

55BW Mission Summary No. 71, 28 July 1944 (Cont'd).

1. General Summary. On 28 July 1944, 107 B-24 a/c of 110 scheduled took off from 0555-0636B to bomb oil refineries in the PLOESTI area. There were 18 early returns.

Group assemblies were accomplished in assigned areas with Wing rendezvous at 0710B. Fighter escort was first observed at 740B consisting of P-38s and P-51s. Escort actually joined the formation at approximately 0900B over YUGOSLAVIA consisting of P-38s and P-51s.

Flak encountered at target was IAH. Flak reported also at KULA, ZAJEEAR, BALJEVAC, MITOVNICA.

A total of 43 ME-109s and FW-190s were observed in target area. No encounters by the Wing.

89 a/c were over the target from 1019-1021B at 23,000-24,000' dropping 137 tons and 66.75 tons of 500 lb GP bombs on ASTRO ROMANO and STANDARD OIL Refineries. A total of 14.25 tons were jettisoned and 10 tons of bombs were returned to base.

Results are as follows:

464th and 485th Bomb Group. Photographs show: PLOESTI, STANDARD O/R. Bombs away photographs indicate probable strikes short of the target. The possibility of strikes on the marshalling yard south of the refinery is indicated.

465th Bomb Group. Photographs show: PLOESTI, ASTRO ROMANO O/R. Bombs away photographs indicate probable strikes short and to the right of the target. The possibility of strikes on the marshalling yard East of the refinery is indicated. No damage to vital Installations in Rfrys. Weather: Enroute scattered cirrus at 20,000' with 10 miles visibility. From DINARIC ALPS to DANUBE 2/10 cirrus at 25,000'. At target 3/10 cumulus at 10,000' with 15 miles visibility in haze.

84 a/c landed from 1350-1400B. One a/c lost to flak, one a/c crash-landed, (crew safe), 2 a/c missing, and one a/c landed at BARI.

Route flown approximately as briefed.

2. 464th Bomb Group. On 28 July 1944, 38 scheduled B-24 a/c took off at 0555B to bomb PLOESTI ASTRO ROMANO Oil Refinery, ROUMANIA.

6 a/c returned early.

31 a/c were over the target at 1021B (briefed target time 1008B). 31 a/c dropped 76 3/4 tons of 500 lb GP bombs (.1N and .025 T fuse from 23,000'.

Recapitulation as follows:

Dropped on target	76 3/4
Returned to base	10
Jettisoned	8 1/4
Total tons accounted for	95

Two of our a/c failed to return. One exploded in midair over the target just before bombs away at 1020B, no chutes seen to open. The other was last seen flying et 16,000' at 4410N2221E with left aileron and rudder gone and No. 1 engine feathered, apparently under control at 1120B. Two chutes from this a/c were seen to open over the target. It is believed that damage done to this a/c was at least partially caused by the explosion of the other a/c.

30 a/c landed at this base from 1325B to 1350B.

Route was flown as briefed.

3. 465th Bomb Group. 34 a/c of 36 scheduled took off at 0610B on 28 July 1944 to attack the ASTRO ROMANO Oil Refinery at PLOESTI, ROUMANIA.

30 a/c went over the target et 1019B at 24,000'. 29 a/c dropped 70.25 tons of 500 lb bombs with .1N and .025T fuses. One a/c jettisoned 10 bombs in a field 20 miles West of BUCHAREST at 0944B after losing two engines and being unable to keep up with the formation. One e/c jettisoned 2 bombs in the ADRIATIC sea et 0740B. One a/c jettisoned 2 bombs et 0850B 4 miles West of KRUSEVAC. One a/c jettisoned x bombs at 4332N2110E et 0850B and 2 more bombs at 4400N2240E at 0929B. One a/c jettisoned 2 bombs in the ADRIATIC at 0737B all in order to stay with the formation. One a/c jettisoned 1 bomb 10 minutes after leaving the target after it had hung up because of rack malfunction.

29 a/c landed at 1400B and 1 a/o is missing.

Route was flown es briefed.

4. 485th Bomb Group. On 28 July 1944 at 0636B, 35 B-24 a/c of 36 a/c scheduled, took off to bomb PLOI.STI STAI DARD O/R (Primary Target). 7 a/c returned prior to bombing.

27 a/c were over the target at 1020B (target time 1008B). 27 a/c dropped 66½ tons of 500 lb GP bombs (.1N x .025T fusing) at 23,800'. One a/c landed at friendly field; disposition of bombs unknown. Bombs were dropped on PFI by manual operation. A-5 was not used because of malfunction. Results were obscured by smoke screen over target. Black smoke was rising up to 15,000'. Photos show some bomb strikes on course but over the target.

25 a/c landed, mean landing time 1345B. There were no stranglers; one a/c is at friendly field. One crash-landed at home base.

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