

55BW Mission Summary No. 102, 13 Sept 44 (Cont'd).

1. General Summary. On 13 Sept 44, 114 B-24 a/c plus 7 spare a/c took off between 0615-0635B to bomb the OSWIECIM Synthetic Oil and Rubber Plant, OSWIECIM, POLAND. There were 11 early returns.

101 a/c were over the PT from 1117-1122B. 96 a/c dropped 235.75 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs (.1N and .025T fusing) from 22,800-24,000'. 7 a/c, including 2 early returns jettisoned full loads. 5 a/c jettisoned part loads.

Results:

460 Gp - Photos show the OSWIECIM O/R with the main concentration of bombs in the south-central portion of the plant. Several direct hits and near misses are visible on the storage warehouses and installations in that area.

464 Gp - Photos show the OSWIECIM O/R with the main concentration of bombs in the central portion of the plant. Several direct hits were scored on the possible styrene plant. Near misses are visible on the gas plant, the injector house, hydrogenation stalls, and the butylene glycol stalls.

465 Gp - Photos show strikes in a close pattern approximately twenty five hundred feet south of the target.

485 Gp - Photos show the main concentration of bombs to have fallen in a probable barracks and industrial area three miles west of the target. Three or four strikes fell in the adjacent marshalling yard with direct hits on goods wagons.

Damage to the OSWIECIM plant is not believed to be extensive. Of the two primary objectives only one was probably damaged and that only by one near miss. The possible styrene plant is probably heavily damaged. Additional miscellaneous buildings have probably been damaged by hits and blast. Damage inflicted to the plant will delay repairs to the vital parts by sapping man power and materials.

IAH flak was encountered at the PT. Other flak: MAH at MOR (4723N-1812E), SIH at GYOR, MAH at HICAKE (4745N-1833E), SIH at KOMARON, MAH at 4732N-1822E, and SIH at NE end of Lake BALATON.

12 e/a were observed; there were no encounters.

Weather: Route out, 2-3/10 stratocumulus over ITALY and ADRIATIC increasing to 9-10/10 over YUGOSLAV Mts, and decreasing to 3-5/10 over the target. Return, same as route out except over ITALY which had increased to 6-7/10 cumulus. Visibility 15-20 miles.

Route flown as briefed to target. After rally, formation deviated to West of briefed course.

87 a/c landed at home bases between 1429-1505B. 3 a/c are lost, 6 are missing, and 5 landed at friendly fields.

2. 460th Bomb Group. On 13 Sept 44, at 0615B, 30 of 31 a/c scheduled dispatched to bomb the OSWIECIM Oil and Rubber Plant.

Group assembly and rendezvous with 485th were accomplished as scheduled but the 464th and 465th were in this Group's assembly area. The Wing formed over SPINAZZOLA at 0741B, six minutes late. Fighter escort, P-38s and P-51s, first sighted at 0935B at VIRO-VITKA, furnished penetration, target and withdrawal cover. They were last seen at 1340B on the YUGOSLAV coast.

5 a/c returned early.

At 23,000' 25 a/c dropped 62.5 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs on the PT at 1122B.

IAH flak encountered for 7-8 minutes over the target.

9 e/a were seen on the mission. At 1000B 1 ME-109 at 4700N-1730E. 6 ME-109s (black) seen immediately after target and 1 FW-190 (brown-grey) at Lake BALATON at 1015B. ME-109 at Lake BALATON was OD color, yellow tail with a white square on vertical stabilizer. An ME-163 was seen North of BUDAPEST at 1040B.

20 e/c returned to base with mean landing time of 1445B. 2 a/c landed at friendly fields.

3. 464th Bomb Group. On 13 Sept 44 at 0620B, 28 scheduled a/c and 3 spares took off to bomb the OSWIECIM Synthetic Oil and Rubber Plant, OSWIECIM, POLAND.

Group assembly, rendezvous with the 465th and Wing rendezvous were as planned and without incident. The 460th was reported as using a portion of the area assigned to this Group for assembly, but no interference with either Group's assembly resulted.

4 a/c returned early.

27 a/c over the target at 1120B (briefed target time 11013) and 24 a/c dropped 58.75 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs from 23,200'. 5 a/c jettisoned 10.25 tons of bombs.

Recapitulation:

Dropped on target	58.75
Jettisoned	10.25
Returned to base	<u>8.50</u>
Total tonnage	77.50

IAH flak was encountered at target for approximately 5 minutes.

3 ME-109s were observed, 1 at 1023B (4810N-1810E) being engaged by P-38s and 2 at 1143B (4937N-1941E).

30 P-38s first observed rt 0931B (4545N-1720E) and remained in vicinity of formation until 1304B (4507-1734E). Markings indicate that a/e of the 1st, 14th, and 81st Fighter Groups were observed. 25-30 P-51s first observed et 0945B (4620N-1730E) and last seen at 1346B (4309N-1648E), these a/c belonging to the 325th Fighter Group.

26 a/c returned to base between 1429-1458B.

4. 465th Bomb Group. On 13 Sept 44 28 a/c scheduled with 2 spares took off et 0634B in two attack units to attack OSWIECIM Synthetic Oil and Rubber Plant.

Group assembly over ANDRIA at 0725B at 8,000'; Wing rendezvous over SPINAZZOLA at 0736B at 8,000'. Escort of P-38s and P-51s joined at 0940B at 4647N-1731E, provided penetration, target and withdrawal cover, departing at coast of YUGOSLAVIA at 1330B. Escort excellent, particularly when bomber formation disintegrated somewhat after bomb run.

There was one early return.

Flak at target was IAH. No e/a seen or encountered.

27 a/c over target at 1117B at 22,800' and 27 a/c dropped 64.5 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs.

Recapitulation:

Dropped on target	64.5
Jettisoned by sortie a/c	3
Jettisoned by E/R	2.5
Brought back by E/R	5
Total tonnage	75

21 a/c landed at home base at 1505B (mean landing time). 2 a/c which landed at VIS landed at home base at 1900B.

5. 485th Bomb Group. On 13 Sept 44 at 0635B, 28 scheduled e/c and 2 spares took off to bomb OSWIECIM Synthetic Oil and Rubber Plant.

Group assembly over ALTAMURA; joined by 460th between ALTAMURA and GRAVINA at 8,000' at 0724B. Wing rendezvous over SPINAZZOLA at 0739B rt 8,000', with 465th leading, followed in order by 464th, 485th and 460th Groups.

Fighter escort, approximately 30 P-38s, joined et 0930B at approximately 4550N-1720E. At 1025B, 30 P-51s joined at 4757N-1803E. Departed at 1253B at 4652N-1452E.

6 of scheduled a/c returned to base prior to bombing.

22 a/c over target at 1121B (target time 1101B). 20 a/c dropped 50 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs from 24,000'. 1 a/c jettisoned 8 bombs at 5004N-1922E. 2 bombs were returned to base. 1 other a/c jettisoned 10 bombs at 4940N-1935E.

No e/a seen or encountered. IAH flak encountered over target for approximately 3 minutes. Enroute, SIH flak encountered for 1 minute at 4950N-1815E. On return, SIH flak for 1 minute encountered at 4730N-1835E.

Return made without incident. 20 a/c landed, mean landing time 1446B.