

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

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

HHS/FFE/hob

319.1

5 February 1945

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

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

1. On 5 February 1945, forty two (42) scheduled a/c took off to bomb the Regensburg, Germany, Winter Harbor O/S. Thirty nine (39) a/c took off from 0827A hours to 0845 hours, with three (3) a/c late take-off's at 0900A, 0901A and 0934A hours.

2. The forty two (42) a/c formed into three (3) attack units. The first unit was led by Lt. Col. James H. Gilson, Commanding Officer, 779th Bombardment Squadron (H); the second unit by First Lieutenant Robert E. Elliott, Assistant Flight Leader, 776th Bombardment Squadron (H); the third unit by First Lieutenant Kenneth (NMI) Machado, Flight Leader, 777th Bombardment Squadron (H).

3. a. Group form-up and assembly were accomplished as prescribed.

b. Line rendezvous was effected with the other groups of the Wing at the proper time and altitude. This rendezvous, however, was effected with some difficulty, due to improper spacing and bunching of the individual formations. This partly parrallel, rather than trail formation, is repoted to have continued to the target.

4. The course flown was as briefed, with minor deviations due to weather. The approximate course is shown graphically on the inclosed track chart.

5. Three (3) a/c returned early, as follow:

a. A/C No 42-94823 turned back at 1008A hours at (43°22'N-15°00'E), landing at 1135A hours. This a/c lost the oil in No 2 engine, which had to be feathered. Its entire bomb load of two (2) tons was returned to base.

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b. A/C No 42-51563 turned back at 1108A hours at (44°53'N-13°30'E), landing at 1245A hours. This a/c had its No 1 engine become inoperative, due to obstruction in the fuel lines. Upon landing, after rolling about one hundred and fifty (150) yards, the landing gear collapsed. The a/c will be out of operation for more than seventy two (72) hours, but no crew members were injured in the mishap. Its entire bomb load of two (2) tons was jettisoned at 1122A hours at (44°12'N-13°58'E), to lighten load.

c. A/C No 44-40928 turned back at 1201A hours at (46°43'N-12°37'E), landing at 1403A hours. This a/c had extensive engine malfunctions -- its Nos 3 and 4 having turbo supercharger trouble, with No 3 oscillating seven (7) to eight (8) inches, and No 4's manifold pressure remaining below thirty (30) inches. Its entire bomb load of two (2) tons was returned to base.

6. One (1) a/c No 42-51264 was a prior return, turning back at 1220A hours at (47°32'N-12°34'E), landing at 1441A hours. This a/c had its No 4 engine become inoperative. The entire bomb load of two (2) tons was released on a M/Y at (47°18'N-12°49'E) at 1225A hours from 21,000 feet on an attack axis of 180°, with unobserved results.

7. Five (5) a/c jettisoned bombs as follows:

a. A/C No 44-48767, at 1254A hours at (48°57'N-12°20'E) dropped two (2) tons of bombs to lighten the load, due to its No 1 engine becoming inoperative.

b. A/C No 42-78692, at 1307A hours at (49°14'N-12°05'E) jettisoned three (3) hung-up bombs (.375 tons) following release at the primary target.

c. A/C No 44-49409, at 1350A hours at (46°45'N-12°05'E), jettisoned one (1) hung-up bomb (.125 ton), following release at the primary target.

d. A/C No 44-49796, at 1307A hours at (49°08'N-11°40'E), jettisoned one (1) hung-up bomb (.125 ton), following release at the primary target.

e. A/C No 42-78472, at 1300A hours (one minute after group bombs away) salvoed its entire bomb load of two (2) tons, due to intervalometer malfunction.

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8. Thirty six (36) a/c released 71.375 tons of 250 pound clustered G.P. bombs, fused .1 nose and .01 tail, on the primary target at 1258A hours from 24,900 feet, upon an attack axis of 283°T. Bombing recapitulation is as follows:

36 a/c dropped on primary target	71.375 tons
1 a/c dropped on a T.O.	2.000
5 a/c jettisoned	4.625
1 E.R. a/c jettisoned	2.000
2 E.R. a/c brought back	4.000
Total	<u>84.000 tons</u>

9. Bomb away photos show a solid cloud cover obscuring all terrain detail and bomb strikes. It is not possible to estimate the area of bomb strikes.

10. a. Bombing on this mission was accomplished by PFF. The PFF operator of the lead a/c reports that the target was first picked up sixty (60) miles away, and from there on was retained clearly. Five (5) sighting angles were given, from 70° to 40°, and C-1 automatic pilot equipment was utilized on the bombing run.

b. The second attack unit leader reports that, due to the Wing formation being bunched up, a wide turn on the the I.P. had to be used, with consequent belief that the northern portion of the target was bombed. Two sighting angles (70° and 60°) were provided by the PFF operator of this a/c, and C-1 automatic pilot equipment was utilized.

c. The third attack unit leader likewise reports that the Wing formation was spread out on the approach to the target. His PFF operator stated that his pick-up and reception were clear. Due to the C-1 automatic pilot equipment of this a/c being erratic, the bombing run was flown manually, with oral directions being provided the pilot by the PFF operator.

11. Flak at the primary target was observed, but not encountered. Consensus of reports shows that intense heavy flak was encountered over the target by bomber formations following this Group. These observations were made following the second rally from the target, at about four (4) minutes after bombs were released.

12. Rendezvous with forty (40) P-51 escort fighters was effected at 1145A hours at (45°57'N-12°31'E). Excellent cover was provided, and continued to 1430A hours at (44°54'N-13°42'E). This escort was identified as a/c-of the 52nd Fighter Group.

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13. Weather was reported as follows:
Base: 5/10 cirrostratus with 8/10 thin altostratus at take-off, base 11,000 feet. Visibility 15 miles.
Route: Scattered cirrus at 20,000 feet and 3/10 low clouds to north of Spur becoming 8/10 to 10/10 altostratus, base 18,000 feet in north Adriatic with low deck increasing to 10/10 top 10,000 feet. Both of these decks broke in North Italy to clear. Clear over Alps. North of Alps, scattered middle clouds increasing in vicinity of Ubersee to 7/10 to 10/10 variable altostratus, top 14,000 feet. Above was a deck of cirrus which increased just south of the target to 10/10.
Return: High clouds appeared to be moving in from the west. Low deck of clouds over Adriatic now covered all of valley south of Alps.
Target: Cirrus at 30,000 feet and 10/10 altostratus, top 14,000 feet. Visibility was unlimited above clouds.
14. a. Following three (3) early return a/c, and one (1) prior return a/c, thirty four (34) a/c landed at this base from 1545A hours to 1612A hours. One (1) a/c landed at this base at 1657A hours, following a prior landing at 1559A hours at the 52nd Fighter Group base, to re-fuel.
- b. Two (2) a/c are reported at friendly airfields.
- (1) A/C No 42-78613, at Lesina.
- (2) A/C No.44-49415, at Desenatico.
- c. One (1) a/c, No.42-52537, is missing. This a/c was last observed leaving the formation at (48°05'N-12°02'E). The a/c was flying at 15,000 feet and losing altitude. At last radio contact the pilot was heard to state that his airplane was very low on oxygen, and that he did not believe that he could make it across the Alps and the weather there, in which event he would head for Switzerland.
15. Military observations were reported as follow:
- a. An effective and heavy smoke screen at Munich, Germany.
- b. Lake NE of Munich at (48°13'N-11°45'E) was camouflaged with white strips across it from north to south.

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Ltr Narr Miss Rpt, contd

c. Munich - Riem A/D had ten (10) unidentified a/c on field.

16. Seven (7) a/c attempted photographs. A selected print is inclosed.

For the Commanding Officer:

FRANCIS F. ELDER
Major, AC
Intelligence Officer

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

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