

55BW Mission Summary No. 100, 10 Sept 44 (Cont'd).

1. General Summary. On 10 Sept 44, from 0640-0700B, 118 B-24 a/c of the 55th Bombardment Wing on their 100th Combat Mission took off to bomb a target in Central Europe. Due to adverse weather conditions the Primary Target was not attacked and bombs were dropped on the industrial area of SE VIENNA. There were 11 early returns.

Only one enemy fighter was encountered, an ME-109, which is claimed by the 460th Bomb Group as destroyed. 8 ME-109s, 8 FW-190s, and 2 ME-110s were observed. On two airdromes near VIENNA, 38 ME-109s were observed, which made no effort to take off.

Flak encountered was IAH, from 10-12 minutes duration. SIH observed at LENDAVA (4635N-1615E).

From 22,000-24,000', 107 a/c dropped 266.5 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs, .1 and .01 fusing. One ton was jettisoned.

Results:

460 Gp - Photos show the Northwest residential area of VIENNA to have received the main concentration of bombs. Strikes are located approximately two miles west of the Railway Traffic Center of the city.

464 Gp - Photos show the bombs to have fallen in the Eastern residential area of VIENNA.

465 Gp - Photos show the bombs to have fallen in the Northern portion of the city of VIENNA. Several strikes are located immediately south of the Wiener Lokomotivfabriks A. G. Several strikes fell on the south choke point of the Marshalling Yard in that vicinity.

485 Gp - Photos show the main concentration of strikes to have fallen in the commercial and residential center of the city of VIENNA. The main concentration of bombs fell immediately south of the railway traffic center of the city.

The main damage of the attack is to the residential area of the city. The south choke point of the Marshalling Yard adjacent to the Wiener Lokomotivfabriks A. G. is probably cut.

Weather: Clear at take-off and over ADRIATIC. Few stratocumulus over DINARIC ALPS, which became 10/10 alto-cumulus with tops 14,000' on far side of mountains. Return was the same.

Route flown as briefed with one deviation at IP.

3 a/c lost to flak. 3 a/c are missing. One B-24 last observed over Northern YUGOSLAVIA. Reports from Air Force show all but one crew

member have returned to Fifteenth Air Force Headquarters. 4 a/c landed at friendly fields.

96 a/c landed at home bases from 1325-1355B.

2. 460th Bomb Group. On 10 Sept 44, at 0655B, 31 scheduled a/c dispatched. Due to adverse weather conditions PT was not attacked; Industrial Area of SE VIENNA was bombed instead.

Fighter escort, P-51s and P-38s, first sighted at 0915B at 4415N-1450E, furnished penetration, target and withdrawal cover to the Italian mainland.

2 a/c returned early.

Because 8-10/10 undercast obscured PT, the Group bombed the alternate target, the SE Industrial Area of VIENNA, by PFF. 29 a/c dropped 72.5 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs from 24,000' at 1039B.

14 e/a were reported by crews. 2 ME-109s were seen near LAKE BALATON at 1112B. These e/a were painted a dark brown. 8 FW-190s seen at 1103B et 4720N-1715E had yellow tails and noses. Over target 2 silver ME-110s and 2 ME-109s seen. Just after bombs away, 1 of the ME-109s made a pass from 6 o'clock low on an a/c of the Group which had been damaged by flak and was stragglng at the time. Fired upon by the tail gunner, the ME-109 was seen to explode.

27 a/c returned to base, mean landing time 1355B. 1 a/c with severe damage crash-landed at GIOIA. Crew escaped injury in landing. 1 a/c missing, last seen on YUGOSLAV border on return route.

3. 464th Bomb Group. On 10 Sept 44, 31 B-24 a/c took off at 0652B. Due to adverse weather conditions the PT was not attacked and bombs were dropped on Industrial Area of SE VIENNA.

4 a/c returned early.

27 a/c were over the target at 1043B and dropped 67.5 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs from 22,000'.

Rendezvous with fighter escort at 4337N-1537E when 25 P-38s of the 14th Fighter Group were observed. At 4340N-1515E, 10-15 P-51s of the 325th Fighter Group were observed. Good cover on penetration, over target and on withdrawal. Escort of P-38s last observed at 1238B at YUGOSLAV coast; P-51s last seen at 4400N-1648E at 1215B.

1 a/c received a direct hit by flak in bomb bay, took fire and exploded. 2 chutes seen to open, incident occurring at 4810N-1630E.

26 a/c landed at base from 1325-1410B.

4. 465th Bomb Group. On 10 Sept 44, 28 a/c took off in two attack units at 0640B to attack the VIENNA SE Industrial Area.

2 a/c returned early.

P-38s joined formation at 0910B at YUGOSLAV coast and provided penetration, target and withdrawal cover, leaving at 1230B at YUGOSLAV coast.

26 a/c over target at 1042B at 23,600' and dropped 64 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs. All a/c dropped bombs except for 4 bombs jettisoned just inside German border by one a/c in order to keep up with the formation.

21 a/c landed at 1355B, mean landing time.

2 a/c observed to go down over target area to flak. 1 a/c seen losing altitude in vicinity of GYOR, but was still airborne when last observed. Several chutes observed from 1 a/c in the LAKE BALATON area, but the a/c was reported still flying when the YUGOSLAV border had been reached. 1 a/c landed at the island of VIS. There are 2 a/c lost, 2 missing and 1 at a friendly field.

5. 485th Bomb Group. On 10 Sept 44, at 0700B 28 scheduled a/c took off to bomb PT, but due to adverse weather conditions the 1st Alternate Target, the SE Industrial Area of VIENNA, was bombed.

At 0901B, 28 P-38s joined the formation at 4335N-1515E, providing cover enroute, over target and on return to approximately 4440N-1649E, departing at 1200B.

3 a/c returned prior to bombing.

25 a/c over target at 1041B dropped 62.5 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs from 23,000'.

4 ME-109s observed over target area, but were driven off by P-38s before they could attack formation. 1 a/c, due to flak damage, fell behind formation over YUGOSLAVIA. Reports have been received that all but one crew member have returned to Fifteenth Air Force.

22 a/c landed without incident, mean landing time 1355B. 2 a/c previously landed at PANTANELLA returned to base at 1500B and 1604B.