

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

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

LSD/HMF/hof

312.1

23 March 1945

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

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

1. On 23 March 1945, forty two (42) B-24 a/c took off, starting at 0745A hours, to bomb the Gmund M/y, Austria. The forty two (42) aircraft formed into two attack units of twenty one (21) aircraft each, the first attack unit being led by Captain Charles H. Foote, Operations Officer, 779th Bombardment Squadron (H), and the second attack unit by Captain Bedford D. May, Flight Leader, 776th Bombardment Squadron (H).

2. Group form up and assembly were accomplished in the normal area as prescribed. However, Wing rendezvous was not accomplished until 1005A hours at (43°51'N-15°30'E) at 11,000 feet.

3. One (1) a/c returned early.

A/c No 42-51563 turned back at 0930A hours at (42°10'N-16°00'E) after number one (1) engine vibrated excessively and had to be feathered.

4. Forty one (41) a/c dropped 79.2 tons of one hundred (100) pound GP bombs (.1 nose and .025 tail fusing) on the Gmund M/Y at 1156A hours from 22,000 feet on an axis of attack of 304° employing visual means.

The largest concentration of the first attack units bombs start at the south east choke point and continue up the marshalling yard as far as the locomotive depot. Strikes can be seen in the complete south central portion of the yard. The northern quarter of the yard is obscured by smoke from previous bombing. Scattered strikes are along the railroad tracks leading away from the south east choke point as far as 2,000 feet.

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Ltr Narr Miss Rpt, contd

The largest concentration of the second attack units bomb fell in the housing area 200 feet north of the east choke point. These strikes continue south into the south east choke point. Additional strikes extend up the north edge of the A/Y. Other strikes possible in smoke from first attack unit.

A/C No 42-51563, early return, returned 2.0 tons to base after number one (1) engine failed.

A/C No 42-50723 returned .2 tons to base after four (4) bombs failed to release over the target due to a bomb rack malfunction.

A/C No 42-50500 returned .4 tons to base after eight (8) bombs failed to release over the target due to bomb rack malfunction.

A/C No 44-49696 jettisoned .2 tons at 1342A hours at (43°30'N-15°40'E) due to a frozen bomb shackle which prevented the release of four (4) bombs over the target.

A/C No 42-78433 jettisoned 1.8 tons at 1159A hours at (48°45'N-14°50'E) after thirty six (36) bombs failed to release over the target due to an intervalometer malfunction.

A/C No 44-49797 jettisoned .1 tons at 1243A hours at (43°20'N-15°20'E) after two (2) bombs failed to release over the target due to a bomb rack malfunction.

A/C No 44-49710 jettisoned 1 tons at 1159A hours at (49°00'N-14°18'E) after two (2) bombs did not release over the target because of an A-2 release malfunction.

Recapitulation of Bomb Tonnage

Forty one (41) a/c dropped on target	79.2 tons
Three (3) a/c returned to base	2.6 "
Four (4) a/c jettisoned	2.2 "
Total	<u>84.0 tons</u>

5. No flak was encountered by the formation either over the target or enroute to and from the target.

6. No enemy a/c, were either observed or encountered.

7. Fighter cover was excellent on penetration, target,

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Ltr Narr Miss Pro, contd

and withdrawal. It was provided by fifteen (15) B-28 a/c which met the formation at 1107A hours at (46°38'N-14°46'E) and were last observed at 1400A hours at (42°40'N-15°20'E).

8. Course was flown substantially as briefed. Track chart inclosed.

9. Eight (8) a/c attempted photographs. Selected strike photographs attached.

10. Weather was generally clear over the entire route and at the target, visibility twenty (20) miles or better.

At base on return, 2/10 to 3/10 cumulus with tops at 4,500 feet.

11. Observations.

<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Altitude</u>	<u>Observation</u>
1200A	Vrbojsko (45°23'N-15°05'E)	16,000	200 cars in M/Y
1211A	Amstettin (48°07'N-14°53'E)	21,900	300 cars in M/Y. No signs of repairs being made
1140A	St. Polten (48°13'N-15°38'E)	22,000	South M/Y full of rolling stock
1142A	(48°13'N-14°52'E)	20,000	40 large barges anchored on river
1115A	Zeltweg (47°10'N-14°45'E)	22,000	6 SFF dispersed in revetment on A/D. M/Y full of wagons.

Crew members reported a very effective smoke screen over the Linz and Vienna areas.

12. Forty one (41) a/c returned to base, landing between 1440A and 1516A hours.

13. Two a/c suffered minor damages when one or several bombs released over the target exploded prematurely several hundred feet below the formation.

For the Commanding Officer:

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

FRANCIS F. ELDER
Major, AC
Intelligence Officer