

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

S-2 NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION DATE: February 25, 1945

MISSION NBR. 229

TARGET: Linz, Austria - North Main Marshalling Yard

I. CHRONOLOGY

Twenty-eight aircraft took off at 0800-0815 hours to attack the North Main Marshalling Yard at Linz, Austria. Two aircraft returned early because of mechanical difficulties. Twenty-five aircraft were over the target at 1302 hours dropping 44.75 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs on the primary target from 23,000 - 25,000 feet. One aircraft salvoed 2 tons ten minutes after the target due to malfunction of all releases on the bomb-run. The two aircraft returning early jettisoned 4 tons in the Adriatic. Six bombs (1.5 tons) were released by hand from one aircraft in the vicinity of Judenburg (47.10N-14.39E) in order to maintain formation position. Two bombs (.50 tons) were jettisoned at Weiselburg (48.08N-15.39E) due to rack malfunction. Two other bombs (.50) were jettisoned at 45.00N-13.20E in order to lighten load. Twenty-three aircraft returned to base at 1547 hours. Two others landed at friendly fields. One aircraft is missing and is believed to be lost as a result of direct flak hit at target.

II. ROUTE AND ASSAULT

450th rendezvoused over Manduria on course to San Vito with 449th Group as planned. The Wing column was formed at San Vito with 450th leading. The briefed course was flown to the I.P. (Engelhartszell) and the target attacked on an axis of 120 degrees. A left rally was executed and the briefed route flown to base. Escort of 15-20 P-51's were contacted at 1213 hours at Neukirken (47.16N-12.17E) at 24,000 feet. Penetration, target and withdrawal cover was provided to Monichdorf (48.22N-14.48E) where escort departed at 1330 hours. Pathfinder equipment was used for navigation and synchronous bombing in three of four squadrons. One squadron bombed visually. 2/10 scattered cumulus clouds with tops at 6000 feet were observed in the target area. Visibility was 10-15 miles. The target itself was smoke obscured. Slight haze and high cirrus prevailed over Adriatic and Yugoslavia enroute out and return. Base weather on return was 10/10 strata cumulus bases at 5000 feet.

III. RESULTS

Although weather conditions were ideal for visual bombing the target was completely covered by an effective smoke screen combined with heavy oil smoke from previous bombing. Three squadrons made their run on PFF while one bombed visually dropping into the smoke on the visual aiming point. Photos show bursts on the small storehouses and barracks just east of the PFF aiming point at J-12.4 on TCS 14-104. Bombs away photos of three squadrons indicate that bombs fell in the area of the north marshalling yard and the Benzol Plant.

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S-2 Narrative Report (Continued)

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IV. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: No actual encounters were experienced. At 1415 hours at Zara (44.07N-15.15E) from 18,000 feet nine unidentified single engine fighters were observed in a Lufberry circle very low. They broke out in elements of 3 and approached the single bomber making the observation from 7 o'clock low. All three elements broke away to the left and down just out of range. Appeared tan in color with no markings visible. A B-24 was above the reporting aircraft at the time and interrogation disclosed that three fighters at higher altitude may have influenced the attackers to break off.

B. Flak: Intense, accurate flak was experienced at the target. Squadrons attacking in trail each experienced approximately four minutes in flak. Although the intensity appeared greater after bombs away the accuracy was better before bombs were released. No route flak was encountered.

V. OBSERVATIONS

At 1304 hours at the target a B-24 was seen to receive a direct burst in the nose section. Went into a steep bank to the left and leveled off at about 14,000 feet with two engines inoperative. no chutes were seen to leave this aircraft although four chutes were seen very low in the target area five minutes later.

At 1303 hours an unidentified bomber was observed going down in flames in the target area from 24,000 feet.

At 1230 hours heavy brown smoke could be seen at Munich at 10,000 feet extending 20 miles north and south.

At 1240 hours near Muhlendorf a solid white smoke screen was observed from 24,000 feet.

At 1235 hours at Enns (48.10N=-14.30E) from 25,000 feet 10/15 tracks in marshalling yard were observed to be filled to capacity with wagons.

VI. CONCLUSION

A. Total Losses:

From flak	1	at target,
From fighters	0	
Other reasons	0	

B. Damage:

From flak	17	holed (minor)
From fighters	0	
Other reasons	0	

C. Casualties: None

D. Victories: None