

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

S-2 NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION DATE: April 25, 1945

MISSION NBR. 273

TARGET: Linz, Austria - Main Marshalling Yard (North).

I. CHRONOLOGY

The plan for the day's operation directed all Wings to employ normal effort against the concentration of rolling stock in the Linz Communication Center.

Thirty-two B-24 type aircraft took off at 0800-0818 hours. There were no early returns. Twenty-four aircraft dropped 47 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs on the primary target at 1248 hours from 24,500 - 26,000'. Eight aircraft found the primary smoke obscured and dropped 16 tons on the first alternate (Wels Station Yard) at 1315 hours from 24,000'. Thirty-one aircraft returned to base at 1545 hours. One aircraft landed at a friendly field.

II. ROUTE AND ASSAULT

Rendezvous was effected with the 449th Bomb Group over Manduria and the briefed course flown to the I.P. at Wegscheib (48.36N-13.47E). The target was attacked on an axis of 130/140 degrees T. Bombing was by visual method with Squadrons in trail. The fourth squadron in column found the aiming point obscured as a result of previous bombing and turned off the bomb-run about one-third the way down. This squadron made a 360 degree turn to the left and returned to the I.P. for a second run. Again the bombardier was unable to synchronize because of bomb smoke so the squadron proceeded to Wels Station Yard where a successful attack was executed. 15-20 P-51's were contacted in the vicinity of Zell am See (47.18N-12.48E) at 1150 hours at 22,000'. Penetration, target and withdrawal cover was provided to the Keypoint (Ledenice, 45-09N-14.51E) where the fighters departed at 1350 hours from 15,000'. Weather was reported as 2/10 scattered cumulus with tops at 6000' in the vicinity of the I.P. with CAVU conditions in the target area.

III. RESULTS

The lead squadron placed a concentrated pattern across the north marshalling yard, scoring direct hits on the trackage and among the rolling stock.

The second squadron lead bombardier was injured by flak on the bomb run and was unable to make final adjustment to kill rate. Bombs fell 2000' west of the target on small buildings and gun positions.

The third squadron found the target partially smoke obscured. Some hits were scored on the target but the main concentration fell slightly west on the adjacent installations.

After two attempts the last squadron failed to complete the run because of smoke so bombed the first alternate. A good concentration was put down across the center of the marshalling yard.

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S-2 Narrative Report (Continued)

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IV. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: None

B. Flak: The flak experienced averaged four minutes of Intense, Accurate, Heavy flak by the three squadrons bombing the primary target. A predicted concentration was put up over the target area on the approach of the lead squadron and continued until the last squadron cleared. Twenty-one aircraft received minor flak damage. Most damage was received prior to bombs away. Interrogation disclosed that many of the bursts were much smaller than the normal 88mm shell. Shell fragments presented at interrogation are believed to be from incendiary type pellets. The pieces which penetrated the aircraft fuse-lage were reported to burst with a white flash and immediately lost velocity. No flak was reported at the alternate target.

<u>Sq.</u>	<u>Igt. Time</u>	<u>Bomb Alt.</u>	<u>Axis</u>	<u>Flak Exp.</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>Severe Dam.</u>	<u>Slight Dam</u>
720	1245	25,500	130	I A H	0	0	6
722	1248	26,000	140	I A H	0	0	7
721	1248	24,500	140	I A H	0	0	8
723	1314	24/24,500	160	None at Alternate			

V. OBSERVATIONS

All main lines and small marshalling yards north and east of Linz were reported to be unusually active and loaded with rolling stock.

An effective smoke screen was reported at the primary. Wind was favorable and forced the smoke east and south way from the target.

At 1240 hours on the bomb run at 25,500' and aircraft resembling a ME-262 flew abreast of the formation at the same altitude, diving beneath the lead squadron just before the first flak bursts were observed.

VI. CONCLUSION

- A. Losses: None
- B. Damage: 21 aircraft received minor flak damage.
- C. Casualties: 1 crew injury (slight)
- D. Victories: None