55BW Mission Summary No. 160, 5 Feb 45 (Cont'd).

1. General Summary. On 5 Feb 45, 152 B-24 a/c (157 a/c scheduled) of the 55th Bombardment Wing took off from 0753-0836A to bomb the REGENSBURG WINTER HARBOR Oil Storage. There were 15 early returns. Group assemblies and Wing rendezvous were accomplished as ordered.

Escort consisting of 40 P-51s was observed at 1145A at 4537-1231 and departed at 1430A at 4454-1342. P-38s were observed in target area only.

A total of 137 a/c were over REGENSBURG WINTER HARBOR Oil Storage at 1257-1302A. From 23,000-25,000', 136 B-24 a/c dropped 263.375 tons of 250 lb GP .1 .01 bombs. 1 a/c of the 464th Bombardment Group which returned prior to bombing dropped two tons on a M/Y at 4718-1249 at 1225A from 21,000' with unobserved results.

Flak at the primary target ranged from S/MIH. No flak was encountered at the target of opportunity. SIH flak was encountered at STRAUBING which was the IP for the Wing.

No enemy aircraft were encountered. One ME-110 was observed in the target area.

Weather: On take off, 6-8/10 cirrus and 1/10 thin stratus. 4/10 stratocumulus over ITALIAN coast, tops 4000', increasing gradually over ADRIATIC to 6-8/10 off ANCONA and 9-10/10 over extreme North ADRIATIC and Northern ITALY, tops 6-8000' 8-10/10 cirrus over ADRIATIC to the ALPS bases above 25,000', decreasing to 3-5/10 over the ALPS and 1-3/10 over Northern ALPS, with low clouds. Over target, 10/10 stratocumulus, tops 12-14,000'. On return, weather was the same with 10/10 stratocumulus over Northern ADRIATIC and ITALY, decreasing to 2-4/10 over Southern ADRIATIC, tops 6-7,000'. Visibility, generally 20 miles.

134 a/c landed at home bases from 1559-1620A. 5 a/c landed at friendly fields. One a/c is listed as missing.

2. 460th Bomb Group. On 5 Feb 45, at 0753A, 36 scheduled a/c were dispatched to bomb the REGENSBURG WINTER HARBOR O/S, GERMANY.

Group assembly and rendezvous with the 485th were as scheduled, as was rendezvous with the Wing at 0920.

There were 3 non-effective sorties (early returns).

At 24,400', 33 a/c were over the primary target at 1257A. 33 a/c dropped 58.5 tons of 250 lb GP clustered fusing .1N .01T. Due to release and rack malfunctions, 17 a/c had 7.5 tons of bombs hung up. Bombs were jettisoned.

No flak was experienced over the target.

The route was flown as briefed.

33 a/c returned to base with a mean landing tine of 1620A.

3. 464th Bomb Group. On 5 Feb 45, 42 scheduled a/c took off to bomb the REGENSBURG, GERMANY, WINTER HARBOR O/S. Group form-up and assembly were accomplished as prescribed. Line rendezvous was effected with the other groups of the Wing at the proper time and altitude. This rendezvous, however, was effected with some difficulty. The course was flown as briefed, with minor deviations due to weather.

There were 3 non-effective sorties. One a/c jettisoned bombs, 2 a/c returned bombs to base. One a/c was a prior return, turning back at 1220A at 4732-1234. The entire bomb load of this a/c was released on a M/Y at 4718-1249 at 1225A from 21,000' on an attack axis of 180°, with unobserved results.

36 a/c released 71.375 tons of 250 lb clustered GP bombs, fused .1N and .01T on the primary target at 1258A from 24,900', upon an attack axis of 283°T. Bombing recapitulation is as follows:

36 a/c dropped on primary target	71.375 tons
1 a/c dropped on a T/0	2.000 "
5 a/c jettisoned	4.625 "
1 E/R a/c jettisoned	2.000 "
2 E/R a/c brought back	4.000 "
Total	84.000 tons

Flak at the primary target was observed, but not encountered. Consensus of reports shows that Intense Heavy flak was encountered over the target by bomber formations following this Group. These observations were made following the second rally from the target, at about 4 minutes after bombs were released.

34 a/c landed at this base from 1545A to 1612A. 3 a/c landed at friendly fields. 1 a/c is missing.

4. 465th Bomb Group. 37 a/c of 41 scheduled took off at 0825A on 5 Feb 45 to attack the WINTER HARBOR 0/S, REGENSBURG, GERMANY. Group and Jing rendezvous were effected as ordered, this group departing

rendezvous point at 0939A at 10,000', flying number four in the Wing formation. There were 3 ineffective sorties, 2 were E/Rs because of supercharger trouble.

A few inaccurate flak bursts were encountered at the IP, STRAUBLING. Flak was not encountered at the target until after bombs away when it continued for approximately 3 minutes. Flak was Scant to Moderate, Inaccurate Heavy.

35 a/c were over the target from 1301 to 1307A at 25,000'. 34 a/c dropped 68 tons of 250 lb GP bombs fused .1N and .01T.

Recapitulation of bomb disposition:

Tons dropped on Primary	68
Tons jettisoned	2
Tons brought back	4
Tons carried (total)	74

No a/c were damaged by flak.

32 a/c landed at 1600A. 3 a/c landed at friendly fields.

Route was flown as briefed.

5. 485th Bomb Group. On 5 Feb 45 at 0820A, 37 B-24 a/c of 38 a/c scheduled took off to bomb the REGENSBURG O/S. The last a/c to take off, failing to find the formation joined the 464th Group and bombed with that formation. 36 a/c after assembling over the base at 9,000' proceeded to line rendezvous point, where the 460th Group joined at 0918A.

There were 4 non-effective sorties. 3 a/c jettisoned bombs, 1 a/c returned bombs to base. 3 effective sortie a/c returned 4 bombs to base, due to rack malfunctions.

Recapitulation of bombs:

3 a/c, E/Rs jettisoned	6 tons
1 a/c, E/R, returned to base	2 tons
32 a/c, sortie, dropped on PT	63 ½ tons
1 a/c, sortie, dropped on PT with 464th Gp	2 tons
3 a/c. sortie, returned to base	½ ton
37 a/c	74 tons

Flak at the target was MIH, and of the predicted type. The formation was in flak for approximately 3 minutes.

33 a/c returned to base at 1618A (mean landing time). The route was flown as briefed.

BOMBING AND NAVIGATION ANALYSIS

1. Bombing Analysis:

a. 485th Bomb Group: This Group employing three attack units of two boxes each led the Wing formation. The target was identified by the PFF operators in plenty of time to insure long bomb runs. The first attack unit started a well coordinated run with all angles agreeing. A few seconds prior to the bomb release line the target was sighted visually. In his haste to move the cross hairs on to the target the bombardier rolled his indices together with the trigger locked and the bombs were released early. The second attack unit had a fair run. The leaders of the third unit had a smooth run and may have hit the target.

b. 460th Bomb Group: This Group, also employing three attack units, flew second in the Wing formation. Overcast conditions made the use of PFF synchronous bombing necessary. The leaders of the first attack unit, had a smooth coordinated bombing run. Seven sighting angles were given to the bombardier by the PFN. No results were observed until after the rally when a break in the cloud disclosed black smoke in the target area. The second attack unit dropped on the lead unit. The third attack unit also used the PFF method. The PFN gave the bombardier seven sighting angles. Thero was a difference of .02 in the tangent of dropping angle used by the first and third attack unit bombardiers. Thore wore no malfunctions reported by this Group.

c. 464th Bomb Group: Flying third in the Wing formation, this Group was also composed of three attack units. All units used standard pathfinder procedure. First and second attack units reported smooth bombing runs. Tho third attack unit reported satisfactory pathfinder operation. A sharp rally was necessary, however, at the approximate point of release due to a collision course with another group. There were six malfunctions in this group, which caused twenty-three bombs to be salvoed in the target area. Three malfunctions were caused by inoperative B-10 shackles, two were due to creeping bomb bay doors, and one is unexplained. No results were observed by this group.

d. 465th Bomb Group: Using three attack units this Group flew last in the Wing formation. After the PFN in the lead attack unit had given the lead bombardier five range corrections, the target became visible. The bombardier made one range and one course correction and thon the bombs were released. The second attack unit was unable to see the target and used the PFF method all the way. The H2X in the third attack unit was out and their bombs were dropped on the second attack unit. The Group reported four malfunctions. Two were due to clustering and one was due to an electrical failure. One malfunction was not explained.

2. Navigation Analysis:

Rendezvous was as briefed. The 485th led the 460th, 464th and 465th Bomb Groups at 0918h at 9000'.

The climb to bombing altitude was started immediately after rendezvous. The Wing formation went over the Keypoint at the coast 4538-1259 at 1133A, seven minutes late at 23,000'. The rest of the route was flown as briefed with the exception of the approach to the IP, which was right of course. This deviation, however, did not affect the accuracy of the bombing; in fact, it made a longer bomb run. The bomb run was started by PFF by the 485th Bomb Group, but during the last few seconds of the run, the target was seen by the bombardier through a break in the clouds. The entire run made by the 460th and 464th Groups was by PFF. The 465th Group started the bomb run by PFF also, but the bombardier identified the target through a hole in the undercast just before the bombs were away.

No route difficulties wero caused by flak. Dead reckoning and PFF were used extensively and pilotage points could be seen at frequent intervals by the Wing leader, the 485th Bomb Group. The Gee box in the lead ship of the Wing leader was inoperative.

Bomb run data:

Group	Axis	Tgt Time	Altitude
485th	282	1302	23,000
460th	290	1257½	24,400
464th	273	1258	24,900
465th	295	1307	24,500

485th Group: Log satisfactory, navigation satisfactory.
460th Group: Log incomplete, navigation satisfactory.
464th Group: Log excellent, navigation satisfactory.
465th Group: Log excellent, navigation excellent.

3. Pathfinder Navigation Analysis:

a. 485th Bomb Group: Pathfinder was used extensively as a navigational aid because of a cloud coverage over the majority of the route. All navigators were supplied with fixes approximately every fifteen minutes. PFF was used in avoiding known flak positions and in brining the Wing directly over the Key point. The turn over the IP was made by the Mickey Operator and a PFF synchronous bomb run was started; all sighting angles agreed perfectly. The bombardier was able to take over the last twenty seconds, but due to an accidental release bombs fell short. Coordination in the lead crew was excellent. No equipment malfunctions were reported.

b. 460th Bomb Group: The lead Pathfinder Operator furnished the navigator with approximately 20 fixes to assist in the navigation. These fixes were used to avoid known flak positions and in following briefed route. The turn over the IP was made by following the Wing leader; the Mickey Operator picked up a target return which resembled the target. Three course corrections were made and five sighting angles were given to the bombardier. Synchronization appeared

to be good. Bombs may have Fallon slightly short of target area, however, black smoke was reported from the target area as the formation rallied. The second attack unit leader's pathfinder equipment was not working well enough to make a successful run so bombs were dropped on the first attack unit. The third attack unit made an independent run on the target. A good FFF synchronous run is reported with bombs dropping about 45 seconds after the first attack unit.

c. 465th Bomb Group: Lead PFF Operator was able to assist the navigator by providing` numerous fixes and guiding the formation around known flak areas. The PFF equipment was working very well and many of the turnpoints were identified on the scope. The Mickey Operator was able to identify the primary target at fifty miles. Due to cloud coverage, it was necessary for the Mickey Operator to turn the formation over the IP and start the bomb run. Two course corrections of two degrees each were made and five dropping angles were relayed to the bombardier. About 15 seconds before bombs away the bombardier was able to see the target and made a small rate displacement. Bombs are known to have hit in the target area. Leader of second attack unit did not properly identify the target and since IP and the target gave about the same return, it is possible that the second attack unit dropped bombs on the IP. Four sighting angles were given to the bombardier when an inverter blow out so bombs were dropped on the previous angles Third attack unit dropped on second attack unit.

d. 464th Bomb Group: Pathfinder equipment was used as an aid to navigation due to cloud coverage over most of the route. The Lead Mickey Operator gave numerous fixes to the navigator. REGENSBURG was first identified on the scope at a distance of 60 miles. The DR navigator guided the formation to the IP and then the Mickey Operator took over. On the bomb run five sighting angles were given and two course corrections made. Coordination between Mickey Operator and bombardier was excellent. It is believed by the lead operator that bombs fell in the target area, however, it is the belief of the other operators that the bombs foll short of the target. No equipment malfunctions were reported.

FIGHTER ESCORT

52nd Fighter Group

Mission: To provide escort on penetration, over the target, and on withdrawal for 4 Groups of B-24s of the 55th Bomb Wing attacking REGENSBURG O/S at 1250A. The mission was accomplished essentially as briefed.

Narrative: 54 P-51s were airborne at 1010A and set course at 1018A. From base, the course was direct to rendezvous. 36 P-51s effected a rendezvous with four Groups of B-24s of the 55th Bomb Wing at 4630-1240 at 1150 at 24,000', south of the briefed rendezvous.

Apparently the bombers were 15 to 20 minutes late and P-51s, who were on time, overtook them early. 13 P-51s affected rendezvous with the bombers at 1215 at 4730-1230 at 24,000'. These a/c became separated from the rest of the group formation when it was climbing through overcast, enroute to the rendezvous. Three P-51s that became separated from the formation climbing trough weather never affected rendezvous with the main bomber formation, but were dispatched to look after a bomber that was calling for escort home. This bomber was picked up at 4750-1230 at 1235 and left over ANCONA at 1250. Two P-51s were dispatched to escort a bomber of 49th Bomb Wing that was in mechanical difficulty at 1230 and left the formation at 4755-1230. This B-24 was escorted to 4400-1420 when it was left at 1300. Four additional P-51s left the formation between rendezvous and the target, two for mechanical reasons and two as escort. Forty-three aircraft were over the target from 1300 to 1315 from 26 to 28,000'. One group of bombers made their bomb run from east to west as briefed but the other three groups made their bomb run from north to south, making effective target cover difficult. The main part of the formation left the bombers at 1350 at 4645-1220 at 24/26,000'. 53 P-5ls were down at base at 1525.