

1. General Summary. On 8 July 1944, from 0630-0638B, 103 a/c of the 55th Bombardment Wing took off to bomb the FLORISDORF Oil Refinery and M/Y. Group rendezvous was accomplished from 0715-0722B. Wing rendezvous was made at 0737B. There were 15 early returns.

38 a/c were over the target from 1037-40B from 21600-22800'. A total of 218.5 tons of 500 lb GP bombs were dropped.

Results were as follows:

460th Group - Heavy concentration of hits across SW end of MY extending from a point 1000' NE of yards and carrying across 1500' SW of yards. Approximately 50 strikes on SW end of yards cutting all lines and destroying rolling stock.

464th Group - Numerous bomb hits on NE choke point of M/Y. 20-25 strikes on 14 columns of freight cars in M/Y proper, 17 hits on the SCHUKERTERKE factory and numerous hits among buildings of the railway workshop area. Many hits in the AUTOMOBILE Works, the AGRICULTURAL MACHINE Works and 6 hits among 3 columns of freight cars in the M/Y.

465th Group - 40 to 50 hits were concentrated in the repair shop area with practically all installations receiving direct hits. 5 hits in oil storage tank area including one direct hit on oil storage tank starting fires. Other hits in adjacent M/Y.

485th Group - Target smoke obscured by previous attack groups. 18 strikes in factory area damaging 2 building installations. Numerous other strikes in vicinity of cable works and in the M/Y.

Flak at target was IAH. Considerable number of e/a were seen and encountered. From 50-70 ME-109 and FW-190 attacked the formation. Claims: 17-6-3.

6 bombers were lost, 3 missing, and 3 at friendly fields.

Route was flown as briefed.

Weather: Clear over ITALY with some scattered cumulus over ADIATIC. 1-2/10 cumulus from ADRIATIC to target. Visibility 20-30 miles at target. Weather on return 1-2/10 scattered cumulus.

76 a/c landed at bases from 1329-1340B.

2. 460th Bomb Group. On 8 July 1944, at 0635B, 25 a/c took off to bomb the FLORISDORF Oil Refinery and M/Y.

The Group formed its 2 attack units at 0715B as scheduled and Wing rendezvous was accomplished at 0739B without incident. Fighter escort, P-38 and P-51, contacted the formation in the vicinity of ZAGRED at 0930B, furnished penetration, target and withdrawal cover. They left the formation at 1230B over the YUGOSLAV coast.

3 a/c returned early.

At 22500', 22 a/c dropped 54.25 tons of 500 lb GP bombs, .1N, .01, .025T fuse on the M/Y at FLORISDORF.

The Group met IAH flak from the IP to the target, and were in the flak area for from 7 to 8 minutes. Other flak was experienced as follows: SIH at MARIBOR, MIH at KAPFENBERG 4725N1518E, MIH railroad flak from 4735N1530E, MIH at GRAZ and MIH at 4808N1659E.

45 e/a, ME-109 and FW-190, were observed between VIENNA and BRATISLAVA. 6 ME-109 were encountered immediately after the target. 2 ME-109 made non-aggressive passes from 6 o'clock low, diving away from the formation. 4 ME-109s attacked this formation individually. 1 e/a attacked from 6 o'clock high passing under, 1 attacked from 7 o'clock high passing under, and 2 made passes from 8 o'clock low, 1 of these e/a passing under and the other breaking off the attack at 400 yd. 2 ME-109 are claimed destroyed and 2 probably destroyed

The route was flown as briefed.

20 a/c returned to base with a mean landing time of 1340B. 2 a/c failed to return.

3. 464th Bomb Group. On 8 July 1944 at 0639B, 27 E-24 a/c took off to bomb the FLORISDOF Oil Refinery and M/Y at VIENNA, AUSTRIA.

Group assembly was made without incident and Wing rendezvous was accomplished over SPINAZZOLA at 0737B on course.

There were 3 early returns.

24 a/c were over the target at 1038B (briefed target time 1030B) and dropped 59 3/4 tons of 500 lb GP bombs. (.1 .01 .025). One a/c jettisoned ¼ ton on rally at 1039B after normal release had failed.

MAH flak was encountered at the IP (TULLM) and developed into IAH on approaching target. The intensity of the flak made it

impossible to be certain whether it was barrage or aimed variety.
Bursts were black and white,

The formation was in flak at the target for a total of 10 minutes. Other points where flak was encountered are: GRAZ (4705N1525E) SAH, A/D(4813N1630E) IAH.

Approximately 50 e/a were seen in the target area, the large majority of which were ME-109 and FW-190, 20-25 of each type being observed. 5 JU-88 were seen at 1043B at 20500' after leaving the target area. 30-40 encounters were reported. Attacks were made first in line abreast, 3 to 6 e/a attacking from 6 o'clock level, breaking through the box attacked then returning to attack singly from 6 o'clock at all levels. The attacks were very aggressive, closed to 100 yd. Other attacks were made from out of the sun high at 12 o'clock and scattered attacks from all levels and all around the clock. ME-109 were black with white stripes under wings and white tail markings, also solid slate gray. No markings on the FW-190 reported.

Smoke screen was employed at the target but was light and very ineffective.

2 of our a/c were lost to e/a shortly after leaving the target. 1 a/c is missing.

Escort of a total of 85 fighters observed. 50 P-51 and 35 P-38 a/c. First rendezvous with formation at 0945B, vicinity of 4420N1630E and escorted to, over and return from target leaving formation at 1230B over the ADRIATIC.

18 a/c returned to base between 1320B and 1340B and 3 landed at FF.

4. 465th Bomb Group. 22 a/c took off at 0630B on 8 July 1944, to attack the FLORISDOF Oil Refinery and W/Y at VIENNA, AUSTRIA. 8 early returns.

Group assembly took place as scheduled over ANDRIA at 0717B at 9000'. Wings rendezvous was accomplished over SPINAZZOLA at 0737B at 9000'.

Flak at the target was IAH and none was encountered enroute. 40-50 ME-109 and FW-190 and 4 ME-410 were observed in the target area between 1037 and 1050B. There were from: 20-25 encounters with ME-109 or FW-190. The following tactics and markings were reported:

1 a/c was attacked by 3 ME-109 in trail stacke-up at 0830 o'clock and 3 ME-109 in trail stacke-up at 6 o'clock at 1038B in the target area. All 6 made aggressive attacks closing to 50 yd and breaking under. They were dirty gray in color with green stripes around the fuselage.

3 ME-109 at 6 o'clock and 1 ME-109 at 11 o'clock attacked 1 a/c at 1039B closing to 1000 yd and were chased away by P-51. Several of these e/a had yellow noses and tails and some had checkered tails.

At 1045B, 2 ME-109 attacked 1 a/c and 4 ME-109 attacked another a/c from 6 o'clock low, closing to 200 yd and then passing both sides of the a/c and down. They had red markings on nose and tail.

4 FW-190 attacked 1 a/c at 6 o'clock and closed to 100 yd before breaking away, at 1100B about 60 miles south of the target.

2 ME-109 at 1042B attacked at 12 o'clock closing to 300 yd and breaking away to the right at 8 o'clock.

1 a/c was attacked by 1 FW-190 at 2 o'clock high at 1045B and one ME-109 from 7 o'clock level at 1047B. The FW-190 closed to 400 yd and the ME-109 to 200 yd. The ME-109 fell off on one wing to the right while the FW-190 went straight down. The Me-109 was blue-gray and the FW-190 had blue and gold band around the gray fuselage.

1 ME-109 at 1044B attacked at 4:30 o'clock low turned sharply to left past 6 o'clock and went into a dive. Just after passing the IP, 4 SEF with red noses made head on attack, slightly high, from 1 o'clock out of the sun closing to 200 yd before turning away. These a/c were fired upon by the runners until they turned when they were identified as P-51. None of these a/c were shot down and there was no apparent damage. The following claims were recorded: 5 ME-109 destroyed, 2 FW-190s destroyed, 1 ME-109 probably destroyed, 2 ME-109 damaged.

14 a/c went over the target at 1037B at 22,800'. 34½ tons of 500 lb GP bombs with .1N and .01 and .025 mixed tail fuses were dropped. 2 bombs were jettisoned in the ADRIATIC on return after hanging up over the target due to rack malfunction.

The weather enroute to the target was as follows: 2/10s scattered cumulus with visibility 30 miles; at the target, CAVU; on return, 2/10s scattered cumulus with visibility 30 miles.

13 a/c landed at 1325B. One a/c was hit by flak over the target and lost an engine. This a/c fell behind and was attacked by 4 FW-190s, e/a/c was shot down but the B-24, losing another engine, forced the crew to bail out at 4715N1720E at approximately 1102B,

The route was flown as briefed.

5. 485th Bomb Group. On 8 July 1944 at 0633B, 29 B-24 a/c took off to bomb FLORISDORF OIL REFINARY (Primary Target).

Assembly over ALTAMURA at 7,000' was satisfactory.

Rendezvous with 460th Group at 7,000' between ALTAMURA and GRAVINA at 0727B. Rendezvous with 464th and 465th Groups at 0737B at 7,000' over SPINAZZOLA on course.

Rendezvous with fighter escort, which consisted of P-51 a/c was effected without incident at 1000B at 4624N1614E. Escort left formation at 1232B at 4330N1610E.

One a/c returned early.

30 e/a, apparently 20 ME-109s and 10 FW-190s were soon between target and PAPA; one e/a attacked formation. Flak at target was IAH. Formation was exposed to flak for 5 minutes. MAH flak was encountered at IP, 4820N1603E.

28 a/c wore over target at 1040B (target time, 1030B). 28 a/c dropped 70 tons of 500 lb GP bombs (.1N, .01 & .025 tail fusing) at 21,700'. 1 a/c jettisoned 5 bombs on a M/Y at 4817N1630E at 1043B due to malfunction in bomb release mechanism. Bombs were seen to strike short of target and in target, flames were soon to leap up to 5,000' and black smoke went up to 10,000'.

About 30 e/a were seen between target and PAPA, of which 20 were ME-109s and 10 FW-190s. One FW-190 attacked a/c in #2 position, low box, second wave attack wars made from 12 o'clock low and was fired upon by ball turret gunner at 1042B in the target area; this a/e is claimed as a probable. E/A broke off at 300 yards out of control. Color of the e/a was brown with green camouflage. 13 a/c of our formation were holed by flak; damage slight. Co-pilot of #1 a/c, low box, 1st wave, was slightly wounded by flak. Three of our a/c were lost apparently to flak in the target area. One a/c, #674, was hit in the wing and seen to go down at 1040D over the target; 7 chutes were seen. A/c #769 was seen to go down at 4715N1723E at 1105D and 10 chutes were seen to open. A/c #1164 was seen to go down at 1101B at

4720N1728E with two engines out; 10 chutes were seen to Comee out of this a/c. Smoke screen was observed 2 miles N of Primary Target.

Return was made without incident. 25 a/c landed, mean landing time, 1329B.

3 a/c were lost. Route was flown as briefed.

DISTRIDUTION:

- 1 cy ca 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.CO, AC of S, A-2, 5th, 47th, 49th, 304th Bomb Wings.
- 1 cy CG, 306th Fighter Wing.
- 1.cy.CO, AC of S, A-1, A-2, A-3, 55th Bomb Wing.
- 1 cy on Bmbder 0, PI, PRO, Stat, 55th Bomb Wing.
- 1 cy en CO, S-3, ea Gp, 55th Bomb Wing.
- 3 cys S-2, ea Gp, 55th Bomb Wing.
- 1 cy CO, III Bomber Command.