

C O N F I D E N T I A L

HEADQUARTERS
464TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
APO 520 U S Army

HHS/PTE/jmm

319.1

26 April 1945

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

TO : Commanding General, 55th Bombardment Wing (H)
APO 520, U S Army

1. On 26 April 1945, thirty two (32) scheduled B-24 type a/c took off to bomb targets in northern Italy, from 0842B hours to 0855B hours.
2. The thirty two (32) a/c formed into two (2) attack units.
 - a. Under the leadership of Colonel Virgil L. Zoller, Deputy Group Commander, a smooth form-up was enjoyed by the first attack unit. Arriving at Andria on time, and at prescribed altitude, it was found that another formation, identified as of the 454th Bombardment Group (H), was in the area, already assembled, at about 2,000 feet below this Group. Departure on course, however, was made at briefed time and altitude.
 - b. The second attack unit, under the leadership of First Lieutenant Louis E. Hensley, Flight Leader of the 776th Bombardment Squadron (H), form-up, assembly and rendezvous were effected without incident.
3. The route was flown as briefed to immediately beyond Rimini. At this place, the Group Leader received radio advice from the Leader of the 460th Bombardment Group (H), then in the vicinity of the primary target, that there was 9/10ths cloud coverage. He further stated that his Group was not going to bomb the primary, and recommended that an alternate target be attacked. Turn right was then made to (4435N-1215E) at 1131B hours, to 4526N-1412E), to Tarnova at 1215B hours as I P for alternate target A F No 8. A bombing run was then begun, at 20,500 feet, on a T C of 274°. Despite every endeavor, visual observation could not be secured, and since a bank of clouds to the north prevented turning toward another alternate, rally left was made at (4602N-1322E) at 1217B hours. From there, course was laid to (4545N-1315E), to (4510N-1310E), and direct to base. A track chart, showing routes briefed, and flown, is inclosed.
4. All a/c returned their entire bomb loads of forty (40)

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Ltr Narr Miss Rpt, contd

100 pound HMX bombs, clustered; fused .1 nose and .025 tail, totalling sixty four (64) tons.

5. Fleck was neither encountered nor observed during this mission.

6. Twelve (12) to fifteen (15) P-51s rendezvoused with the bombers at 1103B hours at (4335N-1320E). Enroute to the target, as many as twenty (20) of these fighters were seen at one time; last contact was at 1330B hours at (4248N-1446E), when twelve (12) of the fighters were seen. The P-51s were identified as of the 332nd Fighter Group, and comments were received concerning the excellent cover provided.

7. Weather was as follows:

Clear at take-off with visibility 20 miles.

Generally clear over Adriatic with patchy stratocumulus and altostratus beginning there and increasing rapidly to 8/10 to 10/10, top 18,000 feet. 2/10 to 3/10 high cirrus.

Over Gulf of Venice, 6/10 to 8/10 altostratus and altocumulus, top 15,000 feet.

At Udine 10/10 altocumulus, top 18,000 feet and 6/10 cirrus at 21,000 feet; visibility 12 miles.

On return, 10/10 altocumulus and altostratus, top 16,000 feet breaking rapidly south of Rimini to few scattered clouds. Visibility was 10 to 15 miles, north of Rimini.

Clear at base on return, visibility 15 miles.

8. All scheduled a/c returned to this base from 1412B hours to 1419B hours.

FOR THE COMMANDING OFFICER:

FRANCIS F. ELDER
Major, AC
Intelligence Officer

1 Incl
Incl 1 - Track Chart