

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

S-2 NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION DATE: March 22, 1945

MISSION NBR. 245

TARGET: Vienna, Austria - Southeast Good Depot

I. CHRONOLOGY

Forty B-24 type aircraft took off at 0800-0822 hours to bomb the rolling stock, trackage and sorting facilities in the Southeast Goods Depot at Vienna, Austria. There were no early returns. Thirty-seven aircraft dropped 70.75 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs on the primary target at 1232 hours from 23/24,500 ft. Two aircraft jettisoned 4 tons approximately 4 miles short of the target when hit by flak. These aircraft left the formation when hit and did not continue over the target. One other jettisoned 2 tons approximately 10 miles short of the target because of engine failure. Two aircraft jettisoned partial loads as follows: one bomb (.25 tons) two minutes after target due to hang-up. 4 bombs, (1 ton at 47.43N-15.05E) in order to maintain formation position. Thirty-eight aircraft returned to base at 1515 hours. One is missing and one landed at friendly field.

II. ROUTE AND ASSAULT

Rendezvous was effected as planned and the briefed route to the Initial Point flown by the Wing column in the order 98th, 376th, 450th, 449th. The target was attacked visually by Squadrons in trail on axis of 84/90 degrees TC. A right rally was executed as planned and the course flown to base was generally as briefed except for slight deviation to the left in the vicinity of Zagreb. Escort of 25 P-38's were contacted near Judenburg (47.10N-14.40E) at 1155 hours. Fighters were at 24,000 ft. Approximately 15 of the escort were still with the formation near Split on the Yugo coast at 1340 hours where they departed at 17,000 ft. Target weather was generally reported as 2/3 tenths cumulus with tops at 12,000 ft.; visibility was 12 miles. A 10/10 undercast was prevalent over the Yugo Mts. on the return with haze over the Adriatic.

III. RESULTS

Bomb strike photographs substantiated the visual observations with a heavy concentration of hits on the target causing several large fires. Some bombs dropped short and several bursts show 1500 ft. to the right of the target. Many bombs fell into the smoke with unobserved results.

IV. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: A single unidentified single engine fighter was observed at 1235 hours just after bombsaway. Followed at formation at same level of 2-3 minutes before breaking away and down. Did not come within range and did not fire.

B. Flak: Over the target the lead Squadron experienced intense, accurate flak. The next Squadron following reported flak as moderate and accurate. The intensity appeared to decrease on the third. The last Squadron in column reported flak to be intense and very accurate. Two separate barrage type concentrations were placed at bombing altitude directly on the course of this Squadron. Flak was reported generally much more intense and accurate in the minute before the bomb release line than on the rally.

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S-2 Narrative Report (Continued)

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IV. ENEMY RESISTANCE (Continued)

B. Flak:

Sq.	Target Time	Bomb Alt.	Flak Exp.	Lost at Target	Sev. Dam.	Slight Dam.
721	1230	25,000	I-A-H	*1	1	8
723	1231	25,000	M-A-H		0	3
720	1231	23,500	M-I-H		1	1
722	1231	24,000	I-A-H		0	8

* Hit and still missing.

One Squadron was slightly off course on return and experienced Moderate, Accurate tracking fire over Novska (45.21N-16.59E). Three of those shown in 721st Squadron above received minor damage at Novska.

V. OBSERVATIONS

At 1155 hours from 24,000 ft. the M/Y at Knittelfeld (47.10N-14.50E) was observed to be jammed with 300-400 wagons.

At the target at 1232 hours from 24,500 ft. a smoke screen could be seen developing to the south but was not effective on the target itself.

At 1430 hours from 9000 ft. what appeared to be a submarine periscope was reported causing a conspicuous wake on a 30 degree heading at 42.10N-16.50E.

At 1235 hours at Wiener Neustadt from 22,000 ft. an aircraft was seen to explode on the ground. Type not certain.

VI. CONCLUSION

A. Total Losses:

From flak: One aircraft hit at the target, still missing.
From fighters: None
Other reasons: None

B. Damage:

From flak: 20 minor
2 severe
From fighters: None
Other reasons: None

C. Casualties:

From flak: 1 nose gunner slight hand wound.
From fighters: None