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

S-2 NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION DATE: April 15, 1945

MISSION NBR. 263

TARGET: Casarsa, Italy - Railroad Bridge

I. CHRONOLOGY

Twenty-three B-24 type aircraft comprising "Blue Force" took off at 0745-0751 hours to bomb the diversion railroad bridge at Casarsa, Italy. Fourteen aircraft dropped 31.75 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs on the primary target at 1320 hours from 22/24,000'. Six aircraft returned 11 tons of bombs to base because target was cloud obscured. One aircraft experienced an accidental bomb release at I.P. (46.12N-12.33E) and jettisoned 2 tons of bombs. One aircraft that was low on fuel jettisoned 2.5 tons in the Adriatic prior to landing at friendly field. One aircraft that returned early due to engine failure returned 2.5 tons to base. Two aircraft that bombed the target experienced rack malfunctions and subsequently jettisoned in the Adriatic partial loads totaling .75 tons. Twenty aircraft returned to base at 1547 hours. Two aircraft landed at friendly fields but one has since returned to base. None lost. None missing. One aircraft still at friendly field.

II. ROUTE AND ASSAULT

Rendezvous and route were flown as briefed. Bombing was by squadron in trail and the visual method was to be employed. On the bomb run, however 6-9/10 cloud layer obscured the target and our Group made a 360 degree turn to make a second run. On this second run the first squadron was still unable to bomb due to cloud cover, the two squadrons following it on an axis of 130-140 degrees was able to pick up the target for a sufficient length of time to synchronize visually and then employ the offset method when clouds again obscured the target. A right rally off the target was accomplished and the route to base was flown as briefed. 5-10 P-51's made rendezvous as escort at 1140 hours at Sestri (44.17N-09.23E) at 21,000' and provided cover until their withdrawal in the target area at 1310 hours. Weather at the target was 6-8/10 stratocumulus at 12/15,000' with considerable haze limiting visibility. Enroute it varied from clear, over the Mediterranean in the Rome area, to 2-9/10 cumulus at 10,000' over north Italy.

III. RESULTS

Bomb strike photos show that one squadron scored a good concentration of hits on the bridge at the west end of the bypass. Cloud cover makes assessment of strikes impossible for one squadron, while another squadron was unable to bomb because of cloud cover.

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S-2 Narrative Report (Continued)
Mission Nbr. 263 Date April 15, 1945
Target: Casarsa, Italy - Railroad Bridge

IV. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: None

B. Flak: Flak bursts were generally low but becoming more accurate at the target was approached by the third squadron.

<u>Sq.</u>	<u>Tgt. Time</u>	<u>Bomb Alt.</u>	<u>Axis</u>	<u>Flak Exp.</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>Severe Dam.</u>	<u>Slight Dam.</u>
1st	1320	22,000	135	S I H	0	0	0
2nd	1320	24,000	140	S I H	0	0	0
3rd	1322	22,000	136	M I/A H	0	0	0

V. OBSERVATIONS

At 1120 hours from 18,000' a smoke screen was observed at La Spezia (44.07N-09.50E).

At 1227 hours and from 22,000' 20 unidentified aircraft were observed on the airdrome at Vicenza (45.33N-11.33E).

VI. CONCLUSION

A. Losses: None

B. Damage: 2 aircraft sustained minor flak damage.

C. Casualties: None

D. Victories: None

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450TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) AAF
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S-2 NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION DATE: April 15, 1945

MISSION NBR. 264

TARGET: Operation "Buckland" (D Plus 5)
Gun Positions, Enemy Command Post,
Stores and Depots in Bologna, Italy
Area.

I. CHRONOLOGY

Forty B-24 type aircraft comprising "Red Force", took off at 0945-1015 hours to bomb target and area MA-19 (L-900448). One aircraft returned early due to engine failure. Thirty-nine aircraft dropped 84 tons of 250 lb RDX bombs on the target at 1355-1402 hours, from 21,500 - 23,000'. One aircraft jettisoned 2.25 tons in Taranto Bay when making an early return caused by engine failure. One aircraft jettisoned .25 tons in the Tyrrhenian Sea because the aircraft was pulling excessive power; and later .25 tons over land (43.15N-10.45) due to an accidental release. Thirty-nine aircraft returned to base at 1702 hours. None lost. None missing. None at friendly fields.

II. ROUTE AND ASSAULT

Rendezvous and route were flown as briefed. The target was attacked on an axis of 21 degrees from the I.P. (Verno, 44.03N-11.09E). Bombing was by 4 squadrons, of 10 aircraft each, in trail, and by visual method. 20 P-38 aircraft made rendezvous as escort at 1320 hours, (42.57N-10.32E), 23,000'; and withdrew at 1440 hours, (42.20N-10.19E), 22,000'. Target weather was CAVU. Route weather .4 to .6 cumulus, tops at 9000', and .2 cirrus based at 25,000'. Visibility was unrestricted.

III. RESULTS

Three squadrons placed a heavy concentration of bombs on the assigned aiming points. The fourth squadron found their aiming point obscured by bomb smoke and elected to bomb gun positions 2,500' SE of the aiming point with a heavy concentration.

IV. ENEMY RESISTANCE

- A. Fighters: None
B. Flak:

<u>Sq.</u>	<u>Tgt. Time</u>	<u>Bomb Alt.</u>	<u>Axis</u>	<u>Flak Exp.</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>Severe Dam.</u>	<u>Slight Dam.</u>
1st	1355	23,000	20	S I H	0	0	0
2nd	1359	22,500	21	S/M I H	0	0	0
3rd	1401	21,500	21	S I H	0	0	0
4th	1402	23,000	21	S I H	0	0	0

V. OBSERVATIONS

None

VI. CONCLUSION

Losses: None Damage: None Casualties: None Victories: None