

5BW Mission Summary No. 130, 17 Nov 44 (Cont'd).

1. General Summary. On 17 November 1944, between 0650-0721A, 111 B-24 a/c of 114 a/c scheduled took off in two Forces, Red Force consisting of 52 a/c of the 460th and 485th Bomb Groups to bomb BLECHHAMMER South O/R, and Blue Force consisting of 59 a/c of the 464th and 465th. Bomb Groups to bomb VIENNA Florisdorf O/R. There were 17 early returns, 5 from Red Force, 12 from Blue Force.

Group assemblies, line rendezvous and Wing rendezvous were effected as ordered. Fighter escort was seen by Blue Force a/c at 0945A at 4615N-1526E and remained with formation until 1300A at 4600N-1702E. Escort was seen by Red Force at 1038A at 4550N-1502E, and departed formation at 1300A at 4455 - 1656E.

93 a/c were over targets, 46 of Red Force at 1236-1237A, and 47 of Blue Force at 1144-1145A. 93 a/c dropped 185.25 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs, 80% fused .1N, .01 and .025T, with 20% fused long delay. 91.5 tons were dropped by Red Force on BLECHHAMMER South O/R, and 93.75 tons were dropped by Blue Force on VIENNA Florisdorf O/R. altitudes of Red Force were 23,500-25,600', of Blue Force were 24,000-25,500'. 2 sortie a/c jettisoned .5 ton and 4 early returns jettisoned 5.5 tons (Red Force), 9 early returns of Blue Force jettisoned 16.5 tons. 2 early returns of Red Force brought back 3 tons, 1 early return of Blue Force brought back 1.5 tons of bombs. 3 a/c of Blue Force dropped 6 tons on Targets of Opportunity.

Flak at BLECHHAMMER was nil to MIH, at VIENNA Florisdorf, M to I, I to A, H. No other flak was encountered.

1 e/a was seen by Red Force, 5 e/a were seen by Blue Force. There were no encounters.

85 a/c were down at bases, 39 of Red Force between 1538-1600A, 46 of Blue Force between 1430-1440A. 2 a/c of Red Force are missing, 8 a/c (6 of Red Force, 2 of Blue Force) landed at friendly fields.

Routes were flown substantially as briefed.

Weather (Red Force): At rendezvous, scattered low clouds with tops at 7,000', light haze aloft. Over the ADRIATIC from Spur to Yugo coast, 6-8/10 cumulus, tops 12,000'. Low patchy clouds in DINARICS with clear conditions prevailing to 30 miles south of VIENNA. From this point to and including target, 10/10 undercast, tops 12-14,000'. On return, undercast to 12-14,000' persisted to near Lake BALATON, then became clear with few low clouds over DINARICS and 2-4/10 cumulus over ADRIATIC, tops 8,000'. Over base on return, 5/10 cumulus, bases 3,500' and tops 7,500'. Visibility generally above 10-15 miles except at take-off when it was 8-10 miles aloft.

(Blue Force): On take-off, 3-4/10 stratocumulus, tops 8,000'. Off Spur these clouds rapidly increased to solid 10/10, tops 2-

10,000'. Farther north this layer broke up and the Yugo coast was clear. Over DINARICS, 1-2/10 with tops 10-12,000'. North of DINARICS layers became scattered with 2-5/10 coverage, average tops 15,000'. 10/10 clouds blanketed target, tops 16,000', with air-to-air visibility approximately 18 miles. On return, from target to DINARICS, 8-10/10 scattered stratocumulus; tops 12,000'. Over DINARICS, and over ADRIATIC, cumulus increased. At base, 2-3/10 cumulus, tops 6,000'.

2. 460th Bomb Group (Red Force). On 17 Nov 44 at 0720A, 31 scheduled a/c dispatched to bomb the BLECHHAMMER South O/R.

Group assembly and rendezvous with 485th accomplished as scheduled. Fighter escort, P-51s and P-38s, first sighted at 1038A at 4550N-1502E, furnished penetration, target and withdrawal cover, and were last seen at 1431A at 4455N-1656E.

3 a/c returned early. 2 a/c jettisoned bombs in the ADRIATIC, 1 a/c jettisoned 2 tons at 4932N-1636E. On route out 1 a/c turned back at 1126A at 4814N-1520E, and landed at VIS.

27 a/c over a target at 1236A at 25,600'. Due to solid undercast bombing was accomplished by PFF. 27 a/c dropped 53.5 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs, .1N, .01 and .025T fusing (1/4 delay) and 5 propaganda bombs. 2 a/c had 2 bombs (RDX) hung up. 1 bomb was jettisoned 5 minutes after bombs away: the other was jettisoned in the ADRIATIC. Radar in the original lead plane was weak and it was necessary to turn the lead over to the deputy. PFF operator had no navigational difficulties except that in target area so many returns were picked up that they caused confusion in identification: solid undercast prevailed over most of the route and radar fixes given to the DR navigator were used extensively. The turn off the IP was made by PFF. At this point some confusion was caused by the lead group crossing over and taking up a bomb run considerably to the south of the

460th. One box of the lead group passed over the 460th, causing second attack unit to turn off the run momentarily. Due to a multitude of returns on radar scope, PFF operator is not positive of his identification of BLECHHAMMER, but it is reasonably sure he made run on proper target. PFF operator of second attack unit feels positive of his identification. Drift was killed on the run, all angles were given and set was working well.

1 unidentified SEF was seen at 1225A at 5016N-1723E. There was no encounter. No flak was encountered at target.

Route was flown as briefed to 10 miles south of the target. Route was flown to left of course through HUNGARY on return.

24 a/c returned to base with mean landing time of 1600A. 3 a/c are at friendly fields, 1 a/c is missing.

3. 464th Bomb Group (Blue Force). On 17 Nov 44, 29 of 30 scheduled a/c took off at 0700A to bomb the Florisdorf O/R in VIENNA. There were 4 early returns. These a/c jettisoned 8 tons of bombs.

Group form-up accomplished without incident. In line rendezvous with 465th, minor difficulty encountered when 465th cut inside course at rendezvous area. Rendezvous with other Wings as proscribed.

25 a/c over target at 1144A (briefed target time 1110A), and 25 a/c dropped 49.75 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs from 24,000'. 149 bombs were fused .1N and mixed .01 and .025T; 50 bombs were fused long delay. 4 a/c each dropped one leaflet bomb in addition to 8 - 500 lb RDX bombs, while the Group lead a/c dropped one leaflet bomb in addition to 7 - 500 lb RDX bombs.

Bombing was by PFF. Group leader employed automatic pilot during bomb run. Leader of second attack unit did not use automatic pilot as it was found to be not working properly. PFF equipment was described as functioning excellently. A smooth and exact bombing run was believed to have been attained. Group leader reports that coordination between PFF operator and bombardier was excellent.

M-IIH flak encountered at 1142A at target. Time in flak averaged 4-5 minutes.

30 P-38s rendezvoused with formation at 0945A at 4415N-1526E, continuing until 1300A at 4600N-1702E.

24 a/c landed at base between 1410-1450A without incident.

Enroute to target over the ADRIATIC difficulty was encountered with 47th Wing. Due to their flight path approaching that of this Group, deviations to left of course had to be flown. Other minor divinations in course were made to avoid weather areas.

4. 465th Bomb Group (Blue Force). On 17 Nov 44, 30 of 32 scheduled a/c took off to bomb the VIENNA Florisdorf O/R. There were 8 early returns.

Line rendezvous with 464th at 0749A at 8,000'; on course at 0804A at 11,000'. P-38s joined at 0942A at ZARA providing penetration, target and withdrawal cover, departing at 1215A near Lake BALATON.

Flak encountered at target was MIH, although IH was observed immediately behind formation. 1 unidentified a/c, possibly jet-propelled, was seen in North VUGOSLAVIA at 1225A. 1 ME-109 was seen on rally off target near BRATISLAVA at 1200A. 3 ME-109s were seen at BARC at 1058A.

22 a/c over target at 1145A at 25,500' and dropped 44 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs, of which 44 bombs carried long delay fuses, the

reminder being standard .1N and .01, .025T. In addition, 3 propaganda bombs were dropped on the target. Bombing was by PPF through solid undercast. Radar navigators of the 4 a/c in the formation are all agreed that the target was positively identified and the target bombed. DANUBE and scope photos of city were used in checking. Navigation was accomplished without difficulty and there was no confusion among crew members. Drift was killed and magnitudes of the last corrections were 2° for the lead a/c and 4° for the second attack unit. Following sighting angles were relayed to the bombardiers: Able 1 - 70, 65, 60, 50; Able 2 - 70, 65, 60, 50; Charlie 1 - 70, 65, 60, 50, 40; Charlie 2 - 70, 65, 60, 50.

3 a/c, unable to reach the target, dropped on targets of opportunity as follows:

Railroad at DRAVOGRAD (4635N-1502E), 8 - 500 lb RDX (2 long delay)

Railroad at VOITSBERG (4704N-1509E), 8 - 500 lb RDX, 1 Propaganda

Factory in Valley South of GRAZ (Exact location unknown), 8 - 500 lb RDX

Recapitulation:

Dropped on target	33.0 tons (.IN, .01 & .025T)
Dropped on target	11.0 tons (long Delay)
Dropped on T/O	<u>6.0 tons</u>
	50.0 tons
Dropped on target	1.5 tons (3 propaganda)
Dropped on T/O	<u>.5 ton(1 propaganda)</u>
	2.0 tons
Carried	52.0 tons

22 a/c landed at base at 1440A. 1 a/c landed at 1730 after landing at friendly field for gas. No a/c lost or missing.

Route flown as briefed except that group was 20 minutes late at target as result of unpredicted winds and the fact that a moment after bombs away the group was forced to swerve to avoid the 451st Bomb Group.

5. 485th Bomb Group (Red Force). On 17 Nov 44 at 0721A, 21 scheduled a/c took off to bomb BLECHHAMMER south O/R.

Assembly at 8,000'' was satisfactory and on time. 485th led Wing formation at rendezvous point at 08829A with 460th following. Rendezvous with fighter escort of 30 P-38s effected at 1042A at 4520N-1445E and left formation at approximately 1401A in vicinity of 4517N-1657E. 25 P-51s observed upon withdrawal from target area.

2 a/c returned early; 1 ton of bombs was jettisoned, 3 tons were returned to base.

19 a/c over target at 1237A, dropping 28.5 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs, fused .1N and mixed .01, .025T; 9.5 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs with delayed fusing; and 10 packages of nickels from 23,500'. PFF equipment in lead ship performed perfectly although C-1 was inoperative. A failure of PFF was reported in lead ship of "C" Box.

Lead ship tested C-1 several times enroute but found PDI processing about 10°. PFF equipment was used to give navigator 20 fixes; target was identified and seen clearly on the scope. 5 sighting angles were given to the bombardier. The drift over the target was killed and the last course correction was 2° right. The bombardier checked the 70, 65, 60 and 50 degree sighting angles with the bombsight and it is reported that the bombs fell into the north end of the target area.

No e/a were seen or encountered. Nil to MIH flak encountered in target area for a period of 2 minutes.

15 a/c landed without incident, mean landing time 1538A. 3 a/c landed at friendly fields, 1 a/c is missing.

Route was flown as briefed. IP could not be picked up in PFF scope and as result the turn on IP was made on ETA. This resulted in turning on a point north of briefed IP and necessitated a bomb run heading of 120°.