

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

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

HR/RRR/jc

23 February 1945.

310.1

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

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

1. On 23 February 1945, twenty eight (28) scheduled B-24 type a/c (including four (4) spares) took off at 0850A hours to bomb the primary target designated in Operations Order No. 89, forming into two (2) attack units. The first attack unit was led by Col. A. L. Schroeder, Commanding Officer 464th Bombardment Group (H), and the second by 1st Lt. George M. Laser, Flight Leader, 778th Bombardment Squadron (H). Because of cloud cover at the Primary target, preventing visual bombing, the Klagenfurt M/Y was attacked as a target of opportunity.

2. Form up, assembly, and rendezvous was accomplished as prescribed, without incident.

3. Twenty five (25) a/c dropped sixty one and one half (61.5) tons of bombs (10x500 RDX, 0.1 nose and .01 tail) on the Klagenfurt M/Y from 21,000 feet at 1345A hours on an axis of 208°. Bombing was visual, each attack unit leader using C-1 automatic pilot.

4. The following a/c jettisoned for the reasons and at the places and times indicated:

a. Y-H A/C No. 44-49409 jettisoned 2.5 tons at (48°24'N-14°52'E) at 1237A hours, in order to lighten load and remain with formation after losing No. 1 engine because of mechanical failure.

b. B-A A/C No. 44-49837 jettisoned 2.5 tons at (47°46'N-14°05'E) at 1315A hours, in order to maintain altitude after losing No. 2 engine because of oil break.

c. Four (4) bombs (1 ton) of a/c No. 42-78613 B-X, hung up on release at target and were jettisoned three (3) minutes later.

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5. A/C No. 44-40401 out of position at the target, did not drop and returned its full bomb load of 2.5 tons to base.

6. Recantulation of bomb disposition:

25 a/c dropped on target	61.5 tons
3 a/c jettisoned	6.0 "
1 a/c returned	2.5 "
Total	<u>70.0</u> "

7. Bomb strike photos show a heavy concentration of hits fell on the Klagenfurt freight yard and in the railroad junction area. There were more than a dozen direct hits on through-line tracks of the freight yard and at least two dozen additional hits on freight sidings, rolling stock, warehouses, and railroad facilities buildings in the freight yard proper. An explosion occurred in the approximate center of the yard--close to the main line tracks. There were additional hits on railroad tracks immediately northeast of the railroad junction. Further west, there were three hits on the west end of the station marshalling yard. Several hits fell in the area immediately northwest of the railroad junction, with probable damage to the wire factory and a direct hit on the west end of the explosives factory building.

8. Rendezvous was made with 44 P-38s at 1142A hours at (46° 05'N-14° 50'E), providing good P/W cover, and were last observed near the Yugoslavian coast at 1425A hours.

9. Weather:

At take off, weather was clear with visibility 15 miles.

Patchy stratocumulus from base to coast increasing to 6/10-8/10 over Spurr tons 5000 feet.

Over Adriatic, 5/10 stratocumulus top 6-8000 feet. 10/10 stratocumulus over Dalmatian coast, top 6000 feet. The Dinaries cleared except for valley stratus. North of the Dinaries, 5/10 patchy stratocumulus becoming at 46° north, 9/10 altostratus, top 15-16000 feet with broken stratocumulus below. These two layers continued to primary target.

At Wels, 9/10 altostratus, top 16000 feet with stratocumulus below. Visibility 20 miles.

At Klagenfurt, a large hole in the cloud decks permitted

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Visual bombing, 8/10 to 9/10 altostratus in the area. visibility was 20 miles.

Similar conditions on return. A low deck of stratocumulus was encountered north of the spur, bases as low as 2000 feet.

At base on landing, 10/10 stratocumulus, base 3500 feet.

10. Twenty eight (28) a/c made return landings, commencing at 1540A hours.

11. Route was flown substantially as briefed to the primary target, thence a reciprocal course to Alagenfurt, track chart enclosed.

12. One crashed B-24 partly covered with snow, observed at (46°34'N-14°10'E) at 1346A hours from 20,000 feet.

13. Crew navigators received with enthusiasm the newly issued sectional flak maps.

14. Nine a/c attempted photos, Selected print attached.

For the Commanding Officer:

FRANCIS F. ELLER  
Major, Air Corps  
--intelligence Officer

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