

55BW Mission Summary No. 77, 9 Aug 44 (Cont'd).

1. General Summary On 9 August 1944, between 0720-0754B, 85 B-24 a/c of 87 a/c scheduled took off to bomb BUDAPEST/TOKOL A/D installations. There were 8 early returns.

Group assemblies were effected as ordered. Line and Wing rendezvous were generally loose, with one Group late and one Group off course at Wing rendezvous.

Fighter escort was sighted at 1013B at (4445N-1920E), and remained with formation until 1245B near the YUGOSLAV coast. Protection was excellent.

77 a/c were over target between: 1111-1112. 75 a/c dropped 187 tons of 500 lb GP bombs, .1N, .01T fusing, from 20,350 22,600'.

Results:

464 Gp - Photographs show: BUDAPEST/TOKOL A/D. Several direct hits on the southeast assembly shop and numerous strikes in the landing area. One twin engine aircraft, possibly damaged previously, was destroyed and another damaged.

465 Gp - Photographs show: BUDAPEST/TOKOL A/D. Excellent pattern of bombing has scored numerous direct hits on the new North assembly shop. Three twin engine fighter-reconnaissance type aircraft have been destroyed and one damaged.

485 Gp - Photographs show: BUDAPEST/TOKOL A/D. Target smoke obscured from previous bombing. Bomb pattern indicates probable strikes within the target area.

The results achieved by the attack include the probable destruction of the new assembly hangar, considerable damage to the Southeast assembly hangar, post holing the landing area, destruction of four twin engine aircraft, possibly ME-410 or similar type, and two damaged.

M-IAH flak was encountered at target, SIH at (4604N-1812E) by one Group.

3-15 e/a were seen in target area. There were no encounters. Claims: 4-0-3 (on ground).

75 a/c landed at bases between 1359-1403B. One a/c was lost to flak at target. One a/c landed at friendly fields.

Route was flown as briefed.

Weather: Clear at bases, 2/10 cirrus over ADRIATIC (25,000'), 7/10 stratocumulus over DINARIC ALPS, tops 8,000', decreasing to 2/10

over flat land, visibility 20-25 miles. Target: clear. Return: 2-3/10 cumulus over low lands, 5/10 cumulus over DINARIC ALPS to 18,000', clear over ADRIATIC, 3/10 cumulus at bases.

2. 464th Bomb Group. On 9 August 1944, beginning at 0720B, 28 B-24 a/c scheduled took off to bomb BUDAPEST/TOKOL A/D Installations, HUNGARY. 5 spare a/c scheduled took off and proceeded with the formation to 4240N1753E when they left the formation returning to base and landing at 1015B. There were no early returns.

The group form up and assembly was as planned. The 2 group and wing rendezvous were strung out, the 485 Gp being late and the 465 Gp being to right of course at SPINAZZOLA.

28 /c were over the target at 1113B (briefed 1100B). 27 a/c dropped 67½ tons of 500 lb GP bombs from 21,700'. 1 a/c jettisoned 2½ tons of bombs from 21,000' at 4715N1925E at 1107B.

Bomb tonnage recapitulation of 28 a/c over target.

Dropped on target	67½ tons
Jettisoned	2½ tons
Returned to base	0
Total tonnage	70 tons

Target visibility was good, permitting visual bombing. The leader of the 1st attack unit employed A-5 equipment and the leader of the 2nd attack unit bombed by PDI as his A-5 was found sluggish.

The formation encountered IAH flak at the target for a period of 4 to 5 minutes. Observations indicate the flak was mostly predicted concentration.

15 e/a were observed between 1117B and 1229B, of which 10 were ME-109s and 5 FW-190s. None of the e/a attacked the formation.

The crews reported excellent fighter escort. 35 to 40 P-38s and 20 P-51s were observed at (44°45'N-19°20'E). The escort was first seen at 1013B and continued with the formation over the target and withdrawal to the Yugoslavian coast at 1244B.

26 a/c returned to base at 1402B.

3. 465th Bomb Group. 28 a/c were scheduled and took off at 0735 on 9 August 1944 in two attack units to attack the TOKOL A/D installations at BUDAPEST, HUNGARY.

The group assembled over ANDRIA, at 0815B at 7,000' and wing rendezvous was accomplished at 0837B at 7,000' over SPINAZZOLA. Escort of P-38s joined formation at 1020B at the DANUBE RIVER and furnished target cover and withdrawal support, leaving the formation at 1245B at the coast of YUGOSLAVIA.

There were 4 early returns.

Flak at the target was MAH and no flak was encountered enroute.

24 /c went over the target at 1111B at 20850'. 23 a/c dropped 57 tons of 500 lb. bombs. Bombing visual with A-5; radar used as navigation aid.

24 a/c landed at 1403B.

4. 485th Bomb Group. On 9 August 1944, at 0754B, 29 B-24s of 31 a/c scheduled took off to bomb BUDAPEST/TOKOL A/D Installations.

Group assembly over ALTAMURA at 0815B at 7,700' was satisfactory. Formation at assembly was good. Rendezvous with Wing over SPINAZZOLA was effected at 0839B at 9,000'. Rendezvous was satisfactory.

Rendezvous with fighter escort, which consisted of 20 P-38s, was effected at 4440N-1920E at 1016B, and escort departed at 4455N-1710E at 1230B. Fighter cover was close to formation and very good.

Four a/c returned prior to bombing.

25 a/c were over the target at 1115B (target time 1100B). 25 a/c dropped 62.5 tons of 500 lb. GP bombs at 22,600'. Lead wave used A-5 in bombing. The second wave bombed manually due to A-5 malfunction.

3 ME-109s were seen between target area and 4705N-1825E at 1115B to 1120B between 23,000' and 20,000'. None of the a/c attacked formation. Flak at the PT was MAH; the formation was exposed to flak for three minutes. SIH flak at 4604N-1812E.

Return was made without incident. 25 a/c landed, mean landing time 1359B. None of our a/c were lost.

Route was flown as briefed.

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.
- 1 cy CG, 306th Fighter Wing.
- 1 cy ea CO, AC of S, A-1, A-2, A-3, 55th Bomb Wing.
- 1 cy PI, PRO, Stat, 55th Bomb Wing.
- 1 cy ea CO, ea Gp, 55th Bomb Wing.
- 3 cys S-2, ea Gp, 55th Bomb Wing.
- 1 cy CG, III Bomber Command.