

55BW Mission Summary No. 43, 10 June 44 (Cont'd).

1. General Summary. On 10 June 105 B-24s of the 55<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Wing took off to bomb the TRIESTE M/Y. Group Assemblies were accomplished from 0704-0712 hours. Wing Rendezvous was made over SPINNAZOLA at 0722 hours. Fighter escort was made at 0833 to 0845 off ANCONA.

From 0931 to 1001 hours 105 e/c were over the Primary Target. From 19,000 to 20,000 feet a total of 212.25 tons of 500 lb GP Bombs were dropped with fair to good results.

Flak at both IP and target was SIH. A total of 17 to 22 e/c were seen with one group having 6 encounters with ME-109s and FW-190s. Claims of 0-1-1 have been made.

17 a/c of the 465th Bomb Group unable to bomb on the PT dropped 42 tons of bombs on the Alternate, FAENZA M/Y from 18,500 ft at 1027 hours.

Route was flown as briefed. Weather enroute was 6/10 clouds 23,000 ft and with haze over target.

All a/c returned to bases.

2. 460th Bomb Group. On 10 June 1944, at 0625 hours, 39 scheduled a/c took off to bomb the commercial port installations at Trieste.

The attack units formed in the regular assembly area at 0704 hours as scheduled. Wing rendezvous was accomplished over Spinazzola at 0723 hours with the 460th leading the Wing. Fighter escort, P-51s, was contacted in the vicinity of (4350-1408) at 0839 hours. Penetration, target and withdrawal cover was provided. The fighter escort was last seen at 1525-4240) at 1105 hours.

From 19,000-21,000'', 39 a/c dropped 94.25 tons of 500lb GP bombs, .1N & .01T fuses, on the primary target at 0931 hours. Due to malfunctions, one a/c salvoed eight bombs in the Adriatic before reaching the target and another a/c jettisoned five bombs beyond the target area after release failure at the target. Results: A good concentration of bombs fell on the aiming point, causing bomb damage to port installations on mole #6 and scoring three direct hits on an 800 ft troop transport. Numerous hits were made on the shipyard, linoleum factory and barracks area.

SIH flak was encountered at the target and also at the IP, Grado.

The route was flown as briefed.

Weather was CAVU over the Adriatic. About half way up the Adriatic, cirrus clouds began forming and increased to 6-7/10ths cover at 23,000'' at the target. Also, there was a layer of altostratus, 4 x 6 miles in dimension lying just west of Trieste and extending to Trieste.

Six e/a were observed: 2 ME-109s at target and 4 MC-202s at Cittanove at 1045 hours.

39 a/c returned at 1205 hours.

3. 465th Bomb Group. On 10 June 1944 34 a/c of 36 scheduled took off to bomb Trieste, (primary target).

The group assembly was accomplished at the assigned place at 0717B hours at 7,000 ft. without incident.

The Wing rendezvous was accomplished at Spinazzola at 0724B hours at 7,000 ft.

34 a/c were over the primary target, Trieste at 0935B hours and 17 a/c dropped 40 1/4 tons of 500lb GP bombs (.1 nose and .01 tail fusing) from 20,500 ft. The lead bombardier could not locate the primary target due to an undercast and did not drop but 17 planes dropped because their bombardiers saw bombs coming from the lead ship in Charlie box. Crew members stated that they saw a number of hits in the target area and saw a few bombs fall into the city proper. The formation then set course for the alternate target, Faenze M/Y, and at 1027B hours 31 a/c were over this target and 17 a/c dropped 42 tons of 500lb GP bombs (.1 nose and .01 tail fusing) from 18,500 ft. The crew members stated that they saw several hits in the east choke point of the M/Y and that some bombs were seen to hit in the city itself.

SIH flak was encountered at Grado, the IP. Some crew members stated that they thought this flak was coming from a convoy sighted at this point.

No enemy a/c were seen or encountered during the mission.

Rendezvous was accomplished with fighters at 0845 off The coast of Ancona at 15,000 ft. The escort left at 1017B hours at Lake Caacchio at 18,000 ft.

Scattered low and scattered high clouds enroute to and from the target with 5/10th undercast over the primary target. The secondary target was CAVU.

34 a/c landed at 1242B hours (mean time).

Route was flown as briefed to the Primary target.

4. 485th Bomb Group. On 10 June 1944, at 0615 hours, thirty two (32) a/c took off to bomb the M/Y at Trieste (Primary Target).

Assembly was over Altamura at 0712 hours. Formation at assembly was satisfactory.

Rendezvous with the 460th Bombardment Group was made between Altamura and Grannie at 0712 hours at 6,000 ft. Rendezvous with the 465th Group was made over Spinazzola at 0722 hours at 6,000 ft.

Rendezvous with fighter escort was made at 0833 hours at 4254N 1410E. Escort remained with formation over the target and departed at 1044 hours at 4355N 1400E. Escort consisted of P-38s, P-47s and P-51s.

Fifteen (15) to twenty (20) e/c were seen between Grado and Monte de Cap; 4 of these being FW-190s; 4 JU-88s; 1 ME-210, and the remainder were ME-109s.

Thirty two (32) a/c were over the target at 0930 hours Finding the target partly obscured by clouds, only twelve (12) a/c dropped thirty (30) tons of 500 lb GP bombs (.1 and .01 fusing) at 19,500'. A right turn was made and a second run was made on target at 1001 hours at 20,000'. Nineteen (19) a/c dropping 47 1/2 tons of the same type bombs. One (1) a/c returned ten (10) bombs to base. Hits were observed in the M/Y; some in the oil storage facilities, which caused flames to leap to a height of approximately 1500 ft. A few bombs fell over the target, falling in a residential district. Several bombs were observed to have fallen into the water short of the target, and some possibly hitting a pier.

The weather enroute was hazy with very little cloud cover; the visibility being unlimited. Over the target, at 0930 hours, a large cloud bank at 15,000' obscured the target area. At 1001 hours, when the second run was made, the cloud layer had moved and the target was partially visible. The weather on return route was clear.

SIH flak was encountered near the IP (4543N 1332E). At the target, SIH flak was again encountered. Some red bursts were observed, at which time the flak ceased and e/a attacked. These red bursts were apparently used as signals. About 6 e/a were encountered over the target area, being equally divided as to types, ME-109s and FW-190's. These e/c attacked individually and in pairs from 8 and 6 o'clock high and level. Attacks were sporadic from approximately 0945 to 0959 hours. Pilots appeared to be experienced and were aggressive in that one attack was pressed to within 200 yards. Bombers claim 1 ME-109 probably destroyed and 1 ME-109 damaged. E/A claimed as damaged attacked from 6 o'clock low. Bomber opened fire at 700 yards and fired about 100 rounds into e/a before it broke away at 200 yards with smoke pouring from it. It was last seen losing altitude but apparently under control. The e/a claimed as probable came in from 6 o'clock low. Bomber opened fire at 1,000 yards. Two other e/a followed this ship in. Bomber fired 150 rounds at one of these. Tracers were seen to go

all around cockpit with e/a flying through a virtual hall of fire. The top turret gunner verifies the first of these encounters; he having seen the e/a stop suddenly and go into a spin.

Return was made without incident. Thirty two (32) a/c landed, mean landing time 1233 hours.

Route was flown as briefed.

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