

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

S-2 NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION NBR. 224

MISSION DATE: February 20, 1945

TARGET: Brennero, Italy - Fiume Shipyards

I. CHRONOLOGY

Twenty-eight B-24 type aircraft took off at 0900-0931 hours to bomb the marshalling yards at Brennero, Italy, however in compliance with instructions from the Wing leader, an alternate target was bombed. One aircraft returned early because of engine failure. Twenty-four aircraft dropped 47 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs on the Fiume Shipyard at 1425 hours from 23,000 - 25,000. Two aircraft that had difficulty maintaining their position in the formation jettisoned 4 tons prior to the target. The aircraft that returned early jettisoned 2 tons. One aircraft returned early to a friendly field and bomb disposition is unknown. Twenty-six aircraft returned to base at 1631-1635 hours. None lost. None missing. One aircraft still at friendly field.

II. ROUTE AND ASSAULT

Rendezvous was effected as planned and the route was flown as briefed to Zell am See where the Wing leader informed the trailing groups that the weather at the primary targets was unfavorable. From the turn back point the course was flown to Gemona then to 45.38N-13.06E, to the I.P. Pisino, then to Fiume on an axis of attack of 50-65 degrees. A right rally was effected by three boxes and one box rallied left. The bombing was visual, and the route home was flown as briefed. Escort of 25-30 P-51's rendezvoused at 1305 hours at 23,000 feet at Villach, Austria. P.T.C. cover was provided and the escorting fighters departed at 1430 hours near Pola.

III. RESULTS

Photo coverage shows that bombs from the lead box fell in the water approximately 1000 feet east of the target. The 2nd Box scored several direct hits on dock installations and on a small naval vessel. The 3rd box put down a heavy concentration of bombs on the ship docks, scored a direct hit on a 315 foot naval vessel, another hit on a merchant vessel 410 feet long, and also hit several small barges along with adjacent dock areas. The fourth box over found the briefed A.P. smoke obscured as a result of previous bombing and changed the A.P. to the naval installations at J-5/6 and scored direct hits on shop and storage buildings.

IV. ENEMY RESISTANCE

- A. Fighters: None seen or encountered
B. Flak: Slight, inaccurate, heavy flak was experienced at Fiume and Udine, slight, accurate, heavy, flak is reported as being received from Casarsa

V. OBSERVATIONS

At 1315 hours from 24,000 feet at 47.03N-13.05E four chutes were seen. The aircraft from which they came was not observed.

V. CONCLUSION

Losses: None. Damage: None. Casualties: None.