

55BW Mission Summary No. 129, 16 Nov 44 (Cont'd).

1. General Summary (RED FORCE). On 16 November 1944, 115 B-24 a/c constituting Red Force, of 116 a/c scheduled, took off between 0755-0810A to bomb the MUNICH West M/Y. There were 14 early returns.

Group assemblies were made as ordered, but line rendezvous was delayed. Wing rendezvous was effected as ordered. Fighter escort was seen at 1050A at 4320N-1340E and accompanied formation over target.

98 a/c were over target at 1301-1307A. 96 a/c dropped 143.25 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs, fused 80% .1N, .01T, and 10% long delay, from 25,000-27,200'. 3 sortie a/c jettisoned .75 ton, 6 early returns jettisoned 8 tons, 9 early returns brought 13.5 tons of bombs back to base.

Results: 460th Bomb Group photographs show bombs away from two boxes 7½ miles SE of the MUNICH Main M/Y. All other photographs show only total undercast.

Flak at target ranged from Moderate to Intense and from Inaccurate to Accurate Heavy. S-MAH was encountered at UDIME, SIH at 4600N-1320E.

3 e/a were seen, none encountered.

75 a/c were down at bases between 1545-1620A. 2 a/c were lost (one of these ditched in friendly territory), 8 a/c are missing and 13 a/c landed at friendly fields.

Route was flown as briefed.

Weather: at take-off, 1/10 cirrus at 20,000' and 3-4/10 stratocumulus, tops 7,000'. Over S ADRIATIC, 3/10 stratus, tops 3,000', increasing to 5/10 in N ADRIATIC, tops 9,000'. 1/10 cirrus over entire ADRIATIC. Generally clear in N ITALY. Over ALPS, 8-9/10 cirrostratus, tops 20,000', with unknown amount of cumulus below. At target, 9-10/10 altocumulus, tops 13,000'; visibility 20 miles. On return, little change except for increase in low clouds in N ADRIATIC. At base, 7/10 stratus and stratocumulus, tops 7,000'. 3/10 cirrus at 19,000' and light rain. Showers falling from low clouds.

2. 460th Bomb Group (Red Force). On 16 Nov 44, at 0800., 31 scheduled a/c dispatched to bomb the MUNICH West M/Y.

Group assembled on time. Rendezvous with 485th delayed until 0920A. 460th over rendezvous point at 0926A. Fighter escort, P-51s, soon over target area only.

3 a/c returned early. 6 bombs were jettisoned at 4642N-1138E and the remainder were jettisoned in the ADRIATIC.

28 a/c were over target at 1302A at 27,200'. Bombing by PFF, 28 a/c dropped 41.25 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs, .1N, .01T fusing, on the target. Due to malfunctions, 3 a/c had 3 bombs hung up. 2 bombs were jettisoned in the ADRIATIC, 1 bomb immediately after target. Group leader used automatic pilot on bomb run.

PFF operator on the lead a/c reported that the set operated very well. There was no navigation difficulty. Contour pilotage was made over the ALPS from the radar scope with a negative relief map. Target was identified by check points, the town itself and two lakes to the south. Target area inside city was identified, although the M/Ys were not positively identified within the area. Equipment functioned well on bomb run. Drift was overcome but only with difficulty due to a wind stronger than had been expected. Last correction was 2° about 7 miles from target. Four sightings were given, 70, 65, 60 and 50 degrees. Principal use was made of first three. There was no confusion on mission between crew members. PFF operator thinks bombs hit target area and states that he was synchronized on a particularly strong return in the target area, which it is believed was the M/Y. Main difficulty lay in killing drift which was about 15°, although PFF operator does not recall exact amount of drift he ended up with. Bomb run which began on axis of 300, ended up with a heading of about 10° by the time drift was overcome.

Group experienced IAH flak over target for 6 minutes.

Route was flown as briefed to target. On return, route flown direct from Italian coast to base.

On return route 3 e/a were seen near TREVISO, ITALY. The e/a were last observed attacking a straggler of this group.

18 a/c returned to base with mean landing time of 1620A. 6 a/c are at friendly fields. 1 a/c ditched in the ADRIATIC at 4314N-1356E at 1509A. 3 a/c are missing.

3. 464th Bomb Group (Red Force). On 16 Nov 44, 27 of 28 scheduled a/c plus 1 spare took off at 0755A to bomb the MUNICH West M/Y. 1 a/c failed to take off due to No. 1 booster pump being inoperative.

28 a/c formed 2 attack units. Formation made without incident. The two-group rendezvous was made as prescribed except that the 465th did not line rendezvous due to cloud conditions, joining Wing formation at rendezvous point.

3 a/c returned early: 4¼ tons were returned, ¼ ton is jettisoned.

25 a/c over target at 1301A (briefed target time 1213A) dropping 37.5 tons of 500 lb mixed GP and RDX bombs (.1N, .01T fusing) from 26,000'.

Recapitulation:

Dropped on target	37.50 tons
Jettisoned	.25 ton
Returned to base	4.25 ton
Total	42.00 tons

Bombing was by PFF due to complete overcast at target. Interrogation of PFF Navigators revealed the fact that this was a well handled PFF mission. One PFF a/c was in the lead and one in the first deputy lead position. The target area was picked up on the scope by the lead a/c 50 miles and by the other 40 miles from the target. The entire approach and bomb run were made by PFF. Lead PFF operator called 5 readings to the bombardier during bomb run, and all agreed readings checked with bombardier. The other PFF operator made 4 readings to his bombardier with the same results. 4 course corrections were made, the last one being 2° to left for course, 10 miles from the target. The last reading for range was 5 miles from the target. The lead PFF navigator picked up the target on the scope, and the other PFF navigator could pick up only the target area of MUNICH. The bombardier used meteorological data to set up the dropping angle. There was no visual operation on this mission. PFF equipment in the lead a/c functioned 9/10 of the time, being in good order on bomb run, and the equipment in the other a/c was in operation for the entire mission. The lead PFF navigator is of the opinion that bombs were dropped on the target due to his being able to pick up the target on his scope without difficulty and the fact that his range findings and axis of attack agreed with the bombardier's data.

The group leader used C-1 automatic pilot on the bomb run. The leader of the second attack unit did not use the automatic pilot as this a/c did not have PFF equipment and dropped on the group leader.

Flak at target was IIR and lasted for 5-6 minutes.

12 P-51s were first observed at 1050A at 4320N-1340E and last observed at 1240A at 4720N-1105E.

3 a/c are missing and 1 a/c is at a friendly field. 20 a/c landed at base between 1530-1600A. 1 a/c landed at 1650A.

Route was flown as briefed.

4. 465th Bomb Group (Red Force). On 16 Nov 44, 31 a/c scheduled (28 a/c plus 3 spares) took off at 0810A in two attack units to bomb the MUNICH West M/Y.

Group assembled at 0909A at 10,000' and made Wing rendezvous at 0923A at 10,000'. There was no fighter escort.

The 3 spares returned to base with all bombs. 1 a/c returned early because of malfunction of one engine and runaway propeller. This a/c jettisoned its bombs at 1200A at 4600N-1210E.

IAH flak encountered at target and S-MAH flak at UDINE. 12 unidentified single engine fighters observed at 1145A at UDINE, passing-under formation, heading south, echeloned in groups of 4 abreast; reported variously by the crews to be either MC-202s, FW-190s or possibly P-47s.

23 a/c dropped 34.5 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs, fused .1N, .01T, on the PT at 1300A from 25,000'. No bombs were jettisoned. There was a solid undercast over the immediate target area so that PFF methods were employed. All radar navigators reported that they definitely identified the specific target within the city since the M/Y and the adjacent industrial area could be seen on the scope. The contour of the city and the WURM Lake were used as check points. The lead PFF operator reported his drift as being killed at the target with a last course correction of 7°. The other two PFF operators believed that the drift was not killed and reported that a 5° correction to the left should have been made over the target to bring the bombs closer to the briefed aiming point. 5 sighting angles were relayed by the operators to the bombardiers: 70, 65, 60, 50 and 40 degrees. No difficulty was experienced by the operators in navigation to the target nor on the bomb run, nor was any confusion in the procedure between bombardier, pilot, navigator and PFF reported. Lead radar navigator reported synchronization on the firing point and believed bombs fell on the target. Deputy PFF navigator reported equipment indicated bombs hitting on extreme East end of the M/Y and center of the city. The PFF operator leading 2nd attack unit reported equipment indicated bombs hit East end of the M/Y.

Recapitulation:

Dropped on target	34.5 tons
Jettisoned by early return	1.5 tons
Carried by missing and lost a/c	6.0 tons
Returned by spares	4.5
Total	46.5 tons

23 a/c landed at base at 1558A. 1 a/c was lost over target from direct hit by flak. One wing caught fire and broke off and the a/c spun into the undercast. No chutes were seen. 2 a/c are missing, being last seen dropping back and losing altitude as the formation came off the target.

Route was flown as briefed.

5. 485th Bomb Group (Red Force). On 16 Nov 44 at 0803A, 28 scheduled a/c and 1 spare took off to bomb the MUNICH West M/Y.

Assembly was at 0913A at 10,000' with the 485th leading. The spare a/c returned to base, landing at 0935A with all bombs. Wing rendezvous effected at 0923A with the 464th leading on course, followed by the 465th, 485th and 460th.

30-40 P-51s passed the formation over the ADRIATIC at approximately 4330N-1348E at 1051A. The fighters were not seen on remainder of the mission.

7 a/c returned early. 1 a/c jettisoned 1.5 tons, 6 a/c returned 9 tons.

21 a/c were over target at 1307A. 20 a/c dropped 30 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs, fused .1N, .01T, from 25,500'. 1 a/c accidentally released bombs, 1.5 tons, at IP (4737N-1101E). Bombing was by PFF with C-1 auto pilot being used. Results were undetermined. Photographs show target to be completely cloud covered. Mickey Operator of lead ship reported equipment operated perfectly and that he had no trouble in picking up target on scope. For some reason not explained he lost the target. Two other targets were picked up and likewise lost. Finally a target was picked up and hold on the scope until the bombs were released. Most of the formation, however, dropped on the deputy lead ship in the briefed target.

No e/a were seen or encountered. MIH-MAH flak encountered over target for approximately 5 minutes. SIH flak encountered at 4600N-1320E for 1 minute.

13 a/c landed without incident at 1615h. 8 a/c landed at friendly fields; 4 of these returned to base between 1727-1920A.

Route was flown as briefed.

6. General Summary (Blue Force). On 16 November 1944, 28 B-24 a/c, constituting Blue Force, of 29 a/c scheduled, took off between 0855-0920A to bomb a military concentration in YUGOSLAVIA. There was 1 early return.

Unit assemblies were accomplished as ordered, but Wing rendezvous was effected only after delay. There was no fighter escort.

27 a/c were over assigned target at time prescribed, and found assigned target completely overcast. Three runs were made, but target could not be seen. One unit (5 a/c), dropped 5 tons of 100 lb GP bombs, fused 90% .1, .01 and 10% long delay, on a road near assigned target from 20,000' at 1200A 27 a/c jettisoned 5.25 tons, and 23 a/c returned 18.65 tons of bombs to bases.

SIH flak at target was reported by one unit. SIH was encountered at 4300N-1945E. No e/a were seen nor encountered.

27 a/c were down at bases between 1335-1350A. There were no a/c lost nor missing, none landed at friendly fields.

Route was flown a few miles South of briefed route to target.

Results: 465th Bomb Group photographs show several strikes in the vicinity of a road North of PRIJEPOLJE.

Weather: At take-off, 2/10 stratocumulus, tops 4,000', continuing to coast and across ADRIATIC. Over DINARICS, 8/10 cumulus, tops 14,000' and 2-3/10 cirrus at 22,000': On east side of mountains, clouds broke to 5/10 patchy stratocumulus, tops 8-9,000'. At target, 5-6/10 scattered, tops 9,000'; visibility 20 miles. On return, clouds had built up over mountains to 16,000' and stratocumulus over ADRIATIC and increased to 4-5/10. 7/10 stratocumulus at base on return with light showers.

7. 460th Bomb Group (Blue Force). On 16 Nv 44, at 0900A, 14 scheduled a/c dispatched to bomb a target in YUGOSLAVIA

Group assembly and rendezvous accomplished as scheduled.

Route flown as briefed to IP but weather caused formation to overshoot IP. Formation returned to IP but target was obscured by cloud cover. Group turned back at 1218A without releasing bombs. 11 a/c jettisoned 3.35 tons of 100 lb GP bombs, .1N, .01T fusing (1/10 delay), in the ADRIATIC; 10.65 tons were returned to base.

No flak reported at target. SIH flak reported at 4300N-1945E.

Route flown as briefed with the one exception mentioned above.

14 a/c returned to base with mean landing time of 1335A.

8. 464th Bomb Group (Blue Force). On 16 Nov 44 at 0855A, 7 scheduled a/c plus 1 spare took off to bomb a target in Yugoslavia.

Form-up was delayed due to late take-off necessitated by last-minute fusing of bombs. 465th Group not contacted until rendezvous point and was not observed after that time. 464th Group fell in behind 460th at rendezvous point and proceeded on course. There were no early returns and the spare a/c remained with formation.

8 a/c over target area at 1129A at 20,000', but due to total overcast it was impossible to pick up the target. As there were no alternate targets briefed, bombs were returned to base. 8 a/c jettisoned .8 ton long delay fused bombs in the ADRIATIC at approximately 1240A in vicinity of 4220N-1800E. 2 a/c jettisoned .1 ton of 100 lb GP bombs unintentionally at same time and place. 8 a/c returned 7.1 tons of 100 lb GP bombs, .1N, .01T fusing, to base.

Recapitulation:

Long Delay Fuse:		.1N, .01T Fuse:	
Jettisoned	.8 ton	Jettisoned	.1 ton
Returned	0	Returned	7.1 tons
Total	.8 ton	Total	7.2 tons

Scant heavy flak observed in area of IP and target, but due to overcast it was impossible to pin-point exact locations.

8 a/c landed at base between 1335-1345A.

Route was flown 15 miles South of course to YUGOSLAVIAN Coast, then due North to IP, then as briefed over target and return.

9. 465th Domb Group (Blue Force). On 16 Nov 44 at 0920A, 6 a/c of 7 scheduled a/c took off to bomb a military target in YUGOSLAVIA.

Group assembled over field at 8,500' at 0949A, and Wing rendezvous made at 0959A at 8,500'. There was no fighter escort.

1 a/c returned early because landing gear could not be retracted. This a/c jettisoned 2 long delay bombs in the ADRIATIC and brought remainder back to base.

No flak was encountered, and no e/a were seen or encountered.

Despite the fact that 3 runs were made on target, the formation could not see the target due to solid undercast. Bombs were dropped on the highway landing north out of the target at 4332N-1934E, which was observed to be carrying military traffic from the assigned target. 5 a/c went over the target at 1200A at 20,000' and dropped 5 tons of 100 lb GP bombs, 90% of which were fused .1N, .01T, 10% of which were fused with 6-24 hour delay fuses. 3 bombs were dropped visually using C-1 automatic pilot. No hits were observed on road itself; bombs were observed to hit on both sides of the road.

Recapitulation:

.1N, .01T fusing jettisoned	4.5 tons
Long delay fusing dropped	.5 ton
.1N, .01T fusing jettisoned	.9 ton
Long delay fusing jettisoned	.1 ton
Total	6.0 tons

5 a/c landed at 1350A; no a/c lost or missing. It was necessary to fly South of briefed route to target due to malfunction of compass. At target, 3 runs were made in an effort to find target which was covered by solid undercast.