

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

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

HH/FWE/fh

319.1

16 February 1945

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

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

1. On 16 February 1945, forty two (42) type B-24 scheduled aircraft took off at 0830A hours to bomb the Regensburg/Obertraubling A/D pursuant to Operation Order No 77, forming into three (3) attack units of fourteen (14) a/c each. The first attack unit was led by Lt. Colonel William G. Moore, Commanding Officer, 777th Bombardment Squadron (H), the second unit by Captain Bedford D. May, Flight Leader, 776th Bombardment Squadron (H), and the third by First Lieutenant William J. Saunders, Flight Leader, 779th Bombardment Squadron (H).

2. Form up and assembly, hampered by weather, was made under the overcast. Wing rendezvous was likewise hampered until landfall, at which point the 465th Bombardment Group (H) fell in behind the left column, resulting in a converging course at the target with the 464th Bombardment Group (H), forcing the latter Group to the right of prescribed course.

3. There were six (6) early returns made as shown below:

a. A/C No 44-48880 turned back at Vis at 1042A because of malfunction in fuel transfer system, and made return landing at 1130A with full bomb load.

b. A/C No 44-49394 turned back at 1115A at (44°05'N-15°00'E) after losing formation in clouds, and made return landing at 1234A with full bomb load.

c. A/C No 44-48768 turned back at 1132A for the same reason at (45°00'N-14°12'E), and made return landing at 1255A with full bomb load.

d. A/C No 44-49415 turned back at 1140A, also for the same reason, at (44°00'N-14°20'E), and made return landing at 1315A with full bomb load.

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

Ltr Narr Miss Rpt continued:

e. A/C No 44-49363 turned back at 1152A at (45°47'N-14°06'E) because of excessive fuel consumption and manifold pressure and inability to stay with formation. To lighten weight, its entire bomb load of 2.16 tons was jettisoned at 1153A at (45°18'N-14°16'E). Return landing was made at 1336A.

f. A/C No 42-51736 turned back at 1206A at (46°22'N-15°06'E) when malfunction in prop governor made it necessary to feather No 3 engine. To lighten load, entire bomb load of 2.16 tons was jettisoned at 1326A at (42°50'N-16°15'E).

4. A/C No 42-78433, after losing formation in clouds, turned back at 1200A at (45°20'N-14°10'E), and made an individual run on a target of opportunity believed to be the Albona Oil Storage at (45°05'N-14°07'E), where its full bomb load of 2.16 tons was dropped from 21,500 feet on an axis of attack of 185° with unobserved results. This a/c made a prior return landing at 1400A.

5. Thirty-four (34) a/c dropped 72.06 tons of frags clustered from 24,000 feet at 1317A hours on an axis of 338° with a right rally.

6. Following a/c jettisoned part loads for the reasons and at the places and times indicated.

a. A/C No 44-49402 suffered an accidental release of 1.08 tons at 1314A hours while on the bomb run.

b. A/C No 44-49250 jettisoned 0.12 tons at Prien (47°52'N-12°20'E) at 1341A hours after one station failed to release over target.

c. A/C No 42-51264 jettisoned 0.06 tons at (49°03'N-12°28'E) after one bomb hung on release over target.

d. A/C No 44-49746 jettisoned 0.12 tons at 1530A hours at (43°10'N-15°04'E), two bombs which failed to release over target.

7. One a/c No 44-10610, experiencing malfunction in release mechanism, returned to base its entire load of 2.16 tons.

8. Recapitulation of bomb tonnage:

34 a/c dropped on target	72.06 tons
1 a/c dropped on Target of Opportunity	2.16
6 a/c jettisoned	7.70
5 a/c returned to base	10.80
Total	<u>92.72 tons</u>

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

Ltr Narr Miss Rpt continued:

9. Bombing was visual, each attack unit leader using C-1 automatic pilot.

Results: Airdrome installations and landing area are nine-tenths obscured by heavy smoke from previous bombing in the hangar and component shops areas. Two aircraft (probably ME 262) are visible, near edge of smoke, parked at south central edge of landing area. Both were probably damaged by previous frag strikes. The only visible frag strikes of this Group start one mile East of the machine gun testing range and continue North for two miles past the East end of the town of Barbing. Main damage is among four separate groups of buildings in the area one mile East and Northeast of the Airdrome.

10. Flak encountered at target was S-MIH, most bursts breaking several hundred yards to the left of course.

MH flak was observed at Tarvisio (46°30'N-13°35'E), confirming previous crew report.

SH flak was observed at Dogna (46°27'N-13°45'E), likewise confirming previous crew report.

MAH was reported at (46°29'N-13°35'E), a probable rail battery.

MIH was reported at (46°40'N-16°25'E).

11. Rendezvous with 50-60 P-38s and 20 P-51s made at (43°55'N-14°45'E) at 1110A, providing PTW escort, leaving the bomber formation at 1456A at (43°45'N-14°52'E).

12. Weather: Base at take off: 10/10 thin Sc bases 3 thsd, 4500' tops. Vsby 20 mi.

Route: Base conditions continuing to Vis becoming 2/10 Sc tops 5 thsd bases 3 thsd. Vsby 20 mi in low haze. 10/10 Sc and Cu over mainland. Trieste area tops 15 thsd. To left of course thin deck of Ci estimated at 25 thsd ft breaking to North of mts. Clear on course over mts, with patches of stratus in valleys. Continued clear on N slopes mts to Target. Vsby 20 mi. No high or middle clouds throughout.

Target: Clear with less than 1/10 thin As at 12 thsd. Vsby 15 mi in haze.

Return route: Same conditions to Central Adriatic becoming 10/10 stratus from Ancona area bases at surge tops 5 thsd.

Base on return: 10/10 cu bases 2500' tops 5 thsd. Vsby 10 mi. Winds good as briefed.

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

Ltr Narr Miss Rpt continued:

13. The following observations were made:

<u>Observation</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Altitude</u>
Smoke Screen w/s town	Straubing (47°52'N-12°39'E)	1303	23,000
Smoke Screen	Burghausen (48°10'N-12°50'E)	1305	23,000
Active M/Y	Muhldorf (48°15'N-12°32'E)	1340	22,000
Smoke Generators	Traunstein (47°52'N-12°39'E)	1250	23,750
Shipping Activity	Trieste Harbor	1420	20,000
Runways U/C	(48°15'N-12°25'E)	1335	22,000

14. Thirty-five (35) a/c made return landings, commencing at 1610A.

15. Route was flown as briefed, track chart enclosed.

16. Nine (9) a/c attempted photos. Selected print attached.

For the Commanding Officer:

FRANCIS F. ELDER
Major, Air Corps
Intelligence Officer