

HEADQUARTERS
450TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) AAF
APO-520 US ARMY

S-2 NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION DATE: April 11, 1945

MISSION NBR. 260

TARGET: Campodazzo, Italy - Railroad Bridge

I. CHRONOLOGY

Thirty-two aircraft took off at 0816-0844 hours to bomb the Campodazzo Railroad Bridge in Italy. One aircraft returned early due to engine failure. 30 aircraft dropped 73.5 tons of 1000 lb RDX bombs at the target at 1218-1231 hours from 24,000 - 26,500'. One aircraft jettisoned 1.5 tons in Taranto Bay, when making an early return with one engine inoperative. One aircraft jettisoned 2.5 tons in the Adriatic because the aircraft was pulling excessive power while enroute to the target. Thirty-one aircraft returned to base at 1514 hours. None lost. None missing. None at friendly fields.

II. ROUTE AND ASSAULT

Rendezvous and route were flown as briefed. The group lead aircraft was forced to return early because of engine failure and the second squadron assumed the lead. Bombing was by 4 squadrons of 8 aircraft each, in trail, and was by visual method. The last squadron made a 360 degree turn between the initial point and the target, after they had overlapped the preceding squadron, and then bombed on the briefed axis. 12-15 P-51 aircraft made rendezvous as escort at 1145 hours, Caorle (45.26N-12.53E), at 26,000' and withdrew at 1242 hours, Caorle, at 23,000'. Weather was CAVU.

III. RESULTS

Bomb strike photos show:

- 1st Sq: Bombs fell 6000' S of the tgt hitting a small village.
- 2nd Sq: Bursts were not picked up on photos. Bombs are believed to have hit north of the target.
- 3rd Sq: Bombs fell 1200' W of the target in an open field.
- 4th Sq: Heavy concentration scored on the bridge. Smoke prevented definite assessment.

IV. ENEMY RESISTANCE

- A. Fighters: None
- B. Flak: Flak at target was tracking variety but was not accurate for altitude. The black bursts received were low and white bursts high and trailing. Flak was observed at keypoint, Caorle (45.36N-12.53E), both on penetration and withdrawal, but was not received.

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IV. ENEMY RESISTANCE

B. Flak: (continued)

<u>Sq.</u>	<u>Igt. Time</u>	<u>Bomb Alt.</u>	<u>Axis</u>	<u>Flak Exp.</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>Severe</u>	<u>Slight</u>
1st	1218	25,000	355	S I/A H	0	0	2
2nd	1221	24,000	350	S I H	0	0	0
3rd	1222	24,000	351	S I H	0	0	0
4th	1231	26,500	350	S I H	0	0	0

V. OBSERVATIONS

A. Communications: At 1140 hours, (45.32N-12.44E), from 22,000': 5 barges tied up to a dock at mouth of Piave River.

B. Flak Positions: None pinpointed

C. Smoke Screens: At 1219 hours, Tesero (46.17N-11.31E), from 26,000': either smoke bombs, or generators operating, marked this initial point.

D. Naval: At 1215 hours, (45.25N-13.10E), 18,500': Appeared to be sinking ship about 1/2 out of water.

E. Air: At 1218 hours, Target area, 25,000': B-24 aircraft seen going down in flames and later exploded. No chutes observed. Appeared to be over Bolzano.

At 1150, (45.47N-12.38E), 24,000': 8 single engine aircraft appeared to be taking off from airstrip near Pasiano.

At 1235, (46.03N-12.36E) 21,000': 3 transports, 7 single engine aircraft, 3 JU-88's observed on airfield. Observation made with field glasses.

VI. CONCLUSION

A. Losses: None
B. Damage: 2 aircraft sustained minor damage. Flak at target.
C. Casualties: None
D. Victories: None