

U. S. AIR FORCE - 15th Air Force - 15th Air Force

15th Air Force - 15th Air Force (H)
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310.1

26 July 1944

1. Narrative Mission Report

2. Commanding Officer, 55th Bombardment Wing (L),
APO 520, U. S. Army

1. On 26 July 1944 starting at 0715B hours, 34 B-24 a/c of 29th Bombardment Group took off to bomb the Zwolfaring A/D installations and dispersed A/C. B-24 a/c No. 42-95240 did not take off because of an oil leak in No. 4 engine. The 33 a/c formed in two attack units. The first unit was led by Major Clarence C. Peff, Commanding Officer of the 775th Bombardment Squadron (H), and the second attack unit was led by 1st Lt. James H. Jones, Jr., Flight Leader of the 779th Bombardment Squadron (H).

2. The Group formation, line rendezvous, and the final rendezvous were executed as prescribed.

3. One (1) B-24 a/c No. 42-95332 returned to base early, landing at 1055B hours because No. 1 and No. 2 superchargers, as well as No. 1 and No. 2 prop governors, were out.

4. Thirty-seven (37) B-24 a/c were over the target at 1111B hours (briefed target time was 1112B hours) and dropped 82.562 tons of High bombs (instantaneous fuse) from 20,500 feet. B-24 a/c No. 42-52563 jettisoned .5 tons of bombs at 48°03'N-16°35'E when these bombs failed to release on the target due to a rack malfunction. B-24 a/c No. 44-41953 lost .062 tons of bombs at 44°50'N-16°47'E when one cluster fell out of the bomb bay as the bomb bay doors were being tested for proper functioning. B-24 a/c No. 42-78431 jettisoned .125 tons of bombs at 42°35'N-16°30'E which failed to release on the target due to a rack malfunction. B-24 a/c No. 42-95332 returned 2.25 tons of bombs to the base.

5. It is apparent from the bomb strike photos that in addition to the bombs dropped on the Zwolfaring A/D, that bombs were also dropped on Bad Voslau A/D, in some instances under the mistaken impression that it was the Primary Target. Photographs indicate that Able Box did drop on the briefed target, however no bomb strikes are visible. Photographs from Baker, Dog, Easy and Fox Boxes indicate that a/c in these boxes released on Bad Voslau. Bomb strike photos of Bad

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Voskresensk show frag strikes from the center of the landing area running North to the West of the a/c dispersal area, which do not appear to have caused much damage to parked a/c.

The A-5 Automatic Pilot was used by the lead a/c of the first attack unit on the bomb run. The lead a/c of the second attack unit did not use the A-5 Automatic Pilot because of a lack of sufficient power to operate the A-5.

6. IAH flak was encountered at the target, and along the route into the target from a point at 47°57'N-16°12'E. The flak was reported as very intense and lasted for a period of about fifteen minutes. SIH flak was observed at Perto (47°36'N-16°52'E).

7. One (1) to four (4) ME 109 a/c were observed in the target area, but no encounters were experienced by this Group.

8. Rendezvous with the fighter escort consisting of 40 to 50 P-51 a/c and 18 to 20 P-38 a/c was effected at 1030B hours at 45°55'N-16°30'E and at 1050B hours at 46°50'N-15°00'E respectively. The escort was last observed at 1305B hours at the Yugoslavian Coast.

9. At the base on take-off there was 2/10 cirrus at 20,000 feet. Over the Spur there was 4/10 cumulus lowering to 3/10 cumulus over the Adriatic with tops at 8,000 feet. Over the Dinaric Alps there was a cirrostratus layer at 21,000 to 23,000 feet. At Zagreb 2/10 coverage: at Graz 4/10 coverage increasing to 10/10 coverage near the IP and accentuated by vapor trails at 20,000 feet. The cloud bank was broken to scattered at the target. On the route back there was 3/10 to 4/10 cumulus to the Adriatic coast, and clear over the Adriatic with 2/10 cumulus at the base on return.

10. Thirteen (13) a/c were damaged, four (4) of which will be inoperational for more than twenty-four hours.

Fight crew members received flak injuries:

- a. S/Sgt Peter Doelder, 36807062, Nose gunner, 776th Bomb Sq (H) - Major Wounds.
- b. S/Sgt Reine W. Menne, 31083975, Radio Operator, 776th Bomb Sq (H) - Hospitalized.
- c. S/Sgt Robert Lambert, 32168458, Waist Gunner, 776th Bomb Sq (H) - Hospitalized.

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d. S/Sgt John F. Taylor, 37656073, Tail Gunner, 776th Bomb Sq (H) - Minor Injuries

e. S/Sgt James A. Brown, 33237370, Nose Gunner, 776th Bomb Sq (H), - Minor Injuries.

f. 2nd Lt William J. Pawloski, O-698475, Navigator, 776th Bomb Sq (H) - Minor Injuries.

g. Sgt Leon Kirkpatrick, 3121965, Top Turret Gunner, 777th Bomb Sq (H) - Minor Injuries.

h. 1st Lt Joseph J. Heilman, O-801369, Navigator, 778th Bomb Sq (H) - Minor Injuries.

11. The following observations of importance were noted:

<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Altitude</u>	<u>Observation</u>
1208B	46°28'N-16°58'E	17,000ft	M/Y with over 500 units in the yards.
1130B	Vienna	19,800ft	Eight (8) to ten (10) smoke generators located SE and E, of Vienna. Generators just starting and in the early stage of development.
1200E	46°53'N-17°28'E	18,000ft	21 SEF on landing strip
1300B	44°05'N-16°50'E	8,000ft	Tent camp consisting of 100 or more tents.

12. Thirty-seven a/c landed from 1402B hours until 1425B hours without incident.

13. The route was flown as briefed to a point 47°45'N-15°45'E, at which point due to the cloud coverage ahead in the area of the IP, the formation cut the IP short and passed over Valdegg (47°54'N-16°03'E), Voslau (47°58'N-16°13'E) and thence on a heading of 50° into the target. The return was as briefed. A Track Chart of the route as briefed and as flown is attached.

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14. Eight (8) c/c attempted photos. Selected print attached.

9. Correction on weather. At the base on take-off there was 2/10 cirrus at 20,000 feet. Over the Spur there was 4/10 cumulus. Clear over Adriatic. 3/10 cumulus, tops 8,000 feet over Dinaric Alps. Cirrostratus layer at 21,000 - 23,000 feet from Zagreb to target area. At Zagreb 2/10 coverage; at Graz 4/10 coverage increasing to 10/10 coverage near the IP and accentuated by vapor trails at 20,000 feet. The cloud bank was broken to scattered at the target. On the route back there was 3/10 to 4/10 cumulus to the Adriatic coast, and clear over the Adriatic with 2/10 cumulus at the base on return.

For the Commanding Officer:

FRANCIS F. ELDER
Major, AC
Intelligence Officer

2 Inclosures
Incl 1 - Track Chart
Incl 2 - Selected Print