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Early Ret

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

S-2 NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION DATE: December 27, 1944

MISSION NBR. 202

TARGET: Brenner Pass, Italy - Railroad Loop

I. CHRONOLOGY

Thirty-five B-24's took off at 0731-0758 hours to bomb the loop in the Brenner Rail Line (46.58N-11.25E), Italy. Five returned early. Twenty-seven dropped 74 tons of 2000 lb G.P. bombs on the target at 1106-1111 hours from 21,000 - 22,000 feet. One aircraft dropped 2 tons on a target of opportunity, (railroad), having left formation because of loss of #4 engine. One jettisoned 3 tons in order to stay in formation. Partial loads were jettisoned by four aircraft, 1 ton in Adriatic to maintain position in formation; 2 tons, having loss of #2 engine, 1 ton in mountains 5 minutes after target due to rack malfunction; and 1 ton at 47.00N-11.40E for same reason.

II. ROUTE AND ASSAULT

Rendezvoused with the 449th group at Manduria on course to San Vito and on briefed course to Initial Point, Ponte, from which the target was attacked visually by the four boxes in trail on axis of 357, 358, 350 and 347 degrees respectively. Rally was to right and as briefed course to home base. At 1050 hours at 22,000 feet 20-40 P-38's rendezvoused with formation at Farra and withdrew at 1155 hours at an altitude of 25,000 feet at the coast. Weather at the target was CAVU. Enroute it ranged from 4/10 cumulus to clear.

III RESULTS

Bomb strike assessment from photos show first box had excellent pattern on bridge which was the aiming point, extending into mountain above tracks. The second box had an equally good concentration around its aiming point with several direct hits on tracks. Box #3, although the photo coverage was partially smoke obscured, dropped a good pattern and several bursts can be seen on the briefed aiming point. The last box had a smoke covered aiming point but bombs were seen falling into target area.

IV. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: None

B. Flak: At the target, moderate - accurate - heavy type flak was experienced. From Bolzano the flak was scant and accurate, heavy type; and from Bressanone it was scant to moderate, accurate, heavy type. Battle damage consisted of 15 aircraft holed (minor).

V. OBSERVATIONS

At 1105 hours from 22,000 feet, a B-24 from formation ahead, seen to go down in flames over target.

VI. CONCLUSION

A. Losses: None
B. Damage: 15 aircraft, minor, from flak.
C. Casualties: None
D. Victories: None