

CONFIDENTIAL

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

EVE/PER/hob

310.1

4 March 1945

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

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

1. On 4 March 1945, thirty six (36) scheduled B-24 a/c, plus six (6) designated spare a/c, took off at 0810A hours to bomb the Szombathely South M/Y. The a/c formed three (3) attack units. The first attack unit was led by Major Harry S. Wilson, Assistant Group Operations Officer of the 464th Bombardment Group (H). The second by 1st Lieutenant George S. Quay II, Box Leader of the 777th Bombardment Squadron (H). The third, by Captain Kenneth (NMI) Machado, Flight Leader of the 777th Bombardment Squadron (H).

2. B-24 a/c No 44-49415 returned early from the local area due to the loss of No. 2 engine which was feathered when the RPM and oil pressure dropped.

3. The Group form-up was accomplished southeast of Spinazzola and above the clouds at 14,000 feet. Due to the fact that the Departure time was delayed because of the weather encountered on form-up, this Group flew directly over Spinazzola and on to Lake Lesina leaving the latter point at 1000A hours.

4. Thirty nine (39) a/c were over the target and dropped seventy four and three quarter (74 3/4) tons of M1X bombs (.1 nose and .01 tail fusing) from 23,500 feet.

Three (3) of the a/c over the target, due to the following reasons were unable to release entire bomb load with the formation:

B-24 a/c No 44-49194: Slight creep in left bomb bay door prevented the release of four (4) bombs from the left racks. This

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

Ltr Marr Miss Rpt, cont'd

a/c jettisoned one (1) ton of bombs, one and one half (1 1/2) minutes after bombs-away time.

B-24 a/c No 44-12401: An undetermined malfunction. Seven (7) bombs hung up and this B/C jettisoned one and three quarters (1 3/4) tons at 1235A hours at (43°00'N-15011'W).

B-24 a/c No 44-42280: Racks froze up. This a/c jettisoned two (2) bombs that hung up immediately after bombs away.

B-24 a/c No 44-42116, after a late take-off was unable to locate the formation and bombed the Graz East W/Y at 1250A hours from 22,000 feet with a/c of the 40th Wing.

B-24 a/c No 44-42415, the Early return, brought back to base two (2) tons of bombs.

B-24 a/c No 44-42363 failed to make the Group form-up and crashed in the area of Spinazzola. The disposition of the bomb load of this a/c is not known.

Reconciliation of Bomb Tonnage

Thirty nine (39) effective sorties dropped on Target	74.75 tons
One (1) effective sortie dropped on Graz East W/Y	2.00 "
Three (3) a/c (of those over the Primary Target) jettisoned	3.25 "
One (1) Early Return brought back to base	2.00 "
One (1) a/c crashed	2.00 "
Total	<u>84.00 "</u>

Bomb strike photos show very numerous hits in the city of Szombathely west of the marshalling yard. One bomb fell in the center of the South W/Y, with damage to two (2) columns of freight cars. The bomb pattern started approximately 3,000 feet west of the yard and continued southeast to the railroad junction. Other scattered hits fell in the fields east and south of the yard.

5. The first Attack Unit Leader used the C-1 Automatic Pilot on the bomb run, as did the leader of the Third Attack Unit. The second Attack Unit Leader made the run manually as too many corrections were necessary and the pilot did not have the opportunity to set up the C-1 automatic pilot

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6. Flak at the target of two (2) fighter duration was described as S- IV, with the exception of crews of Able and Baker Boxes who report S-IV.

7. Escort of thirty (30) to forty (40) P-51 s/c were first observed at 1000a hours at (11°53'N-15°20'E). Fifteen (15) to twenty (20) P-38 s/c were observed in the target area. The escort was last sighted at 1130a hours at (11°00'N-15°30'E).

8. Weather at take off was 2/10 stratocumulus and cumulus with tops up to 12,000 feet. Scattered snow showers in area.

2/10 to 10/10 cumulus over Adriatic, top 14,000 feet, breaking along Dalmatian Coast to 3/10 to 4/10.

2/10 to 10/10 cumulus over Irianic Alps and in lower mixer area 10/10 altostratus, top 13,000 feet. Both layers broke in vicinity of the TB to scattered.

At target, 2/10 altostratus tops 12,000 feet, visibility unlimited.

On return, low cover overhanging 2/10, tops 12-14,000 feet.

2/10 stratocumulus and cumulus at base on return, at 2,000 feet. Visibility 20 miles.

9. Forty (40) s/c landed at this base between 1150a hours and 1600a hours.

10. Due to the fact that the form-up was late, the route flown was from Spinzola to Lake Lesina, to (13°13'N-14°50'E), to (14°03'N-15°07'E) and then as briefed. Track chart of route as flown attached.

11. Observations:

<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Altitude</u>	<u>Observation</u>
1135A	(16°03'N-14°22'E)	12,000	Two (2) WY's-each containing at least 200 units.
1320A	(17°17'N-16°28'E)	21,000	WY with 20-30 S&F.

12. Four (4) s/c received flak damage. Three (3) s/c received minor flak damage, and one (1) s/c received major flak damage and

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Ltr Narr Miss Int, cont'd

this a/c will be inoperational for a period of one hundred (100) man hours.

12. Twelve (12) a/c attempted photographs. Selected print attached.

For the Commanding Officer:

FRANCIS F. ELDER
Major, Air Cross
Intelligence Officer

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