

55BW Mission Summary No. 114, 12 October 44 (Cont'd),

1. General Summary. On 12 October 1944, 143 B-24 a/c were scheduled, and 147 a/c took off between 0650-0742A to bomb an Ammunition Dump and Stores Depot near BOLOGNA, ITALY. There were 9 early returns.

Group assemblies were accomplished as ordered. There was no rendezvous, each Bombardment Group proceeding to its target at 5 minute intervals. Fighter a/c joined the Groups and gave cover to, at, and from the target.

138 a/e were over targets between 1120-1142. 114 a/c dropped 158 tons of 100 lb GP bombs, fused .1N and non-delay T, from 20,500-22,500'. 18 sortie a/c jettisoned 10.9 tons of bombs, due to rack malfunctions. 24 sortie a/c returned 33 tons, and 8 early returns brought back 8 tons to bases.

Flak at targets was S-MAH. SAH was encountered at 4212N-0945E, IMOLA, and 4438N-1152E.

No e/a were seen or encountered.

Results:

Stores Depot M-006433 received numerous strikes in the storage area. The main weight of the attack fell on the west portion of the area. Reconnaissance photographs show the area was well covered and four sheds were destroyed and three damaged.

Ammunition Dump L965505 was well covered with strikes. The dispersed nature of the target protected it from heavy damage. Reconnaissance photograph show several small buildings damaged along the west side of the dump.

138 a/c were down at bases between 1328-1354A. No a/c were lost nor missing, none landed at friendly fields.

Routes were flown as briefed.

Weather: At base 3/10 to 4/10 stratocumulus with tops at 6,000'. 2/10 to 3/10 stratocumulus over the APPENINES with tops at 8,000'. North of ROME to LA SPEZIA, 8/10 to 10/10 stratocumulus tops varying from 10,000' to 12,000'. From LA SPEZIA to target, 2/10 to 3/10 small cumulus, tops 6,000'. At target, 1/10 to 2/10 cumulus tops 6,000' with visibility 10 miles in haze. On the return, 3/10 cumulus over land and ADRIATIC with tops 6,000' to 9,000'. Cumulus at base on return. Visibility was 10-15 miles from ROME to the target and 20-25 miles otherwise.

2. 460th Bomb Group. On 12 October 1944, at 0725A, 34 of 35 scheduled a/c were dispatched to bomb the BOLOGNA AMMUNITION DUMP NO. 20, ITALY.

The Group assembled without incident and was on course at 0845A.

The fighter escort, P-38s, furnished target cover. At 21,500', 34 a/c were over the primary target at 1142A. 33 a/c dropped 55.35 tons of 100 lb GP bombs. 13 a/c had 253 bombs hung up which were later disposed of as follows: 95 bombs jettisoned in the ADRIATIC, 80 bombs brought back, 46 bombs jettisoned immediately before target. The Group leader used the automatic pilot on the bomb run.

Results: A long pattern of bombs covers AMMUNITION DUMP L965505. The dispersed nature of the target protected it from heavy damage. Several small buildings along the west side were damaged.

The Group experienced MAH flak over the target and on the rally to the ITALIAN coast. Flak was reported at the southern tip of LAKE COMMACHIO and the northern portion of the RAVENNA defenses.

The route was flown as briefed.

34 a/c returned to base with a mean landing time of 1350A.

3. 464th Bomb Group. On 12 October 1944, beginning at 0704A 36 scheduled B-24 a/c and 5 designated spare B-24 a/c, took off to bomb the STORES DEPOT near BOLOGNA, ITALY.

The Group form up and rendezvous were executed as prescribed.

4 scheduled B-24 a/c returned early.

37 a/c were over the target at 1127A (briefed target time 1130A) and 32 a/c dropped 31.45 tons of 100 lb GP bombs from 20,500'. Of the 32 a/c dropping on the target, 5 a/c returned ½ ton of bombs which failed to release on the target due to rack malfunctions.

Recapitulation of bomb tonnage:

32 a/c dropped on target	31.45 tons
10 a/e over the target returned	5.50 tons
2 a/c jettisoned	1.05 tons
3 a/c (early returns) returned	<u>3.00 tons</u>
Total	41.00 tons

Bombing was visual. The leaders of the first and second attack unit used the C-1 automatic pilot, The leader of the third attack unit used PDI because of proximity to the preceding units.

Results: Strikes cover the western portion of STORES DEPOT M-006433. Direct hits are visible on three sheds and near misses are visible on two others.

Flak at the target of from 2-3 minutes duration was reported as S to MAH. SAH flak was reported at IMOLA, 4422N-1142E, and at ARGENT, 4437N-1150E, SIM flak was observed.

9 P-38 a/c were first observed at 1129A at 4430N-1230E. 4 P-51 a/c were observed in the target area.

The route was flown as briefed.

37 a/c landed at this base between 1318A and 1344A.

4. 465th Bomb Group. 36 a/c scheduled took off at 0650A on 12 October 1944 to attack BOLOGNA STORES DEPOT at M-006433.

The Group assembled at 9,500' at 0815A. Wing rendezvous was accomplished at 9,500' at 0830A. An escort of P-38s joined the formation at 1050A, at the west coast of ITALY.

There were 5 early returns.

Flak at the target was S to MAH. No flak was encountered enroute but scant, heavy flak was observed in the RAVENNA area. No e/a were seen or encountered.

31 a/c went over the target at 1120A at 21,500'. 25 a/c dropped 24.9 tons of 100 lb GP bombs fused .1N and non-delay T. 2 a/c brought one bomb each back to base after they had hung up due to rack malfunction. One a/c jettisoned 20 bombs, 5 miles southeast of MEDIN at 1112A after its #4 engine ran away. 5 a/c returned all their bombs to base.

Bombing was visual with the formation going over the target in 3 attack units of 2 boxes each and each attack unit leader using PDI on the bomb run.

Results: Strikes cover the southwestern portion of STORES DEPOT M-006433. Direct hits are visible on one shed and near misses are visible on another.

31 a/c landed at 1328A.

The route was flown as briefed.

5. 485th Bomb Group. On 12 October 1944 at 0742A, 36 B-24 a/c scheduled took off to bomb an Ammunition Dump at BOLOGNA, ITALY.

Assembly was at 0830A at 10,600' with the formation being satisfactory.

No Wing rendezvous was effected. Each Group left departure point at 5 minute intervals, the 485th over departure point at 0840A at 10,600'.

P-38 a/e joined the formation at 1153A at 4420N-1222E. They left the formation at 1253A. et 4408N-1225E.

There were no early returns.

24 a/c dropped 926 bombs (46.3 tons) on target from 22,500'. 2 of these a/c returned 30 bombs to base due to rack malfunctions. One other of these a/c jettisoned x bombs at 1157A in the ADRIATIC.

12 other a/c returned 480 bombs (24 tons) to base, 10 of which failed to release because the leader of the 1st unit did not drop. 2 a/c did not release because of rack malfunction.

Results: No military damage is visible.

SAH flak was encountered at 1107A for approximately 1/2 minute at 4212N-0945E. Over the target, SAH to MAH flak was encountered for approximately 5 minutes. On return, SAH flak was encountered at 4438N-1152E for approximately 1 minute.

No e/a were seen or encountered.

35 a/c landed without incident. The 36th a/c, #730, having its hydraulic system damaged by flak had the right landing gear to collapse on landing. The pilot made an excellent landing, keeping the ship under control and skidding it to a stop off the runway without injury to any of the crew members. Mean landing time was 1354A.

Route was flown as briefed.