NOVEMBER, 1944

Following is the list of Wing missions, November 1944:

Serial Number (June)	Mission Number (Current)	Date	Target	Groups Participation			
1.	120	1 Nov 44	GRAZ, AUSTRIA, M/Y	460	464	465	485
2.	121	3 Nov 44	MUNICH, GERMANY, Moin M/Y (Individual PFF a/c)	460	464	465	485
3.	122	4 Nov 44	LINZ, AUSTRIA, Benzol Plant	460	464	465	485
4.	123	4 Nov 44	PODGORICA, YUGOSLAVIA, Army Headquarters				485
5.	124	5 Nov 44	VIENNA, AUSTRIA, Florisdorf	460	464	465	485
6.	125	5 Nov 44	PODGORICA, YUGOSLAVIA	460			485
			MITROVICA, YUGOSLAVIA		464	465	
7.	126	6 Nov 44	VIENNA, AUSTRIA, South O/D	460	464	465	485
8.	127	7 Nov 44	ADIGE/MEZZOCORONA, ITALY, RR Bridge	460			
			ISARCO/ALBES, ITALY, RR Br		464	465	
			ADIGE/ORA, ITALY, RR Bridge				485
9.	128	15 Nov 44	LINZ, AUSTRIA, Bonzol Plant (Individual PFF a/c)	460	464	465	485
10	129	16 Nov 44	MUNICH, GERMANY, West M/Y (Red Force)	460	464	465	485
			PRIJEPOLJE, YUGOSLAVIA, Troop Concentrations (Blue Force)	460	464	465	
11.	130	17 Nov 44	BLECHHAMMER, GERMANY O/R (Red Force)	460			485
			VIENNA, AUSTRIA, Florisdorf (Blue Force)		464	465	
12.	131	18 Nov 44	UDINE, ITALY, Campoformido A/D	460	464	465	485
13.	132	19 Nov 44	LINZ, AUSTRIA, Benzol Plant		464	465	
			HORSCHING, AUSTRIA, A/D	460			485
14.	133	20 Nov 44	BLECHHANER, GERMANY, South 0/R	460	464	465	485
15.	134	22 Nov 44	SALZBURG, AUSTRIA, M/Y	460	464	465	485

16.	135	25 Nov 44	MUNICHI, GERMANY, West M/Y (Individual PFF, Night)	464	465	485

The month of November may be characterized as a period in which, in operations, determination and ingenuity triumphed over consistently unfavorable weather. Despite protracted periods of weather which forced stand-downs, 16 Wing Missions were flown (aircraft took off for a 17th Mission but were recalled) This fact alone is a striking illustration of the determination to overcome weather handicaps, for it marks an increase of six missions over the ten flown in October. However, in the number of aircraft dispatched and bombing, and in the tonnage of bombs dropped the falling curve which has obtained since August 1944 continued: 1,538 aircraft were dispatched, of which 1,135 (73%) dropped 2,450 tons of bombs on assigned Primary or Alternate Targets or on Targets of Opportunity. The comparable figures for preceding months are 2,561 in October, 3,578 tons in September, and 5,135 tons in August 1944.

It must be pointed out that of the total of 16 Wing missions five were of a nature which required only limited scope, with the result that a small tonnage of bombs was dropped. Three of these five were Pathfinder missions, dispatched in weather conditions which precluded full strength attack; on these missions only three, five and three aircraft were scheduled respectively of each of the four Bombardment Groups of the Wing. One further mission of the five was a limited ground-support mission, dispatching only seven aircraft of each Bombardment Group The fifth of these limited effort missions was of an emergency nature (see below) in which only two aircraft from a single Bombardment Group were dispatched by a special Operations Order to attack a target of special nature.

Of the total of 16 Wing missions, 12 were directed against 14 targets in GERMANY and AUSTRIA, three against four targets in YUGOSLAVIA, and two against four targets in ITALY.

Enemy communications were the objective of six missions (eight targets -- five Marshalling Yards and three Bridges); oil objectives were attacked on five missions (six targets); troops concentrations or enemy headquarters were bombed on three missions (four targets); enemy airdromes were hit on two missions (two targets); and one mission was directed against an ordnance depot (one target).

On 1 November 1944 the 55th Bombardment Wing participated in the celebration of the first anniversary of the activation of the Fifteenth Air Force, appropriately bestowing "presents" to the enemy in the form of bombs dropped on the GRAZ, AUSTRIA, Marshalling Yard.

The Strategic Air Force had initiated the use of individually bombing Pathfinder aircraft for sone time; during the month of November the 55th Bombardment Wing had its first experience in the

effort. The general procedure was to dispatch Pathfinder aircraft in a "stream;" the total of a limited number of such aircraft from all Wings and Bombardment Groups of the Air Force thus representing a respectable total. These aircraft, operating in clouds which necessitated pilotage by instrument on practically the entire course of flight, did not assemble, but proceeded from a point of departure at a predetermined time. Navigating to the assigned target, each crew bombed individually. In the nature of the operation fighter escort could not be provided; it was therefore directed that targets be bombed only if they were completely cloud obscured.

The 55th Bombardment Wing participated in this type of mission on 3, 15 and 25 November, the targets on the respective dates being the MUNICH, GERMANY, West M/Y; the LINZ, AUSTRIA, Benzol Plant; and the MUNICH, GERMANY, West M/Y. The first two of these missions were flown in daylight, while the third was the first night mission flown by aircraft of this Wing. The technical and operation problems of this type of mission were successfully met, and this Wing put over the targets its fair proportion of aircraft scheduled.

The falling curve of opposition by enemy aircraft, in evidence since August 1944, took a slight change during the month of November. While not more than 45 enemy aircraft were seen on missions during the month, there were three encounters - oddly enough, these were aircraft with fixed landing gear.

Despite the almost consistently unfavorable weather, six of the 16 missions flown in November were notably successful. The most conspicuously successful, and a brilliant example of what can be accomplished by the use of Pathfinder technique and equipment, was the mission of 4 November against the LINZ, AUSTRIA, Benzol Plant. While, as was expected, the Benzol Plant itself was not hit, the target actually contemplated in view of this being a planned Pathfinder mission - the adjacent and surrounding Hormann Gooring Works -- was well hit and extensively damaged, as were also the nearby Chemical Works and Marshalling Yard.

Another highly successful Pathfinder mission was that of 20 November against the BLECHHAMMER, GERMANY, South Oil Refinery. Subsequent reconnaissance showed that severe damage was effected upon vital installations, with the result that the plant was rendered inoperative until repairs could be made.

The narrative of what is to be generalized as morale factors and activities is, for the month of November, a long one, since in addition to the organized functions developed through the Special Services Section there were two notable changes in the physical set-up of Officers Quarters, the Officers Club and the Enlisted Men's Club ("Club 55") -- and, inevitably, the festivities of an American Thanksgiving Day as celebrated in Italy.

When the Wing was initially set up in Spinazzola, several "villas" were requisitioned for Officers Quarters, one "apartment" was utilized for an Officers Mess and Club, and a "Grotto" was fitted up as a club for the enlisted men. Subsequently, and especially as the necessity for winterization became apparent, it was possible greatly to improve these features. A large villa of the family Spade was requisitioned for use as quarters for all Field Grade Officers and an an Officers Mess and Club. This building is located at 94 Largo San Sebastiano, about 310 yards distant from headquarters. It contains rooms in sufficient number, size and arrangement adequately to furnish all essential aspect of quarters, club and mess. The main dining room offers a beautiful view, the rooms used for club purposes are large enough for general social purposes, and the quarters are adequate and offer the great advantage that the majority of the officers of headquarters room in the same building, thus promoting fellowship. This fact alone accounts for a great improvement in the pleasure of the association of the officers outside their duty activities.

The club, mess and quarters had a "housewarming" on 18 November 1944, an event which is a highlight in the pleasant experiences of personnel in the combat theater. The Commanding General of Fifteenth Air Force, Major General Nathan F. Twining, the Commanding General of the XV Fighter Command (Provisional) Brigadier General Dean C. Strothers, the Commanding Generals of the 5th, 47th and 304th Bombardment Wings, Brigadier Generals Lawrence, Rush, and Upthegrove, and the Commanding Officer o: the 49th Bombardment Wing, Colonel (now Brigadier General) William L. Lee, were guests. A program of music, fun and satire was staged, and an excellent dinner was served.

The former Officers Mess and Club at 11 Corso Umberto was turned over to the 323rd Service Group, and the building which had been used by this organization as an Officers Mess and Club was, in turn, readapted as "Club 55" for the Enlisted Men of the 55th Bombardment Wing. The newly organized club, located at No. 3 Via Enrico Tote, not more than 100 yards distant from headquarters, is admirably adapted for its purposes. It was formally opened the evening of 30 November 1944.

Thanksgiving Day was celebrated by adding a normal day of duty dinners in both Enlisted Men's and Officers' Messes which were superb. The menus closely approximated the traditional Thanksgiving dinner at home, both in foods served and in excellence of preparation.