

55BW Mission Summary No. 79, 12 Aug 44 (Cont'd).

1. General Summary. On 12 Aug 44, between 0613-0636B, 111 B-24 a/c of 111 a/c scheduled took off to bomb gun positions in the area of SETE, FRANCE. There were 3 early returns.

Group assemblies were effected as ordered, but line and Wing rendezvous were unsatisfactory; formation was not unified until some distance en route has been covered. Fighter escort of P-51 a/c was seen at approximately 1100B at 4305N 0412E, gave target cover, and remained with bombers until 1200B at 4250N0621E.

108 a/c were over targets (attacking 8 targets by individual boxes, 2 Groups over same targets in two waves) between 1103-1116B.

107 a/c dropped 247 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs, .1N, .025T fusing, from 14,800-17,400'. 5 sorties jettisoned full bomb loads, 3 sorties jettisoned part loads (4 bombs total). 2 early returns jettisoned full load. 3 sorties returned full load, 1 sortie returned part load to base.

Results:

460 Gp - Photographs show: Gun positions in FRANCE. Able box on position R-671013 scored 3 strikes within 150' of the aiming point. Main concentration of bombs within 500' radius. Baker box on position R-772101, strikes between positions extending slightly over. Charlie Box on position R-836145 strikes slightly West and South of positions. Dog Box on position R-911096, all bombs fell in water South of target. All boxes had a very good concentration of bombs in the target area.

464 Gp - Photographs show: Guns positions in FRANCE. Able box on position R-671013 scored strikes West and Northwest of the target. Baker box on position R-772101 scored strikes in between the 2 gun positions with no strikes hitting either position. Charlie box on position R-836145 failed to take photos. All boxes had a very good concentration of bombs in the target area.

465 Gp - Photographs show: Gun positions in FRANCE. Able box on position S-150263 results undetermined due to insufficient photo coverage. Baker box on position S-105227 scored hits on Charlie box on position R-959096, strikes round the aiming point but no direct hits visible. Dog box on position R-943108 did not take photos. Good concentration shown by the boxes that secured photos.

485 Gp - Photographs show: Gun positions in FRANCE. Able box on position S-150263 scored the vast majority of strikes within 1000'. Baker box on position S-105227 scored 2 direct hits on the gun position and blanketed the surrounding area. Charlie box on position R-959096 scored several strikes directly on the aiming point with the vast majority within 1000'. Dog box on position R-943108, strikes one mile West of the target.

Of the 8 positions assigned, direct hits were scored on R-959096, S-105227, and R-671013. All Groups had the majority of their bombs within 1000' of the assigned positions.

Flak at targets was SIH encountered by 3 Groups; 1 Group reported no flak encountered.

2 e/a were seen, 1 by each of 2 Groups; none was encountered.

104 a/c were down at bases between 1500-1515B. 1 a/c was lost (crash landed at base), none is missing, 2 landed at friendly fields.

Route was flown as briefed by 2 Groups; 2 Groups varied briefed route.

Weather: 10/10 stratus 1,000-3000' from bases to APPENINES, thence to target generally clear but hazy over water; target clear, visibility 20 miles; return, clear to coast of ITALY. 5/10 cumulus over mountains to bases.

2. 460th Bomb Group. On 12 Aug 44, at 0630B, 25 scheduled a/c were dispatched to bomb Gun Positions on the FRENCH coast in the SETE-NARBONNE area.

Due to weather conditions, the Group formed its attack units over the SPINAZZOLA Air Base at 0735B. There was no rendezvous with the 485, the 460 proceeding to SPINAZZOLA and joining the Wing at 0742B. A few P-51s were seen in the target area. 2 a/c returned early.

From 16,000-16,500', the 4 boxes, totalling 23 a/c; were over the targets, Able, Baker, Charlie and Dog (Primary targets) at 1116, 1115, 1114, 1112½ B respectively. The tonnage in 500 lb RDX bombs, .1N & .025T fuses, was distributed as follows:

6 a/c, (A) Gun Position; R-671013 -	14.75 tons
5 a/c, (B) Gun Position, R-772101 -	12.25 tons
6 a/c, (C) Gun Position, R-836145 -	14.50 tons
6 a/c, (D) Gun Position, R-911096 -	15.00 tons
Total:	56.50 tons

Due to rack malfunctions, 3 a/c had 4 bombs hung up. These were jettisoned in the sea.

SIH flak was experienced by the Group over the target area.

The route was flown as briefed. 21 a/c returned to base with a mean landing time of 1515B. 1 a/c, due to loss of power, crash-landed near the base on the return. Another a/c, low on fuel, landed at NAPLES and has returned to this base.

3. 464th Bomb Group. On 12 Aug 44, 30 scheduled B-24 a/c took off at 0625B to bomb Gun Positions in the SETE area of South FRANCE. The Group form-up, line rendezvous and the Wing rendezvous were executed as prescribed. The 30 a/c formed into 4 boxes and bombed their respective targets as follows: 7 a/c of Able box were over Gun Position R-671013 at 1110B, dropping 152 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs from 16000'. 1 a/c attacking this target released only 1/2 ton of bombs on the target, the remainder of the bombs failing to release because of a rack malfunction. were returned to base. 7 a/c of Baker box were over the Gun Position R-772101 at 1114B, dropping 17½ tons of 500 lb RDX bombs from 16000'. 8 a/c of Dog box were over Gun Position R-836145 at 1111B, dropping 7½ tons 500 lb RDX bombs from 14,800' 3 of the a/c assigned to bomb this target did not release their bombs due to inability to pick up the target, and these 3 a/c returned 7½ tons of bombs to base. 1 a/c failed to pick up target on the bomb run and because the racks could not then be locked due to a malfunction, 22 tons of bombs were jettisoned at 4135N0955E. 1 a/c due to a rack malfunction, was unable to release or salvo on the target and jettisoned 22 tons of bombs at 4230N0642E in order to lighten the load and maintain formation position. 8 a/c of Easy Box were over Gun Position R-911096 at 1108B dropping 17½ tons 500 lb RDX bombs from 15,700'. 1 a/c jettisoned 22 tons of bombs at 4307N0334E in order to keep in formation after having lost No. 3 engine.

The A-5 pilot was used by the leader of Able, Baker and Dog boxes. Easy box leader did not use the A-5 but chose to use PDI.

No flak was encountered by A,B, and D boxes. E box encountered SIH.

1 ME-109 was observed at 1104B at 4305N0325E. E/A was at 15,000', came in toward formation from 12 o'clock level to within 800 yd, then peeled off to the right. E/A did not attack. The e/a is described as having a black spinner. No other observations or encounters were reported.

15 P-51 a/c were observed at 1051B at 4305N0335E and were seen at intervals until 1153B at 4255N0527E.

30 a/c landed at base from 1449B to 1520B without incident.

The route was flown different from the route as briefed. From CORSICA the formation flew to 4233N0348E, thence to the IP and then to the target.

4. 465th Bomb Group. 28 a/c of 28 scheduled took off at 0613B on 12 Aug 44 in 2 attack units to attack gun emplacements at SETE, FRANCE.

The group assembled between ANDRIA and CANOSA at 0715B at 10,000' and fell in behind the 464 Gp over ANDRIA at 0725B at 10000'. Wing rendezvous was accomplished over SPINAZZOLA at 0741B at 10000'.

An escort of P-51s furnished target cover at approximately 1105B. There were no early returns.

Each box reported that flak at its particular target was SIH and no more than 25 bursts were noted at any target. No flak was encountered enroute. No enemy a/c were encountered and 1 crew reported seeing 1 JU-88 at 1045B at the IP.

7 a/c. from A box attacked gun position S-150263 at 1107B from 17000' and dropped 17½ tons of bombs. 7 a/c from B box attacked gun position S-105227 at 1106B from 17,300' and dropped 17½ tons of bombs. 7 a/c from C box attacked, gun position R959096 at 1105B from 16600' and dropped 15 tons of bombs. 1 a/c from C box was unable to drop its bombs due to its bomb bay doors jamming. It jettisoned its 10 bombs at 1121B at 4250N0520E. 7 a/c from D box attacked gun positions R-943108 at 1103B from 16850' and dropped 17½ tons. A total of 67½ tons of bombs were dropped and all bombs were 500 lb RDX. Lead a/c of each box used A-5 pilot in attacking their respective targets; however the A-5 in B box leader did not function properly on the bomb run when small corrections were necessary.

26 a/c landed at 1505B and 2 a/c landed at 1630B after making an emergency landing in CORSICA for the purpose of refueling.

The route was flown as briefed except that our group, in following the lead group from CORSICA to the IP, found itself from 10 to 20 miles S of course when it reached the IP.

5. 485th Bomb Group. On 12 Aug 44, at 0636B, 28 a/c scheduled took off to bomb SETE Gun Installations.

Group assembly was late due to muddy condition of taxi strips, causing late take-offs. After forming at 10000' at 0733B the formation was satisfactory.

Rendezvous with 460 Gp over ALTAMURA was effected at 0736B at 10,000'. Formation was on course over SPINAZZOLA at 0743B.

Rendezvous with fighter escort, which consisted of 15 P-51s was effected at 4303N0412E at 1100B. Escort left formation at 4250N0621E at 1200B. 1 a/c returned early.

27 a/c were over the target at 1112B (briefed 1110B). 26 a/c dropped a total of 65 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs between 17-17,400'. After reaching the IP the Gp broke off in 4 boxes. 7 a/c of A box dropped 17.5 tons on S-150263 gun position at 1112B. The box used PDI on bomb run. 6 a/c of B box dropped 15 tons on S-105227 gun position at 1111B. This box used PDI on bomb run. 7 a/c of C box dropped 17.5 tons of bombs on R-959096 gun position. This box used A-5 on bomb run. 6 a/c of D box dropped 15 tons on R-943108 gun position, using PDI. Leader of D box said he forced to left of target by C box. 1 a/c of D box did not release bombs because bomb bay doors were stuck. Bombs

were jettisoned at 1145B at 4340N0403E to lighten load. A/C using PDI did not use A-5 because of malfunctions.

No e/a were seen or encountered. No flak was encountered.

Return was made without incident. 27 a/c landed, mean landing time 1500B. Route was flown as bricfed.

DISTRIBUTION:

- 1 cy ea CG, AC of S, A-3, Fifteenth AF
- 2 cys AC of S; A-2, Fifteenth AF
- 1 cy 28th SCU, Fifteenth AF
- 1 cy PRO, Fifteenth AF
- 1 cy ea CG, AC of S, A-2, 5th, 47th, 49th, 304th Bomb Wings
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- 1 cy ea PI; PRO, Stato, 55th Bomb Wing
- 1 cy ea CO, ea Gp, 55th Bomb Wing
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