

55BW Mission Summary No, 139, 7 Dec 44 (Cont'd).

1. General Summary. On 7 Dec 44, between 0235-0240A, 6 PFF a/c of a/c scheduled took off to bomb the M/Y at SALZBURG, AUSTRIA, bombing individually and by PFF. There were 2 early returns.

There were no Group assemblies, nor any rendezvous. There was no fighter escort scheduled. a/c departed as scheduled from the ordered line of departure.

1 a/c was over Primary Target at 0540A, and this a/c dropped 2.5 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs, fused .1N, .01T, from 24,000'. 3 a/c dropped 7.5 tons on VILLACH, AUSTRIA, M/Y (1st Alternate Target) at 0510, 0515, and 0529A from 24,000, 23,700, and 23,000' respectively. 1 a/c dropped 2.5 tons on TRIESTE, ITALY Harbor (Target of Opportunity) from 17,300' at 0510A. 1 early return jettisoned 2.5 tons of bombs.

Results of PFF bombing were unobserved.

Flak at SALZBURG was SIH, at VILLACH was SIH, at TRIESTE was S-MIH. 1 a/c over VILLACH encountered no flak. 1 searchlight operated as 1 a/c was over VILLACH, and 8 searchlights operated at SALZBURG.

3 enemy night fighters were seen following 1 a/c in the TRIESTE area. There were no encounters.

5 a/c were down at bases between 0705-0801A. 1 a/c which did not bomb was down at base at 0535A.

Routes were flown generally as briefed.

For details of the function of equipment and details of weather encountered, see individual Bombardment Group reports.

TABULAR VIEW OF MISSION

A/C No.	GROUP	TAKE-OFF TIME	STATUS	TARGET	TARGET TIME	TONNAGE	FLAK	AXIS	ALTITUDE	TIME DOWN
759	460	0235	Eff.Sortie	VILLACH	0529	2.5	NIL	120°	23,000	0801
861	465	0235	Eff.Sortie	VILLACH	0515	2.5	SIH	135°	23,700	0708
034	485	0235	E. Return	-	-	-	-	-	-	0535
070	464	0236	Eff.Sortie	SALZBURG	0540	2.5	SIH	120°	24,000	0800
613	464	0239	Eff.Sortie	VILLACH	0510	2.5	SIH	180°	24,000	0705
050	460	0240	Eff.Sortie	VILLACH	0510	2.5	A- MIH	208°	17,300	0742
(Prior Return)										
957	465	Did not take off								
777	485	Did not take off								

2. 460th Bomb Group. On 7 Dec 44, 2 scheduled a/c were dispatched to bomb a target in GERMANY. A/c 8759 and 2050 took off at 0235 and 0240A respectively.

Due to clear weather over the ALPS and the presence of N/I e/a, neither a/c was able to penetrate to the Primary Target. A/c 2050

turned back at (4610-1350) and on the return route, PFF operator received excellent returns from TRIESTE and it was decided to bomb the harbor installations. From 17,300', this a/c released 2.5 tons of 500 lb. RDX bombs, .1N -. 01T fusing at 0510A A/c 8759 penetrated to the Alternate Target, VILLACH M/Y where at 0529A, 2.5 tons of bombs were released from 23,000'.

A/c 2050 reported 3 U/I e/a at (4400-1510) at 0410A. These a/c followed our a/c over TRIESTE and disappeared at (4530-1350) at 0530A. These a/c remained out of range, continually dropping their noses and turning on wing as though to make a pass which never did materialize. A/c had red and green wing lights.

A/c 2050 encountered S-MIH flak over TRIESTE. a/c 8759 encountered no flak over VILLACH, but an orange and blue light was observed blinking at the target. One searchlight was in operation at this time. At 0500A 20 miles SW of VILLACH, a large orange ball of fire or light was seen for 3-4 minutes at 15-16,000'.

A/c 3759 flew route as briefed. A/c 2050 was some forty miles east of course on penetration due to incorrect motor winds. Return route was flown to west of course.

Weather: On take-off to TRIESTE, stratocumulus and altocumulus, bases 3-4,000', tops 18,000', North of TRIESTE, to 20 to 30 miles South of VILLACH, 8-10/10ths stratocumulus at 10-12,000' clearing to 1-3/10ths stratocumulus over VILLACH. VILLACH was covered by a 5 sq. mile patch of stratocumulus. Weather was same on return to spur and then 8-10/10ths stratocumulus, bases 4,000'. Both a/c encountered icing conditions en route to targets. Moderate to heavy cloud icing over ADRIATIC. Light to moderate rime icing along YUGO coast between VIS and TRIESTE, 7-18,000'.

A/c 2050 and 8759 returned to base at 0742 and 0801A respectively.

PFF equipment functioned well on both a/c and was used for navigation to and from the target. Fixes were taken continually and flak areas were avoided by PFF. Four to five angles were given on the bomb runs and cooperation was good between the bombardier and the mickey operators. Rate was killed. Auto pilot was used on the VILLACH bomb run. Auto pilot was not used on TRIESTE due to malfunction.

3. 464th Bomb Group. On 7 Dec 44, 2 scheduled PFF B-24 a/c took off to bomb the West M/Y at SALZBURG, AUSTRIA.

Both a/c report their time and altitude of departure from place of rendezvous to be as prescribed.

A/e No. 42-52070 dropped 2.5 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs, fused .1 - .01, on the primary target (SALZBURG West M/Y) at 0540A from 24,000' on an attack axis of 120°. Chock agents used enroute were the

Chiem Son (4752-1207) and TRAGISTEIN (4752-1238). xxxx pickup of the primary target was made by scope 35 miles away. During the approach and the bombing run, the scope was clear, with ne interference Five sighting angles were given: 70-65-60-50-40°, one course correction is given of 5° to the right, when 10 miles away from the target. Coordination between all crew members was described as exceptionally excellent. Due to malfunction of the automatic pilot equipment, causing the a/c to slip off to the right, the C-1 was not used on the bombing run.

A/c No. 42-95613 dropped 2.5 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs, fused .1 - .01, on the 1st alternate target, (the M/Y at VILLACH, AUSTRIA), at 0510A, from 24,000' on an attack axis of 180°. Decision to bomb the alternate target was made because weather conditions past the ALFS enroute, led to the belief that the primary target would be clear. Approach to the 1st alternate target, and its bombing run, were performed by PFF, though weather conditions at the target were found to be clear. The PFF equipment was reported to operate efficiently with air crew coordination good. The bombing run was made by C-1 automatic pilot. 5 sighted angles were given, from 79° to 40°, plus 4 corrections for course, 1 to the right and 3 to the left, all of 2°. 5 bombs hung-up upon release, but were salvoed immediately on the target.

Searchlights were observed by the crew of a/c No. 070, only. In the vicinity of the primary target, during and just after the bombing run, 8 searchlights were seen. These searchlights were seen shining through clouds, and did not illuminate the a/c.

SIH flak was encountered at the primary target. About 12 red puffs were seen during the bombing run, ahead and to the left side. Enroute from the target SIH flak was also encountered by a/c No. 070 at 0559A at SPITTAL (4548-1330).

SIH flak was encountered at the 1st alternate target. These bursts were well to each side of the a/c. Enroute to the target, SIH flak was encountered by a/c No. 013 at 0443A at (4615-1350)

Route was flown by a/c No. 070 as briefed to and from the primary target. A/c No. 013 flew its briefed course to the turn point for the alternate target, and the briefed course on return to base.

Weather at base at take off was overcast at 6,500', with patches of lower scud. Enroute to the target, an overcast from 6,500' to 16,000' was encountered from the Spur to the ALPS. Over the ALPS and Northwards, high and middle clouds broke off, only patches of stratus and stratocumulus remaining. Mountains and bodies of water were visible.

In the target area were patches of stratus and stratocumulus. The primary target is obscured by stratus and the 1st alternate target was clear.

On return, conditions were similar to those encountered on the route out, with clouds further South over the ADRIATIC.

At the base, on landing, there was 10/10ths coverage at 6,500', plus patches of stratocumulus at 5,000'.

A/c Nos. 070 and 613 landed at base at 0800 and 0705A respectively.

4. 465th Bomb Group. On 7 Dec 44, 1 a/c took off at 0235. to attack a target in GERMANY. Due to weather unsuitable for night bombing the 1st alternate, the VILLACH M/Y, was attacked by PFF instead of the primary target.

There was no assembly.

There was no early return.

No e/a were seen or encountered.

Flak at the target was scant, inaccurate, heavy.

When the a/c approached the ALPS it was evident that the primary target could not be attacked because the weather was clear and the a/c was silhouetted by a bright moon. The a/c turned around and proceeded to the 1st alternate target. The PFF equipment was working satisfactorily and Lake AMISZEN was picked up on the scope and used as an IP. This check point was verified visually by the D.R. navigator. The PFF operator had difficulty in keeping the target on the scope at all times and as they neared the target synchronization became more difficult and the target became fused in the scope. Three sighting angles were relayed to the bombardier as follows: 70-65-60°. Axis of attack was 135°. There was no drift on the downwind bomb run and there was no confusion in procedure between the crew members. The PFF operator stated that he thought that he was synchronized on the city but was unable to pick up the target within the city. Results were unobserved.

1 a/c went over the target at 0515A at 23,700' and dropped 2.5 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs, fused .1 -. 01.

Weather: Stratocumulus and altostratus to cirrus (very thick) over the ADRIATIC and Northern ITALY. Severe icing conditions from 9-15,000', plus turbulence was encountered at the head of the ADRIATIC area. Beyond the ALPS the weather was clear. At VILLACH it was 10/10ths undercast. The weather enroute home was the same as the route out except there was no turbulence encountered.

1 a/c landed at the base at 0708A.

The route was flown as briefed.