

55BW Mission Summary Mo. 126, 6 Nov 44 (Cont'd)

1. General Summary. On 6 November 1944, between 0700-0715A, 134 a/c of 134 B-24 a/c scheduled, took off to bomb a target in AUSTRIA. There were 8 early returns.

Group assemblies were effected as prescribed, but line and Wing rendezvous were delayed and finally effected on route.

Fighter escort joined formation at 0941A at (4425N - 1528E) and additional fighters gave target and withdrawal cover. Escort departed formation at 1300A near (4350N - 1620E).

125 a/c were in target area and dropped 181.75 tons of bombs (90 tons of 500 lb. RDX, 80% fused .1N, .01T, 20% long delay fusing) and 91.75 tons of M-17 Incendiary bombs, instantaneous fusing) from 21,000 - 23,000' between 1120 - 1125A. 1 a/c dropped 2.5 tons on a target of opportunity. 22 sortie a/c jettisoned 44.75 tons, 4 early returns jettisoned 6 tons, 33 sortie a/c returned 79.5 tons to bases, and 8 early returns brought back to bases 16 tons of bombs.

No flak was encountered. 5 e/a were seen, but none encountered.

122 a/c were down at bases between 1352 - 1415A. No a/c was lost, 2 a/c are missing, 1 a/c landed at a friendly field.

Route was flown as briefed, except that IP was missed and briefed route from IP to designated target was not flown.

Weather: 4/10 to 5/10 stratus and stratocumulus at take off, continuing to coast. 1/10 cirrus over ADRIATIC and 3/10 stratocumulus, tops 3000 feet. DINARICS were clear except for stratus in valleys. 3/10 to 4/10 stratus and stratocumulus from mountains in vicinity of POLA, tops 8-10,000 feet. From POLA to the target 8/10 to 10/10 stratocumulus, tops 10,000 feet. At target, 9/10 stratocumulus, tops 10,000 feet. Visibility was 20 miles. On return, 8/10 stratocumulus from target to BALATON and 2/10 from here to DIMARICS. 1/10 stratocumulus over DINARICS and ADRIATIC, and 3/10 to 4/10 diurnal cumulus at base on return. Visibility 20 miles or better entire route.

Results: The visible strikes were located approximately twenty-five miles south of the assigned target in the vicinity of the SOLLEMAU AMMO DUMP. Bombing photographs from Both the 460 Bomb Group and the 485 Bomb Groups indicate probable strikes at this location. Photographs from the 464 and 465 Bomb Groups show practically total undercast and have no indication of the results of the attack.

2. 460th Bomb Group. On 6 November 1944, at 0715 hours, 34 scheduled a/c were dispatched to bomb a target in VIENNA, AUSTRIA.

Group assembly and rendezvous with the 485th were on time, and Wing rendezvous was accomplished two miles North of rendezvous point. Fighter escort, P-38s, first sighted at 1025 hours at (4550N - 1510E), furnished penetration, target end withdrawal cover. They left the formation at 1300 hours at VIS.

3 a/c returned early. 2 a/c jettisoned 12 bombs in the ADRIATIC and returned 8 bombs to base. 1 a/c dropped bombs at (4639N - 1500E).

At 22,200', 31 a/c were over the target at 1122½ hours. Because of solid undercast, bombing was accomplished by PFF. 12 a/c dropped 30 tons of M-17 incendiaries and 17 a/c dropped 42.25 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs, .1N & .01T fusing (1/5 delay). Because the PFF a/c of the 2nd attack unit returned early, the 2nd attack unit dropped on the Group leader. Bombs away photographs show that the bombs were released on SOLLENAU near WIENER NEUSTADT. Due to malfunctions, 3 a/c had 21 bombs hung up. 2 a/c jettisoned 11 bombs, 4 minutes after target time and the other a/c jettisoned 6 bombs 7 miles West of MAGYKANIZA and 4 bombs in the ADRIATIC. The 1st attack unit used the auto pilot on the bomb run.

No flak was encountered over the target.

The route was flown as briefed except the actual IP and target were about 20 miles south of briefed locations.

31 a/c returned to base with a mean landing time of 1400 hours.

3. 464th Bomb Group. On 6 November 1944, 33 scheduled B-24 type a/c took off at 0715A hours to bomb the primary target designated in Operations Order #239.

Group form up, assembly, and 2 group rendezvous were made as prescribed, without incident. Hampered by adverse weather, arrival at the Wing rendezvous point was delayed 4 minutes; however, the Wing formation was complete upon reaching the Spur.

There was only 1 early return, namely a/c #44-49146, which never completed assembly and landed at 0810 hours, because of inability to retract landing gear.

A/c /42-95332, a prior return, landed at 1325A hours after attacking a target of opportunity on its return at 4712N - 1445E at 1105A hours from 21,500 feet.

Bombs of the 33 a/c were disposed of as reflected by following capitulation, including the 1 early return and the 1 a/c dropping on target of opportunity:

M-17	RDX (.1 & .01)	RDX (delayed)
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Dropped on targets of opportunity		2.0 tons	0.5 tons
Jettisoned	8.5 tons	3.0 tons	8.0 tons
Returned to base	29.0 tons	28.0 tons	
Load of missing a/c unaccounted for		2.0 tons	0.5 tons
Totals	37.5 tons	35.0 tons	9.0 tons

Bomb strike photos from the 1 a/c attacking target of opportunity shows several direct hits In a group of 3 buildings at a road intersection one half mile northeast of the ZELTWEG AIRDROME.

This Group maintained its position in the Wing formation and did not drop its bombs on the primary target because the Wing lead did not drop nor did it fly over the target. No target of opportunity could be found without leaving the Wing formation for as much as 50 to 60 miles.

Intense heavy flak was observed some 4 to 5 miles left of course. Intense heavy flak was also observed at ST. POLITEN.

1 ME-109, with red checkered tail observed at 4610N - 1500E at 1037A hours fly at 20,000 feet, about 2,000 feet below formation. 4 ME-109s observed at 4705N - 1705E at 1145A hours, flying at 22,000 feet, about 3,000 feet off, were driven off by P-38s in pursuit.

Rendezvous was made with 35 to 40 P-38s at 0941A hours at 4425N - 1528E and with 15 to 20 P-51s at 1110A hours at 4712N - 1445E. Withdrawal of both types of fighters was at approximately 1245A hours. Crews commend the cover given by the escort.

30 a/c landed at this base between 1344A hours and 1425A hours.

1 a/c failed to return and is missing. It was last seen at 1110A hours when it dropped out of formation with #2 engine smoking, but apparently under control, at 4756N - 1526E.

Route was flown as briefed until about 2 miles short of IP, thence on 2 parallel, about 4 or 5 miles south of the briefed course, crossing lake to south of briefed rally point, thence on prescribed course to base.

4. 465th Bomb Group. 38 a/c of 38 a/c scheduled took off at 0700 hours on 6 November 1944 in 2 attack units to attack a target in SOUTHERN GERMANY.

The Group assembled at 0810 hours at 10,000 feet, and our formation fell in behind the 464th at 0814 hours. Enroute an approaching group forced the two groups to turn right and left to avoid collision. Our formation proceeded to the Spur to intersect the Wing formation which was accomplished at 0851 hours at 10,000 feet. An

escort of P-38s joined the formation at 0950 hours just inside the YUGOSLAVIAN COAST and furnished penetration, target and withdrawal cover as far back as the YUGOSLAVIAN COAST, leaving at 1245 hours. An escort of P-51s joined the formation at 1100 hours and gave target cover.

4 a/c returned early, 2 of which were spares. There was 1 prior return.

No flak was encountered at the target, and no flak was encountered enroute. A series of dog fights was observed, with 1 unidentified single engine a/c observed going down at 4540N - 1720E, t 1138 hours. A B-24 was observed with 2 unidentified single engine planes, not believed to be P-51s, at 1045 hours at 4700N - 1450E.

The Wing formation turned a few miles south of the IP and set a heading for the target. The Radar Navigators reported picking up the primary target in their scores and definitely identifying the specific target which the Wing was to bomb. On the bomb run, the lead Group took a heading which took the formation to the South of the briefed target. The Radar Navigator notified the lead ship of the group of the change in course, but the Group leader elected to follow the Wing thinking that the Wing Leader may have decided to bomb an alternate target.

The wing headed back on return course for the base, the Group leader was unable to pick up any targets of opportunity on course and decided not to leave the wing formation in order to bomb a target of opportunity. D.R. Navigators agreed with the Radar Navigators that the course as flown was about 15 miles South of VIENNA. The leader of the Second attack unit accidentally dropped his bombs in the vicinity of the Neusiedler Sea, and 16 a/c dropped their bombs on the leader. 17 a/c dropped 40 tons of 500 lb Incendiary bombs and 2 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs with .1N and .01T fuses and 1/2 ton RDX bombs with non-delay fuses, at 1120A from 23,000' in the vicinity of Neusiedler Sea. One a/c went over VIENNA with the 304th wing and dropped its bombs with that wing. 7 a/c jettisoned 2 long delay RDX bombs 10 miles South of VIS as ordered, 2 a/c jettisoned 3 bombs and 1 a/c jettisoned 6 bombs 10 miles South of VIS while jettisoning long delay RDX bombs. 4 a/c jettisoned 10 RDX bombs 10 miles North of VIS in order to conserve fuel.

Recapitulation:

Total tons RDX bombs dropped at NEUSILER Sea	2½
Total tons M-17 incend. at NESTILER Sea	40
Total tons M-17 incend. dropped at VIENNA	2½
Total tons dropped at 4722N-1445E	2½
Total tons jettisoned by sortie a/c	16½
Total tons jettisoned by E/?	1
Total tons returned by sortie a/c	18½
Total tons returned by E/R	9
Total tons on missing a/c	2½

32 a/c landed at 1415A. There is 1 a/c missing.

5. 485th Bomb Group. On 6 Nov 44 at 0714A 31 scheduled B-24 a/c took off to bomb a target in AUSTRIA. Assembly was effected at 0816A at 7,000'. The 485th led over rendezvous point on course at 0827A followed by the 460, 464, and 465 Gps. There were 2 early returns; a/c returned bombs to base.

35 P-38s joined the formation at 1020A at 4620N1450E and furnished fighter cover until 1300A, departing at 4350N1620E.

The weather ship was contacted enroute and it reported that the primary and all alternate targets were cloud covered. 10/10 cloud coverage based at 8,000' prevented bombing by visual means. Being unable to identify the IP by pathfinder the formation turned on the ETA of the IP and made the bomb run on PFF, using the C-1 auto pilot.

29 a/c were over the target at 1121A at 21,000'. Following is a summary of bombs dropped in the target area. 17 a/c dropped 33.5 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs .1N and .01T, and 8.5 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs with non delay fusing. (one of the 17 a/c jettisoned two bombs in the ADRIATIC on return after the bomb rack had malfunctioned over the target. 9 a/c jettisoned 10 bombs at 4402N1712E due to rack malfunction. 2 a/c jettisoned 4 bombs (long delay fusing at 4135N 1615E. Those 2 a/c returned 16 bombs to base (500 lb RDX .1 .01 fusing).

The lead PFF operator reports that the target was definitely identified by comparison with pictures on the scope with those furnished as target material. In addition the river near the target was used as check point. The target returns were, however, rather weak and poor. The drift over the target was killed and four sighting angles were furnished the bombardier; 70, 65, 60, and 40 degree angles. The PFF operator of the second attack unit reported that the formation bombed south of VIENNA at approximately 4749N1616E.

No fighters were seen or encountered.

No flak was encountered, but IH flak was observed a few miles North of the point where the bombs were released.

Return was made without incident. 28 a/c landed at 1352A, mean landing time. 1 a/c landed at VIS. Route was flown as briefed except between IP and target.