

55BW Mission Summary No. 105, 20 Sept 44 (Cont'd).

1. General Summary. On 20 Sept 44, 119 B-24 a/c were scheduled and between 0725-0745A 125 a/c (119 scheduled plus 6 spares) took off to bomb the M/Ys at HATVAN, HUNGARY. There were 4 early returns.

Group assemblies, line rendezvous, and Wing rendezvous were effected with some delay. Fighter escort, consisting of P-38s and P-51s, was first seen at 1130A at EGER, and remained with formation until 1341A near the YUGOSLAV coast.

121 a/c were over target between 1147-1151A. 117 a/c dropped 291.5 tons (61 a/c dropped 152 tons of 500 lb RDX, fused .1N,.01T and 56 a/c dropped 139.5 tons of M-17 IB) of bombs from 12,200-13,500'. 3 sortie a/c jettisoned 7.5 tons. 4 early returns brought 10 tons back to bases; 5 sortie a/c returned 4.75 tons to bases.

Results:

460 Gp - HATVAN MAIN M/Y: Majority of bombs fell in track area of the yards. The area east of the station and the vicinity of the north choke point received the highest concentration of strikes. Several additional bombs fell in the industrial area east of the yard. The incendiaries covered the general area of the marshalling yard.

464 Gp - HATVAN SOUTH M/Y: Several bombs fell in the southern part of the main yard. Additional strikes are presumed to be in the area of the south yard, but smoke prevents complete assessment. Incendiary bombs are seen to cover the entire area of the south marshalling yard. Photographs from later Groups show all tracks leading to the east sidings of the north marshalling yard to be cut in several places.

465 Gp - HATVAN SOUTH M/Y: A very close concentration of bombs fell in the south half of the yard. The entire pattern is approximately 1,200' wide and 1,000' long. Photographs from later Groups show all through tracks to be cut. The incendiary bombs are concentrated in the southwest portion of the yard and the adjacent residential area. Much rolling stock either destroyed or damaged.

485 Gp - HATVAN MAIN M/Y: The vast majority of the bombs fell in the track area of the yard. Smoke from previous bombing prevents accurate assessment. The incendiary bombs covered the general area of the marshalling yard.

Damage to rolling stock and trackage to both yards was severe. The south yard was well loaded at the time of the attack. Approximately one hundred units were destroyed, another one hundred damaged, and an additional twenty still burning at the time of the reconnaissance. All through tracks were cut in several places. In the main yard all through tracks were cut in several places. Damage to

goods wagons present was heavy. The repair sheds and other installations were damaged.

There was no flak at target. One Group encountered SIL between DUNFELDVAR - PAKS.

No e/a were seen nor encountered.

121 a/c were down et bases between 1452-1510A; none lost, none missing, none at friendly fields.

Route was flown as briefed.

Weather: Enroute 4-6/10 cumulus, bases 11-13,000', over ITALY; scattered stratocumulus and 2-4/10 cirrus over YUGOSLAVIA. At target, 2-4/10 cirrus. Return, 2-4/10 cumulus over YUGOSLAVIA, increasing to 6-8/10 over ADRIATIC and ITALY. Visibility 15-20 miles.

2. 460th Bomb Group. On 20 Sept 44, at 0735A, 31 scheduled a/c dispatched to bomb the HATVAN M/Y in Hungary.

Group formed in assigned quadrant but did not make the 360 degree turn over the cone of silence. The Group joined the Wing formation over the Italian coast. Fighter escorts, P-38s and P-51s, first sighted on bomb run. They furnished withdrawal cover to 4610N-1750E, leaving formation at 1151A.

From 12,500', 31 a/c over target at 1151A. 16 e/c (first attack unit plus 3 a/c) dropped 40 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs, and 14 a/c of the second attack unit dropped 34.75 tons of M-17 incendiary clusters. Due to malfunction in the toggle switch, 1 a/c failed to bomb and jettisoned 10 bombs (500 RDX) 3,000' south of the target. 1 a/c had 1 bomb (incendiary) hung up. This a/c returned bomb to base but upon landing the bomb fell through the bomb-bay doors onto the runway. The first attack unit used the auto pilot on bomb run but the second attack unit used PDI.

There was no flak at target. In the DUNAFELDVAR (4648N-1655E) - PAKS (4638N-1854E) area, SIL flak was encountered. 15 barrage balloons were reported at PAKS.

Route flown as briefed.

31 a/c returned to base with mean landing time of 1510A.

3. 464th Bomb Group. On 20 Sept 44, at 0725A, 28 scheduled a/c and 3 spares took off to bomb the HATVAN, HUNGARY, M/Y.

Group assembly and Wing rendezvous accomplished as ordered without incident.

2 a/c returned early.

29 a/c over target at 1148A (briefed target time 1200A) and 27 a/c dropped 66.75 tons of bombs. 15 a/c dropped 37 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs, and 12 a/c dropped 29.75 tons of M-17 incendiaries. Bombing was visual from 13,000' and target visibility was excellent.

5 a/c returned 10.25 tons of M-17 incendiaries to base. 2 a/c returned early with 2.5 tons each, and 2 a/c which-were over the target returned 2.5 tons due to rack malfunction, preventing the Dog Box leader from dropping and leader of the second element in Dog Box did not drop because leader did not. 1 a/c returned .25 ton due to rack malfunction. 2 a/c jettisoned total of .50 ton of 500 lb RDX due to rack malfunction. 1 bomb at 4240N-1740E and 1 at 4130N-1610E.

Recapitulation:

Dropped on target	(RDX)	37.00 tons
Dropped on target	(M-17)	29.75 tons
Returned to base	(RDX)	00.00 tons
Returned to base	(1-17)	10.25 tons
Jettisoned	(RDX)	00.50 tons
Jettisoned	(1-17)	00.00 tons
Total		77.50 tons

C-1 Automatic Pilot was used by the leader of the first attack unit. The second attack unit leader used PDI on the bomb run, as C-1 Automatic Pilot was erratic.

Fighter escort first observed at 1141A at 4748N-1945E and remained in vicinity of formation until reaching the YUGOSLAV coast on return at 1341A. A few P-38s sighted first and gradually increased in number until a total of 30-40 were in the area. Markings reported indicate a/c were from the 1st and 14th Fighter Groups. P-51s totaling 8 were from the 52nd Fighter Group.

29 a/c landed at base on return between 1439-1505A.

Route flown as briefed.

4. 465th Bomb Group. On 20 Sept 44, at 0740A, 32 a/c scheduled took off to bomb the HATVAN M/Y.

Group assembled in usual area at 0830A at 6000', and Wing rendezvous accomplished at 0836A at 6000'. Escort of P-38s joined at 1130A at EGER and furnished penetration, target and withdrawal support, staying with formation to ADRIATIC coast at 1330A.

There were 2 early returns, both returning bombs to base.

No flak encountered and no enemy aircraft were seen.

30 a/c over target at 1147A at 12,200', and 15 a/c dropped 37.5 tons of 500 lb incendiaries and 15 a/c dropped 37.5 tons of 500 lb RDX and GP bombs, totaling 75 tons dropped on target. Bombing was

done visually with first attack unit using A-5 and second attack unit using PDI, as bombardier was not familiar with A-5.

Recapitulation:

GP and RDX bombs on target	37.5 toas
Incendiaries on target	37.5 tons
Returned to base	5.0 tons
Total	80.0 tons

30 a/c landed at 1502A, mean landing time.

Route flown as briefed.

5. 485th Bomb Group. On 20 Sept 44, at 0745A, 28 scheduled a/c and 3 spares took off to bomb the HATVAN NORTH M/Y in HUNGARY.

Group and Wing assemblies as briefed.

Fighter escort, 30-35 P-38s, joined formation at 1150A at 4750N-1940E. Later, several P-51s joined formation and both furnished excellent cover enroute and on return, leaving at 1300A at 4430N-1640E.

All spare a/c remained with formation over target. There were no early returns.

31 a/c over target at 1151A (target time 1200/). Deviation in time caused by unpredicted tail winds encountered enroute. 15 a/c dropped 37.5 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs from 13,500', and 15 a/c dropped 37.5 tons of 500 lb Cluster Aimable M-17 Incendiary bombs from 13,500'. 1 a/c returned 10 incendiary bombs to base because of bomb rack malfunction.

C-1 auto pilot used by lead unit on bomb run. Second unit also used auto pilot.

No e/a seen or encountered. There was no flak at target. On return, SH flak was observed at 4648N-1855E.

Return made without incident. 30 a/c landed, mean landing time 1505A. The 31st a/c circled the field until other a/c had landed This a/c had a shortages of hydraulic fluid. Landing was accomplished without mishap.

Route flown as briefed. Axis of attack was 190° True.