

55BW Mission Summary No. 110, 4 October 44 (Cont'd).

1. General Summary. On 4 October 1944, 193 B-24 a/c were scheduled in two forces, and between 0741-0750A 100 a/c including 6 spares not scheduled took off to bomb MUNICH Main M/Y (Force A) and between 0840-0855A 92 a/c (Force B) took off to bomb AVISIO Viaduct, ADIGE/MEZZOCORONA and ADIGE/ORA RR Bridges. There were 11 early returns, 5 of Force A and 5 of Force B.

Groups assemblies, line rendezvous, and Wing rendezvous were effected as ordered. No fighter escort was provided for Force B. Escort, consisting of P-38 and P-51 a/c joined Force A at 1046A at (4400N-1340E) and at the IP, gave excellent penetration, target, and withdrawal cover, departing Force A formation at 1320A at (4420N-1320E).

181 a/c were over targets (94 over MUNICH M/Y, 77 over N. ITALY targets) between 1200-1201A (Force A) and 1310-1312A (Force B). 174 a/c dropped 431.25 tons of 1000 and 500 lb GP and RDX bombs on assigned targets as follows: 91 a/c of Force A dropped 224.25 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs, fused .1N, .01T, from 22,800-23,500' on MUNICH Main M/Y, 83 a/c of Force B dropped 100.5 tons of 1000 lb RDX bombs, fused .1N, .01T, on AVISIO Viaduct, 50 tons of 1000 lb RDX bombs, fused, .1N, non-delay T on ADIGE/MEZZOCORONA RR Bridge; and 52 tons of 1000 lb RDX bombs, .1N, and non-delay T, on ADITE/ORA RR Bridge. 1 a/c dropped 2.5 tons of 1000 lb RDX bombs fused, .1N, non-delay T, on a target of opportunity. 6 early returns Jettisoned 10 tons, 4 sorties dropped 15.25 tons of bombs. 5 early returns brought 12.5 tons back to bases. 6 sorties returned 8.5 tons of bombs.

Results: MUNICH Main M/Y. Strikes are visible in the center of the yard, the area of the west choke point, and the residential and industrial areas on either side of the yard. Smoke from previous bombing prevents complete assessment but it is probable that at least the majority of through tracks were cut in the area of the west choke point. Moderate amount of damage is believed to have been inflicted on the central portion of the yard.

ADIGE/MEZZOCORONA RR. Probably no damage was done to the bridge.

AVISIO Viaduct. Three direct hits, possibly more, were scored and it is probable that at least one of these did succeed in cutting the viaduct.

ADIGE/ORA Bridges. One direct hit is probable on the bridge and several hits are visible on the approaches. The approaches are probably cut but appreciable structural damage to the bridge is not likely.

Flak at MUNICH was IAH. Flak at AVISIO Viaduct was MAH. Flak at ADIGE/ORA RR Bridge was SAH. There was no flak at ADIGE/MEZZOCORONA, and none encountered en route.

5 e/a were seen by one Group of Force Able, none seen by other Groups. No e/a were encountered.

174 a/c were down at bases between 1505-1515A (Force Able) and 1558-1600A (Force Baker). 1 a/c was lost and 2 a/e are missing of Force Able, 2 a/c of Force Able and 2 a/c of Force Baker landed at friendly fields.

Routes were flown as briefed.

Weather: (Force Able) Weather at take off consisted of a few scattered stratocumulus and swelling cumulus over the horizon. Scattered patches of alto stratus and 2/10 to 3/10 stratocumulus from base to the coast. Over the ADRIATIC, 1/10 to 2/10 stratocumulus with patches of middle and high clouds. From the north coast of ITALY to the alps, 8/10 to 10/10 stratocumulus with top at 12,000 feet, with 5/10 cumulus over the Alps, tops at 15,000 feet. At the target, 1/10 to 2/10 low cumulus with visibility 25 miles. On return similar conditions existed. Generally clear over the ADRIATIC and with 3/10 cumulus and alto stratus at the bases on return. Visibility was 20 miles or greater over entire route.

Weather. (Force Baker) Over ITALY on take off, 1-2/10ths altostratus at 15,000', clearing over ADRIATIC. 2-4/10ths altocumulus along eastern ADRIATIC at 12-14,000', increasing over north ITALY to 7-8/10ths, tops 10-12,000'. In the target area, 1-3/10ths cumulus and 3-5/10ths cirrus. On return, conditions were similar with 2-3/10ths cumulus and 4-6/10ths cirrus over the ADRIATIC. Visibility, 15-20 miles.

2. 460th Bomb Group. On 4 October 1944 at 0840A, 46 of 48 scheduled a/c were dispatched to bomb the AVISIO Viaduct in ITALY.

Group assembly was accomplished without incident and rendezvous with the 485th was accomplished as briefed. The 460th, in lead position, was on course at 1005A. 3 a/c returned early because of runaway props; jettisoned in ADRIATIC. one a/c was unable to keep up with the Group on route to the target. This a/c, with #2 engine failure, dropped 2.5 tons of bombs on the CASARSA RR Bridge.

From 18,500', 43 a/c over target at 1312A. 41 a/c dropped 102.5 tons of 1000 lb RDX bombs, .1N, .01T fusing. Both attack waves used the automatic pilot on bomb run. Due to malfunctions, 2 a/c failed to bomb the target. One a/c jettisoned bombs at 4605M-1135E, and the other jettisoned 50 miles West of PADUA.

Results: Three direct hits, possibly more, were scored and it is probable that at least one of these did succeed in cutting the viaduct.

The Group encountered MAH flak over PT for 3-4 minutes. Flak was very accurate for altitude. Smoke pots were located north and west of the target. The smoke generators were poorly located, fired late and consequently were ineffective.

Route flown as briefed.

41 a/c returned to base, mean landing time 1600A. 2 a/c landed at friendly fields.

3. 464th Bomb Group. On 4 October 1944 at 0729A, 46 of 48 scheduled a/c plus 6 of 7 designated spares took off to bomb the MUNICH Main M/Y. The 52 a/c formed into "A" Group and "B" Group.

Group form-up and line rendezvous of Able Force were executed in a satisfactory manner. Line rendezvous was 2-3 minutes late. 4 a/c returned early.

48 a/c over target at 1201A (briefed target time was 1210A) and 46 a/c dropped 111.75 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs, .1N, .01T fusing, from 23,500'. "B" Group, over target at 1201A, dropped from 23,000'; "A" Group, over target at 1202A, dropped from 23,500'.

Recapitulation of Bomb Tonnage:

46 a/c dropped on target	111.75 tons
2 a/c returned	3.00 tons
4 a/c jettisoned	5.25 tons
4 a/c early returns	10.00 tons
3 a/c no take off	<u>7.50 tons</u>
Total	137.50 tons

Recapitulation of tonnage dropped by Groups: 24 a/c in "A" Group dropped 56.75 tons; 22 a/c of 24 a/c in "B" Group dropped 55 tons.

Group leaders of "A" Group and "B" Group bombed using C-1 automatic pilot. Second attack unit leaders of each group used PDI, being unable to set up the C-1 automatic pilot, in each case, because of excessive prop wash. Bombing was visual.

Results: Several strikes are visible in the central portion of the marshalling yard. Additional strikes fell in the residential and industrial areas on either side of the yard. Smoke from previous bombing prevents a complete assessment of damage.

IAH flak lasting for 5 minutes was encountered at the target.

Escort consisting of 50 P-38s first observed at 1046A at 4400N-1340E. 30 P-51s made rendezvous with formation at IP at 1155A. Escort described as very good and stayed with formation until 4420N-1320E at 1320A.

2 a/c are missing. B-24 a/c #42-52485 received flak hits in the nose section and in No. 2 engine while over target. The nose wheel doors were hanging. This a/e was last seen over the target losing altitude fast. No chutes were observed. B-24 a/c #42-78340 received 2 or 3 flak hits over target. No. 1 and No. 4 engines were feathered at 21,000 and the a/c was last seen as it slid from the formation over the target. No chutes were observed.

Route flown as briefed.

45 a/c landed between 1450A and 1520A. One a/c after landing at BARI to permit removal of injured crew members, landed at this base at 1750A.

4. 465th Bomb Group. On 4 October 1944 at 0731A, 43 of 49 a/c scheduled took off in two groups with two attack units each to attack the Main M/Y at MUNICH, GERMANY.

Group assembly and Wing rendezvous were accomplished as ordered. Escort of P-38s joined formation at 1115A at the ITALIAN coast and furnished penetration, target and withdrawal cover as far as the ADRIATIC on return. There were 2 early returns.

No enemy a/c were encountered and 4 or 5 unidentified single engine fighters were seen in target area. Flak at target was IAH. No flak encountered enroute.

23 a/c at 22,400' and 23 a/c at 23,200' went over the target at 1200A and 45 a/c dropped 112.5 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs, fused .1N, .01T. 1 a/c failed to drop because bomb bay doors stuck and it jettisoned bombs in ADRIATIC south of TRIESTE at 1305A. A-5 automatic pilot was used by lead a/c of each group on bomb run and bombing was visual.

No. 1 Group dropped	55.0 tons
No. 2 Group dropped	57.5 tons
Jettisoned	2.5 tons
Jettisoned by e/r	2.5 tons
Brought back by e/r	<u>2.5 tons</u>
Total carried	120.0 tons

Results: Several strikes are visible on the west choke point of the marshalling yard. It is probable that at least the majority of through tracks were cut in that area. Additional strikes are visible

in the industrial area north of the yard. The majority of the bomb strikes are obscured by smoke from previous bombing.

44 a/c landed at 1515A. One a/c is lost and 1 a/c is at a friendly field.

Route flown as briefed.

5. 485th Bomb Group. On 4 October 44 at 0855A, 46 of 48 scheduled a/c took off to bomb the ADIGE/MEZZOCOROMA and ADIGE/ORR RR Bridges.

The 46 a/c formed into two attack units of four boxes each. Group assembly and Wing rendezvous were as ordered.

No fighter rendezvous was scheduled.

2 a/c returned early.

21 a/c of the first unit were over the ADIGE/MEZZOCOROMA RR Bridge at 1312A. 20 a/c dropped 50 tons of 1,000 lb RDX bombs, .1N, non-delay T fusing, at 16,200'. One a/c returned 5 bombs to base. Bombing was visual. The autopilot was not used because it was out of commission.

23 a/c of the second unit were over the ADIGE/ORR RR Bridge at 1310A. 22 a/c dropped 52 tons of 1,000 lb RDX bombs, .1N, non-delay T fusing, at 16,480'. 3 of these a/c returned, 6 bombs to base because of bomb release malfunctions. One other a/c jettisoned 5 bombs at 1515A at 4210N-1600E after failing to release over target. The A-5 pilot was used and bombing was visual.

Results: The ADIGE/MEZZOCOROMA Bridge is not believed to have been damaged. The DIGE/ORR Bridge received one probable direct hit and several hits on both approaches. The approaches are probably cut but appreciable structural damage to the bridge is not likely.

At the ADIGE/ORR RR Bridge, SAH flak was encountered for approximately 1 minute. 4 a/c received minor flak damage. No flak was encountered over the ADIGE/MEZZOCOROMA RR Bridge, and no flak was encountered enroute to or on return from either of the targets. No e/a were encountered.

Return made without incident. 44 a/c landed, mean landing time 1558A.

Route flown as briefed.