

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

S-2 NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION DATE: April 10, 1945

MISSION NBR. 259

TARGET: Operations Buckland (D Plus 1)
Gun Emplacements in Defensive
Area "Baker"; NE Italy.

I. CHRONOLOGY

Maximum effort by the Fifteenth Air Force was concentrated in close cooperation with the Eight Army for the second consecutive day in the Spring offensive in Northern Italy.

The four Groups of the 47th Wing were employed against defensive positions along the Santerno River in the Northern Sector of Area "Baker"

Thirty-nine B-24 type aircraft of the 450th Bomb Group took off between 0815-0835 hours. One turned back short of the key point because of engine failure. Thirty-seven aircraft dropped 81.18 tons of 120 lb fragmentation clusters on the primary target at 1158 hours from 21/24,000'. One aircraft jettisoned 1.8 tons in the Adriatic 20 miles southeast of Ravenna because of rack malfunction over the target. The early return jettisoned 2.16 tons in the Adriatic at point of turnback. Five bombs (.3 tons) were jettisoned in the Adriatic by two aircraft experiencing rack malfunctions over the target. Thirty-eight returned to base at 1415 hours. None lost; none missing; none at friendly fields.

II. ROUTE AND ASSAULT

Local rendezvous with the 449th Bomb Group was executed as planned and the Wing column formed over San Vito on course in the order 376th, 98th, 449th and 450th. A trailing squadron of the 449th Bomb Group caused the 450 some difficulty in maintaining formation position and was directly beneath the formation at the Initial Point. The lead Bombardier of the 450th anticipated difficulty in clearing this low element of the preceding group so changed his aiming point slightly right and adjusted for the new heading. The squadron beneath continued to drift right on the bomb run and at the Bomb Release Point was directly beneath the 450th lead attack unit. Bombs were held and the formation continued on course and salvoed 2000 feet northwest of Massa Lombarda. The second wave experienced no difficulty and dropped on their assigned aiming point. The bombs of one aircraft failed to release and the pilot left the formation on the rally and proceeded directly to the coast and jettisoned before heading south over the water.

15 P-51's were observed in the target area at 1150 hours. No route escort was assigned.

A few scattered cumulus clouds at 7000' prevailed over the route to the I.P. At the target CAVU conditions were experienced with 25/30 miles visibility. All ground markers were easily identified and the assigned aiming points were located early on the bomb run.

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III. RESULTS

The leading wave dropped long with a heavy concentration hitting on open fields 2000' northwest of Massa Lombarda.

The two squadrons of the second wave hit their assigned targets with excellent results. Bursts started north of the river and developed across to the northwest.

IV. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: None observed or encountered.

B. Flak: Flak experienced by both waves was generally Scant/Moderate and inaccurate. On the bomb run both units observed a fairly heavy concentration of bursts beyond the target area and slightly low. The left rally took the formation away from the danger area well short of the observed barrage. A few scattered bursts were close to the leading wave on their penetration beyond the assigned bomb release point.

No route flak was experienced.

Sq.	Tgt. Time	Bomb Alt.	Axis	Flak Exp.	Lost	Sev. Dam	Slight Dam.
721	1158	23,000	298	S/M I H	0	0	0
723	1158	23,500- 24,000	300	S/M I H	0	1	0
720	1158	21,500	300	S/M I H	0	0	0
722	1158	21,500	300	M I H	0	0	0

V. OBSERVATIONS

At 1204 hours at Imola (44.12N-11.43E) from 23,000 20-25 buildings on the northwest edge of town were observed to have white circles on roofs and a larger white circle on the ground in the immediate vicinity.

VI. CONCLUSION

A. Losses: None
B. Damage: One aircraft received minor flak damage in the target area
C. Casualties: None
D. Victories: None