

HEADQUARTERS
450TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) AAF
APO-520 US ARMY

S-2 NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION DATE: February 5, 1945

MISSION NBR. 212

TARGET: Salsburg, Austria - West Marshalling Yard

I. CHRONOLOGY

Thirty-six B-24 type aircraft took off at 0815-0835 hours to bomb the marshalling yard (west) at Salsburg, Austria. One aircraft turned back at 1015 hours due to engine failure and landed at 1120 hours. Seventeen aircraft dropped 33 tons of 500 lb G.P. bombs on the primary at 1328 hours from 25,000 - 26,000 feet. Seventeen others dropped 33 tons on first alternate (Rosenheim West Marshalling Yard) at 1352 hours from 24,500 - 25,500 feet. One aircraft jettisoned 2 tons near the primary I.P. (Altenmarkt, 48.01N-12.32E) because of serious gas leak. The bombs of the early return (2 tons) were jettisoned in the Adriatic at 41.00N-17.45E. Thirty aircraft returned to base between 1608-1645 hours. Five others landed at friendly fields.

II. ROUTE AND ASSAULT

Rendezvous was effected with 449th over Manduria and briefed route flown to IP (Altenmarkt). 15-20 P-51's picked up the formation at 47.28N-12.40E at 1250 hours, 26,000 feet and provided penetration and target cover. Escort was last seen in the primary target area at 1330 hours. The lead box identified the IP visually and turned into target on the briefed axis of 118 degrees. Scattered clouds prevailed on the bombrun increasing in density near the target. The lead box was able to identify the target and dropped visually. The second box anticipated difficulty in attempting a visual run and made a normal run on PFF with excellent coordination. Due to failure of PFF equipment in the 3rd box the 4th box took over the lead of this attack unit before reaching the IP. A PFF run was started but the cloud conditions cleared on the final minutes of the run and the Bombardier decided to make a visual try. In the final seconds a 9/10 undercast interfered and it was then too late to change back to PFF. The attack unit turned toward the first Alternate (Rosenheim Marshalling Yard, West) and made an excellent run on synchronous PFF. Rallies were executed as briefed and the prescribed route flown to base. The boxes bombing the primary returned with the Wing formation. Those going to the alternate returned alone. 6/8 tenths cloud coverage was experienced over the entire route and at the target. Coverage at target was based at approximately 8000 feet with tops at 18,000 feet.

III RESULTS

The lead box made a visual run on the primary and strike photos show bomb strikes partially concealed by smoke and cloud cover around the briefed aiming point. Several bursts can be seen on the tracks and on adjacent installations.

The second box dropping on the primary by synchronous PFF methods scored very satisfactory results. Bomb strike photos were obtained showing bombs bursting in the vicinity of the Main Station.

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S-2 Narrative Report (Continued)

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III RESULTS (continued)

Boxes 3 and 4 dropped on Rosenheim West Marshalling Yard by PFF. Interrogation disclosed excellent coordination and results were believed to be very satisfactory. Target was picked up early and course and rate were killed before bombs away.

IV. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: No enemy aircraft were seen.

B. Flak: Slight, inaccurate, heavy flak was experienced at the primary by the 2nd, 3rd and 4th boxes. This was somewhat in the nature of observed flak rather than directed at the formation. Most bursts were several hundred feet low and behind the formation.

V. OBSERVATIONS

At 1350 hours the marshalling yards at Villach were observed to be loaded with unusually heavy traffic. Several locomotives were in steam. Observation was made from 22,500 feet preventing accurate estimate on number of units.

VI. CONCLUSION

A. Losses: None

B. Damage: None

C. Casualties: None

D. Victories: None

E. Corrections on Telephone Mission Report not included above: Two aircraft reported as missing on Telephone Report have since been definitely located at friendly fields.