

SECRET  
HEADQUARTERS  
14/157 TO AIR FORCE STAFF ( )  
APO 530 U S Army

14/157 / 13

8 April 1945

312.1

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

To : Commanding General, 55th Bombardment Wing (H)  
APO 530, U S Army

1. On 8 April 1945, thirty two (32) of thirty two (32) scheduled B-24 a/c took off from this field between 0800-0835 hours to bomb the Fortezza Marshallina Yard in northern Italy.

The leader of the 1st attack unit was Colonel Virgil L. Foller, Deputy Commanding Officer of the 46th Bombardment Group (H).

The leader of the 2nd attack unit was 1st Lieutenant George M. Lassar, Flight Leader of the 778th Bombardment Squadron (H).

2. Group formation and rendezvous was as planned and effected without incident, leaving on course over Andria at 7,000 feet at 0912 hours.

3. Two (2) a/c returned early; and one (1) a/c was a prior return:

A/C No. 44-42364 turned back at (47°22'N-12°30'E) after the plane lost the power of No. 1 engine.

A/C No. 44-48880 turned back at (46°43'N-11°22'E) at 1120 hours after losing the superchargers on No. 2 and 3 engines.

A/C No. 44-40606, a prior return, attempted to bomb the M/Y at Klagenfurt after No. 1 engine was lost and had to be feathered. No military damage was believed to have been inflicted as the bombs were seen to fall in open fields to the north and west of the North M/Y.

4. Twenty nine (29) a/c were over the primary target at 1026 hours, (briefed target time: 1205 hours). Twenty one (21) of these a/c dropped 51.25 tons of 500 pound RDX bombs (.1 nose and .01 tail fuses) from 23,500 feet on a heading of 190°. Baker Box consisting of eight (8) a/c did not bomb as the box leader's C-1 auto-pilot was inoperative and the bombardier was unable to synchronize on the target. The interphone was also out making it impossible to inform the pilot to use the PDI. This entire box brought all bombs back to base.



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A/C No 44-12364, on early return, jettisoned a full load of 2.50 tons at (47°23'N-13°12'E) at 1157B hours after losing 1 engine.

A/C No 42-95355 jettisoned .50 ton at (47°15'N-13°06'E) at 1155B hours as engine major trouble was causing them to lag behind the formation.

A/C No 42-95364 jettisoned .25 ton at (47°01'N-13°30'E) at 1520E hours as this bomb had hung up in the racks.

A/C No 44-12415 jettisoned .50 ton at (46°43'N-14°21'E) at 1130E hours to maintain altitude.

Eight (8) % of Baker Box returned twenty (20) ton of bombs to base as they did not bomb the target. One (1) other % on early return, brought back 2.50 tons.

Recapitulation of Bombs:

21 % dropped on target	51.25 tons
1 % " " " of opportunity	2.50 "
9 % returned to base	22.50 "
4 % jettisoned	3.75 "
Total	<u>80.00 tons</u>

Bomb strike photos show four hits on tracks at the north choke point of Portezza Marshalline Yard. Several other hits fell on the coal dump in the northwestern part of the yard. A majority of the hits were either in the hills along the west edge of the yard or on the mountain 3,000 feet to the northwest.

5. The C-1 Automatic Pilot which operated well was used by both the 1st and 2nd unit attack leaders. However, the Baker Box Leader in A/C No 44-49857 reported his C-1 inoperative on the bomb run. Bombing was visual and Lead Bombardiers were able to synchronize 1 1/2 to 2 minutes on the target.

6. Flak at the target was reported to be S/AE, tracking and both white and black in color, for a period of two (2) to three (3) minutes.

7. Rendezvous was made with twenty (20) to twenty five (25) P-51 % at 1120E hours at (46°43'N-14°22'E) and were last seen in the target area at 1227B hours, (43°47'N-11°15'E).

8. Weather was as follows:

At take off, 7/10 cirrostratus at 20,000 feet and 1/10 altocumulus at 11,000 feet. Visibility 20 miles.

Clouds broke over Adriatic to few patches of cirrus and 2/10 stratocumulus, top 7,000 feet.

8/10 to 10/10 stratocumulus from Zara Northward to Alps, tops 8,000 feet.

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Ltr Marr Miss Ret, contd

Over the Alps: clouds broke to 3/10 to 4/10 stratus cumulus, tops 10,000 feet. Visibility 25 miles.

At target 3/10 stratocumulus in Po valley which increased southward from the Po River to 8/10 to 10/10 cumulus in Florence area, tops to 13,000 feet. Moderate turbulence over Apennines. In Florence area a deck of cirrus was encountered, 1/10 to 3/10, base 19,000 feet which continued south to sea. South of Florence low clouds broke slightly to 6/10 to 7/10, top 10,000 feet.

Clear over Adriatic and 9/10 altostratus at base on return at 9,000 feet with 1/10 to 2/10 stratocumulus at 2,000 feet. Visibility was above 20 miles for the route.

9. Three (3) a/c suffered minor flak damage.

10. Observations reported by returning crew members:

Time	Place	Altitude	Observation
1153B	Kluge Point A/Y (46°37'N-14°19'E)	19,000	50/10 units in north wind. Southward and level, 6 str.
1203B	Lisijona A/Y (46°03'N-14°30'E)	20,000	100/150 units in yard.
1350B	(45°26'N-10°16'E)	15,000	5/6 str of A/D-coast range - Some blended into terrain lines
1143B	St. Vert A/Y (46°46'N-14°21'E)	21,000	300/400 units in yard.

11. Twenty nine (29) a/c landed at this base between 1521 and 1543E hours.

12. Route was flown as briefed. Track chart showing route inclosed.

13. Four (4) a/c attempted photos. Selected strike photos are attached.

FOR THE COMMANDING OFFICER:

FRANCIS F. ELDER  
Major, AC  
Intelligence Officer

- 2 Incls  
1. Track Chart  
2. Selected print

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