

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

S-2 NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION DATE: November 12, 1944

MISSION NBR. 173

TARGET: Ora, Italy - Railroad Bridge

I. CHRONOLOGY

Forty-one B-24 type aircraft took off at 0700-0728 hours to bomb the Ora Railroad Bridge. There were three early returns. Twenty-two dropped 63 tons of 1000 lb G.P. (instantaneous fuse) bombs on the primary target at 1117 hours from 22,500 - 23,500 feet. Of these, two jettisoned 2 tons and one jettisoned .5 tons because of hung up bombs. Fourteen dropped 40.5 tons of 1000 lb G.P. (instantaneous fuse) bombs on the alternate target (Casarsa Railroad Bridge) at 1150 hours from 21,000 feet, having been crowded off the primary target by another formation. One jettisoned 3 tons in Adriatic because of bomb release trouble; and one jettisoned 3 tons because of fuel shortage. Thirty-seven returned to base at 1415-1435 hours. One stopped at friendly field to refuel and has since returned. None lost. None missing.

II. ROUTE AND ASSAULT

Rendezvoused with 449th Group at 10,000 feet at 0830 hours on course to San Vito. Hence as briefed to target where the first two attack units made their run on an axis of 248 degrees and then returned to base on briefed course. The third attack unit was crowded off the primary target so went and made a run on alternate target on an axis of 150 degrees and back to base on briefed course. Rendezvoused with 40-50 P-38's at 1030 hours and they departed at 1228 hours near Ancona. Escort at 26,000 feet. Weather enroute was clear to 9/10 undercast with cumulus up to 24,000 feet in vicinity of Venezia. Target conditions were CAVU.

III RESULTS

Primary target: Good pattern around bridge. Photo assessment shows two direct hits on south approach and one near miss center of bridge.

Alternate target: Visual observation and confirming photos show numerous direct hits on the railroad tracks and several direct hits on the main bridge.

Bombardier's Combat Mission Report: Bombing today was accomplished by three attack units consisting of two boxes in each unit. Each ship carried six 1000 lb RDX with instantaneous nose fuzes and .01 tail fuzes. The route to the target was flown as briefed.

The X-Ray attack unit was led by Lt. Myers of the 720th Squadron. Bomb run was made using PDI as A-5 was out. A normal run was experienced. Impacts were not observed because of smoke. Photo reports that the bombs from the first box hit slightly left with a few bombs hitting the south approach of the bridge. The second box missed the bridge with the bomb pattern developing 800 feet to the right of the bridge. Results of this attack unit were unsatisfactory.

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S-2 Narrative Report (Continued)
Mission Nbr. 173 Date November 12, 1944
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Bombardier's Combat Mission Report: (Continued)

Yoke attack unit was led by Lt. Butner of the 722nd Squadron. A short bomb run was experienced due to the fact that I.P. was missed. Lt. Butner claims he was well synchronized when bombs went away and observed reports were bomb pattern was to the left of the bridge. Photo reports show, however, that this unit's pattern were about 1000 feet to the short of the bridge and in the river. Results were scored as unsatisfactory.

Zebra attack unit was led by Lt. Kemp of the 723rd Squadron. An attempt was made to bomb the primary target, but prior to release point the auto-pilot failed and went into a very sharp right turn. Lt. Kemp held his bombs and led his attack unit to an alternate target and bombed the Casarsa South Railroad Bridge by-pass. The unit used a heading of 180 degrees and both boxes toggled well. Visual reports stated an excellent pattern was formed on the by-pass. Photo reports show a heavy concentration developing around the aiming point. Results were scored as excellent.

IV. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: None

B. Flak: At primary target flak was intense and accurate heavy type and twenty-three of our aircraft were holed (minor). From Bolzano area it was intense and accurate heavy type. At Venezia it was scant and inaccurate heavy type. No flak reported at alternate target.

V. OBSERVATIONS

None

VI. CASUALTIES

Pilot of aircraft #804 wounded in leg - slight. Twenty-three aircraft received minor flak damage.

VII. FLIGHT LEADERS:

<u>PILOT</u>	<u>BOMBARDIER</u>	<u>NAVIGATOR</u>	<u>PILOT</u>	<u>BOMBARDIER</u>	<u>NAVIGATOR</u>
Stevens	Myers	Schatzman	Hobert	Butner	Fanshel
Venclik	Kemp	Cole			

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S-2 NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION DATE: November 12, 1944

MISSION NBR. 174

TARGET: Blechhammer, Germany - Synthetic Oil Refinery

I. CHRONOLOGY

Three Pathfinder aircraft took off at 1620-1634 hours to attack the Blechhammer South Synthetic Oil Refinery near Oppeln, Germany. Specific instructions were issued that the target would not be attacked unless weather conditions were suitable for PFF bombing. Two aircraft returned early. One aircraft reached the target and executed a satisfactory bomb run dropping 2 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs on the target at 2018 hours from 23,500 feet. One of the early returns jettisoned 2 tons at 47.42N-17.48E from 23,000 at 1940 hours. The other aircraft jettisoned .5 tons in Adriatic and the 1.5 balance at 41.50N-18.20E. One aircraft returned to base at 2030 hours due to CAVU weather condition which indicated that target would be clear of protective cloud cover. The second aircraft to return experienced Mickey failure in the vicinity of Budapest and proceeded in direction of Gyor in order to pick a suitable target on which to jettison before returning to base. The aircraft bombing the primary returned at 0030 hours, 13 November 1944.

II. ROUTE AND ASSAULT

The three aircraft followed the briefed course to Novi Sad. Unusually clear weather caused one pilot to make decision to turn back just short of Novi Sad. A thin low deck of alto-cirrus was noted north of Novi Sad and the remaining two aircraft proceeded on course to Hatvan. Clear weather and PFF failure caused a second aircraft to turn back. This aircraft proceeded toward Gyor and dropped bombs at 47.42N-17.48E thence to Pindzehely to Batpovo to Mljet Isle to base. The third aircraft continued on briefed course from Hatvan to I.P. at Skoczow thence to target. The bomb run was made on a 221 degree heading. The briefed course was flown to base without incident.

III. RESULTS

The run on the primary target was believed to have been well executed. The Mickey Navigator reported that he had the target positively identified and the run was well coordinated. No visual observation was possible.

IV. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: None
B. Flak: None at target. Slight, intense, inaccurate flak was experienced at Bijeljina.

V. OBSERVATIONS

None

VI. CASUALTIES

Navigator reported toes of right foot frozen.

VII. FLIGHT LEADERS:

None listed.