was made over Aniric with the 465th, then being above the overcast and the 464th below the overcast. Fine maneuvering was made in a criss-cross pattern, being on course over Spinnaker at 1036A hours.

At 1320A hours the main unit in the PFF set went out and the Group Leader surrendered the lead to a/c No 42-25613 Baker Box leader 1st Lt Arnold E. Gimmel, Deputy Flight Leader of the 778th Bombardment Squadron (H) who led the Group over the target. After the target the Group Leader took the lead again on the return to the base.

14. One (1) a/c was an early return and one (2) a/c was a prior return.

(a) A/C No 42-94878 turned back at 1230A hours at (4522-1704) as #3 search radar was out and #4 search radar was fluctuating excessively. This a/c returned two (2) tons of bombs to base.

(b) A/C No 42-50728 turned back at 1238A hours at (4610N-1635E) due to loss of #1 engine. This a/c dropped two (2) tons of bombs on a target of opportunity at 1243A hours at (4605N-1639E) corridor from 10,500 feet on a heading of 180°. Due to not having a bomb sight the target was missed.

15. Twenty (20) a/c were over the target at 1429A hours (briefed target time 1409A hours) and nineteen (19) a/c dropped thirty six and one half (36½) tons of 500 pound G.P. bombs (.1 and .01 and .025 mixed tail fuse) from 24,500 feet on a heading of 237°.

One (1) a/c No 42-50728 dropped two (2) tons on target of opportunity (see paragraph #14(b) above).

Two (2) a/c jettisoned three and one half (3½) tons:

A/C No 42-51644 jettisoned two (2) tons at 1424A hours at (4822N-1718E) due to accidental release before target when intervalometer dropped bombs without release switch being tripped.

A/C No 44-49837 jettisoned one and one half (1½) tons at 1425A hours at (4830N-1613E) due to intervalometer malfunction.

One (1) a/c No 42-94878 returned two (2) tons of bombs to base (see paragraph #14 (a) ).

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

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

Ltr Narr Miss Ent, cont'd

Recapitulation of bombs

Dropped on target	36.5 tons
Target of opportunity	2
Jettisoned	3.5
Returned to base	2
Total	<u>44 tons</u>

Bombing was by PFF method. The lead PFF a/c missed up the target forty (40) miles away and the target was properly identified on the bomb run.

Four (4) sighting angles were given and two (2) course corrections were made, the last being 2° to the right at eight (8) miles from the target.

The cooperation between the bombardier and Wicker operator was good. On the rally the oscillator went out and the original Group Leader took over the lead back to the base.

Photos taken by Blue force show bombs away only. All target and terrain detail is obscured by clouds. It is impossible to estimate the bomb impact area.

16. The Group leader used the C-1 automatic pilot. The leader of Baker Box dropped on Charlie 11 due to PFF being out. The leader of Charlie Box dropped on Able Box on order of the Group Leader.

17. Flak at the target was reported as S I H, with several a/c reporting no flak. On the approach to the target there were many flak bursts in the sky but the flak appeared to almost disappear at the time this Group went over the target.

Flak was encountered at the following locations:

4518N-1705E	(R.R. to Zagreb)	S A H	3 to 5 bursts
4521N-1650E	(Novska)	S A H	
4516N-1654E	(Jasenovec)	S A H	30 bursts
4556N-1714E		S A H	Believed by Flak

18. Rendezvous was made with twenty five (25) P-51 a/c at 1215A hours at (4510N-1650E) and were last observed at 1542A hours at Split. Fighters were from the 332nd Fighter Group.

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

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

Ltr Harr Miss Fort, contd

19. One (1) a/c suffered minor fuel damage.

20. Observations reported by returning Crew Members:

<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Altitude</u>	<u>Observation</u>
1437A	4520N-1200E	20,000	M/Y with approximately 500 units.

21. Twenty two (22) a/c landed at this base between 1630 and 1700A hours.

22. Route was flown as briefed - Track chart showing route flown enclosed.

23. Weather for Red and Blue forces at take off was as follows:

about 5/10 high stratocumulus at take off, base 8,000 feet. Over Adriatic, 8/10 to 10/10 strato cumulus, top 8,000', continuing over Palmation coast but breaking over Dinarics to scattered.

North of Dinarics, 8/10 to 10/10 stratocumulus, top 10,000 to 12,000 feet which continued to target. Varying amounts of cirrus were encountered near Lake Balaton at 10,000 feet. Vapor trails also were noted in this area.

At target, 10/10 stratocumulus, top 12,000 feet. Visibility was 20 miles.

On return, low layer had broken to 3/10 to 7/10, visibility was low over southern Italy 10 to 12 miles in moderate haze.

Clear at base on return, visibility 15 miles.

For the Commanding Officer:

FRANCIS F. ELLER  
Major, AC  
Intelligence Officer

3 Incls:

Incl 1 and 2-Track Charts  
(Red and Blue forces)

Incl 3 - Selected photograph for Red force