

55BW Mission Summary No, 73, 2 Aug 4h (Cont'd).

1. General Summary. On 2 August 1944, between 0855-0915B, 139 B-24 a/c of 142 a/c scheduled, took off to bomb harbor installations and stores at GENOA, ITALY. There were 7 early returns.

Group assemblies were made without incident, line rendezvous was not as ordered, two Groups being late, and line rendezvous was not effected as ordered, due to the lateness of one Group.

Fighter escort was contacted 1212-1238B at about 4235N1030E; fighters gave excellent cover to, over, and from the target, departing the formation about 1330B.

129 a/c were over the target at 1258-1306B. 127 a/c dropped 312.75 tons of 500 lb GP bombs (.1N, .025T fusing) from 19250-22000'. 3 sorties jettisoned full bomb load, 2 sorties jettisoned part loads, and 2 early returns jettisoned full bomb loads. 1 sortie returned full load to base, 3 sorties returned part loads; 4 early returns brought back full bomb loads.

Results:

460 Gp - photographs show: First bombs strike ammunition ship or train at the briefed desired mean impact. An explosion follows that spreads from car to car up three columns of goods wagons and showers the entire area with burning bits of debris. The bombs then continue up the pier through three oil storage tanks and across the choke point of the marshalling yard. Numerous explosions were seen to occur. Large fires resulted.

464 Gp - Numerous strikes observed in the marshalling yard assigned as the target. Several strikes are seen to hit the west end of the Odero Terni Orlando ship repair yard. Numerous strikes were scored on the large pier east of the Maritime Station with direct hits on four large warehouses. One direct hit and several near misses close enough to ensure damage were scored on a large merchant vessel.

465 Gp - At least twenty strikes are seen on the mole east of the power sub station. Probable direct hits and several near misses on six small cargo vessels on the South side of the mole. Numerous strikes are observed in the marshalling yard several direct hits are observed on goods wagons. A number of the wagons hit, were seen to explode and burn.

485 Gp - Several strikes in the area of the breakwater with direct hits in two places. Numerous strikes seen in the east end of the marshalling yard. At least two large fires resulted but smoke in the area prevents detailed assessment. Flak at target was MAH. No other flak was encountered. 2 e/a were seen by one Group; no e/a was encountered.

130 a/c were down at base between 1535-1545B, none was lost, 1 is missing, 1 landed at a friendly field.

Route was flown as briefed except for minor deviations required by weather conditions.

Weather: En route, 2-3/10 alto cumulus over ITALY, tops 8-9000', over TYRRHENIAN SEA 2-3/10 cumulus; Target: 2-3/10 cumulus, and 2-3/10 cirrus, tops 19,000'. Visibility 20 miles. Return: as on route to target.

2. 460th Bomb Group. On 2 Aug 1944, at 0855B, 30 scheduled a/c were dispatched to bomb the GENOA Harbor Installations in ITALY.

The Group formed its two attack units as scheduled and the rendezvous with the 485th was accomplished without incident at 1000B over ALTANURA. The Wing formed over SPINAZZOLA at 1011B, with the 460th in the lead position. The fighter escort, P-38s, were contacted at 1218B over CAPRAIA Isle. They furnished penetration, target and withdrawal cover, left formation near ROME 141

On route to the target, one of our a/c turned back in the vicinity of the IP 4410N0910E at 1254B. The #1 and #2 engines were feathered. The a/c was last seen on a heading to CORCICA, under control but losing altitude.

29 a/c were over the primary target, the harbor installations of GENOA at 1258B. From 19,250', 27 a/c dropped 67.5 tons 500 lb GP bombs on target. One a/c jettisoned its bombs in the sea just before target time in order to hold the formation when the #3 engine failed. Due to release malfunction, one a/c was unable to release its bombs and returned them to base. The A-5 was used by both attack units.

The Group encountered S-MAH flak over target.

29 a/c returned to base with a mean landing time of 1540B.

3. 464th Bomb Group. On 2 Aug 44, 39 scheduled B-24 a/c of this Group took off at 0848B to bomb the harbor installations at GENOA, ITALY.

2 a/c returned early.

Group assembly was as planned, but rendezvous with the 465 Gp was slightly off schedule, due to that Gp being 1½ min. late. Wing rendezvous was not as planned, as one Group was not at the designated position on time.

Rendezvous with fighter escort was first effected at 1212B at 4235N 1030E. 6 P-51s were seen at this time. This type a/c gave cover up to the target, the greatest number being seen at any one time being twelve. P-38 a/c were first observed at 1215B at 4245N1020E. 12 were

seen at this time, and excellent cover was provided to, over and upon return, the number varying enroute, with the greatest number reported at one time being 35. P-38 cover was last seen at 1337B off CAPRAIA Isle.

MAH flak was encountered.

37 a/c were over the target at 1306B (briefed target time 1300B). 92½ tons of 500 lb GP bombs were dropped on target from 20,000'. One a/c brought 2½ tons back to base; one a/c jettisoned 2½ tons at 4125N1210E. 37 a/c returned to base from 1529-1555B.

Route flown as briefed. A-5 pilot used during bomb run by leaders of the attack units.

4. 465th Bomb Group, 35 a/c of 36 scheduled took off at 0903B on 2 Aug 44 in 2 attack units to attack harbor installations at GENOA, ITALY.

The group assembled over ANDRIA at 0959B at 9,000'. Wing rendezvous as accomplished over SPINAZZOLA at 1012B at 9000'. An escort of P-38s was picked up at 1230B at CAPRAIA Island at 20,000'. They furnished penetration cover, and withdrawal cover as far as the Island of ELBA where they were last seen at 1330B at 18000'.

3 a/c returned early.

Flak at target was MAH, no flak was encountered enroute. No e/a were encountered but 2 silver a/c believed to be ME-109s were observed at 1305B in the target area flying close to the deck.

32 a/c went over the target at 1303B at 22000'. 32 a/c dropped 77 tons of 500 lb bombs. 1 a/c jettisoned 4 bombs at 4200N1115E nt'1147B and 2 bombs 3 miles North of CAPRAIA Island at 1229B after losing a turbo. 1 a/c jettisoned 2 bombs at 4210N1115E at 1150B, 2 bombs at 4250N1000E at 1218B and 2 bombs at 4340N0920E at 1240B after losing a supercharger. Sighting was done by visual means and due to malfunction of the A-5 pilot the lead a/c did not have it in use while making the bomb run.

32 a/c landed at 1545B. Route flown as briefed.

5. 485th Bomb Group. On 2 Aug 44, at 0915B, 35 of 37 a/c scheduled, took off to bomb GENOA Harbor Installations.

Group assembly was effected at 1002B; formation was satisfactory. 1 a/c was late at assembly due to late take-off. This a/c joined formation at MELFI,

Rendezvous with 460 over ALTAMURA was effected at 1002B at 10000'. Rendezvous with Wing on course over SPINAZZOLA was effected at 1015B at 10000'. The rendezvous was late because the lead ship had to

return to the base to repair a gas leak; a/c then joined formation on course.

Rendezvous with fighter escort, which consisted of several P-38 was effected at 1238B at 4004N1005E and left the formation on return at 1345B at 4245N 1035E.

2 a/c returned prior to bombing.

31 a/c were over the target at 1301B (target time 1300B). 31 a/c dropped 75.75 tons of 500 lb GP at 21900'. 3 of the 31 a/c attacking the target returned 7 bombs to base due to bomb rack malfunctions. 2 a/c jettisoned bombs in water between IP and target because each lost an engine just after the IP. The lead ship had a malfunction in the A-5 and bomb sight on the bomb run. Too late for the deputy to take over, the bombardier set up a fixed drooping angle and called correction to pilot by voice. The second wave bombed on A-5.

No e/a seen or encountered. Flak at PT was MAH for approximately 4 minutes.

32 a/c landed, mean landing time 1535B. 1 a/c landed at CORSICA because of engine malfunction and returned to home base at 1721B.

Route was flown as briefed.

DISTRIPUTION:

- 1 cy ea CG, AC of S, 4-3, Fifteenth AF.
- 2 cys AC of S; A-2, Fifteenth AF.
- 1 cy 28th SCU, Fifteenth AF.
- 1 cy PRO, Fifteenth AF.
- 1 cy ea CO, AC of S, A-2, 5th, 47th, 49th, 304th Bomb Wings.
- 1 cy CG, 306th Fighter Wing.
- 1 cy en CO, AC of S; A-1; A-2, A-3, 55th Bomb Wing.
- 1 cy en Bmbdr O, PI, PRO, Stat, 55th Bomb Wing.
- 1 cy ea CO, ea Gp, 55th Bomb Wing.
- 3 cys S-2, ea Gp, 55th Bomb Wing.
- 1 cy CG, III Bomber Command.