

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

HEADQUARTERS
161ST BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
APO 520
U S Army

LSL/PFL/v.j

210.1

25 February 1945

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

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

1. On 25 February 1945, twenty four (24) scheduled B-24 type a/c plus four (4) spares took off at 0810A hours to bomb Linz, Austria Ordnance Depot. The twenty eight (28) a/c formed two (2) attack units. The first attack unit was led by Lt. Col. William C. Moore Jr., Commanding Officer of the 777th Bombardment Squadron (H), and the second by 1st Lt. Robert E. Elliot, Flight Leader, 776th Bombardment Squadron (H).
2. Local weather conditions, consisting of overcast conditions up to 7,500 feet made it necessary to form up at 9,000 feet over the local area. This Group was over Andria twelve minutes late, where it made rendezvous with the 465th Bombardment Group (H). Wing rendezvous was accomplished in the area of (42°21'N-15°21'E) at 1005A hours as the 485th Bombardment Group (H) took over the Wing lead.
3. Two a/c returned early: B-24 a/c No. 42-95332 returned from the form-up area because No. 2 prop governor was not functioning, landing at 0844A hours with two tons of bombs.
B-24 a/c No. 42-51264 turned back at (47°15'N-12°23'E) at 1300A hours because of a burst cylinder on No. 2 engine, landing at 1435A hours.
4. Twenty six (26) a/c were over the target at 1310A hours and dropped fifty two (52) tons of bombs (8 x 500 mixed GP and RDX .1 nose and .01 tail fusing) from 24,000 feet on an axis of attack of 110°.
B-24 a/c No. 42-51264 mentioned in paragraph three (3) jettisoned two tons of bombs at (45°00'N-12°48'E) at 1230A hours in order to maintain altitude after losing No. 2 engine.

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Ltr Narr Miss Rpt, 464th Bomb Gp. 45 Feb 45, cont'd

Recapitulation of Bomb Tonnage

26 a/c dropped on Primary target	52 tons
1 a/c jettisoned	2 "
1 a/c returned	2 "
	<hr/> 56 Tons

5. Bomb strike total show approximately eighteen (18) hits on the Ordnance Depot, as follows: One (1) hit in the open area south of the workshps which adjoin the railway exit; one (1) hit on an M/T shed; seven (7) hits on the probable administration buildings; two (2) close near misses on barracks; and seven (7) hits on M/T sheds in the southwest corner of the Depot. Several additional hits were on the barracks type buildings south of the depot and a few others hits on the railway line where it emerges from the Depot. There were ten hits in the M/Y between the main station and the southwest choke point. Two hits fell on main line tracks adjacent to the freight yard. A heavy concentration of hits was in the suburban residential area 2,000 feet southwest of the main station. The center and southeastern sections of the city were obscured by heavy smoke clouds.

6. Fighter escort consisting of twenty (20) P-51s and ten (10) P-38s made rendezvous with the formation at (45°57'N-12°30'E) at 1146A hours and furnished excellent cover on penetration, over target, and on withdrawal and were last observed at 1425A hours at (44°05'N-15°06'E).

7. The weather was as follows:

9/10 - 10/10 stratocumulus at take-off, base 3500 feet, tops 5500 feet with a few tops to 7500 feet. 2/10 to 3/10 stratus below at 2300 feet. Formation was able to get above clouds through a large break near Margherita. The local visibility was 15 miles.

Low overcast conditions continued to about 10 miles north of spur where it broke rapidly to 5/10 and to 1/10 north of Ancona. Clear to few scattered low clouds and about 1/10 high cirrus were the prevailing weather conditions over the north Adriatic, north Italy and the Alps.

North of the Alps, cirrus increased to 8/10 to 10/10 based at 30000 feet. There were patchy low clouds amounting to 2/10 to 3/10 but both decks and decreased to nil by the IP.

At target, 2/10 to 3/10 cirrus, visibility 15 miles.

Similar conditions on return with low deck in local area broken up to 4/10 to 5/10 cumulus, base 2500 feet. visibility en-route varied from 15 to 30 miles.

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Ltr Narr Miss Rpt, 464th Bomb Gp. 25, Feb 45, cont'd

8. Leaders of both attack units used the C-1 automatic pilot.
9. PFF was used in bombing the target. The Target area was clear of clouds but due to very effective smoke generators and smoke from previous bombing, PFF methods were necessary. Five sighting angles of 70°, 65°, 50°, and 40° were given to the bombardier and three course corrections were given on the bomb run. Pathfinder equipment performed in a very satisfactory manner during the entire mission.
10. Flak at the target was IAH and was encountered for seven (7) minutes. Prior to bombs away flak was of the barrage type, and on the rally, tracking fire was encountered.
11. Course flown by the Group was from Andria directly to (45°38'N-13°06'E) and from that point to the target and return, the route was flown substantially as briefed. Track chart enclosed.
12. Twenty five (25) a/c made return landing, commencing at 1537A hours. One (1) a/c, A/C No. 42-49250, piloted by Lt. Col. Moore, Group Leader landed at Bari at 1532A hours with a wounded man aboard. This a/c returned to base at 1700A hours.
13. One major injury was incurred on the mission when the engineer of the lead ship was wounded in the scalp by flak encountered over the target. The injured enlisted man is hospitalized at Bari.
14. Seven (7) a/c attempted photos. Selected print attached.
15. Thirteen (13) a/c were damaged by flak. Twelve (12) a/c received minor damage. One (1) a/c received major damage and will be inoperational for more than one hundred (100) man hours.
16. Observations:

Time	Place	Altitude	Observation
1132A	4541-1239	18,000	Bridge previously bombed has been repaired
1247A	4602-1236	18,000	A/D occupied by 20 plus SEP's and 2 TEF dispersed on hardstands.
1245A	4557-1240	18,000	300 units in M/Y, and temporary bridges erected over river.
1206A	4700-1245	24,000	M/Y completely filled with rolling stock.

For the Commanding Officer:

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

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