

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

S-2 NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION DATE: December 12, 1944

MISSION NBR. 192

TARGET: Blechhammer, Germany - South Oil Refinery

I. CHRONOLOGY

Six B-24 type aircraft took off in three two-ship elements at 0720-0726 to bomb in train the Blechhammer South Oil Refinery by PFF method.

Able element dropped 1.75 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs (fused .1 - .01/.025) and one ton 500 lb 1/2 hour delay fuse bombs, and two leaflet bombs on the primary at 1108 hours from 22,100 feet. This element jettisoned 1.25 tons 500 lb RDX bombs in Adriatic at 0750 hours because of overload. Weather was cirro-stratus with tops to 20,000 feet enroute with I.P. clear and target obscured by overcast. Rain and severe icing conditions on return.

Baker element was separated on the route to the target, and aircraft #907 is at a friendly field (Vis). The lead plane met the same weather conditions as able element but discovered clear weather in target area and turned back and bombed the alternate target of Moravska Ostrava Oil Refinery, dropping 1.5 tons 500 lb RDX bombs (fused .1 - .01/.025) and .5 tons of 500 lb 2 1/2 hour delayed fuse bombs at 1105 hours from 25,000 feet.

Aircraft #907 of Baker element took off at 0722 hours to bomb the Blechhammer South Oil Refinery. Dropped 1.5 tons of 500 lb RDX (fused .1 - .01/.025) bombs, .5 tons of 500 lb long delay (2-6 hour) bombs, and one leaflet bomb at 1107 hours from 24,500 feet. On return route lost #2 engine due to low oil pressure and landed at Vis at 1425 hours. Caught in crosswind and blew tire in landing and nose gear and landing gear collapsed skidding plane sideways off runway. Crew was returned to base at 11415 hours, 13 December, by C-47. Charlie element proceeded to 49.37N-17.33E and seeing clear weather ahead turned here and dropped 2.5 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs on target of opportunity, town of Puchar (49.05N-18.20E), at 1113 hours from 25,000 feet. Aircraft #055 in this element landed at a friendly field (Foggia) to refuel, later returning to base at 1700 hours.

Able element returned to base at 1507 hours; one plane of Baker element returned at 1550 hours; and one plane of Charlie element landed at 1535 hours. None lost. None missing.

II. ROUTE AND ASSAULT

Able element flew route as briefed to I.P. (Werbenthal), which was clear, and attacked primary target on PFF on axis of 101 degrees T.C., and on briefed route to base.

Baker element started on briefed course but was separated in weather and the lead ship proceeded on briefed course to I.P. Seeing clear weather in primary target area it turned and bombed alternate target (Moravska Ostrava) on PFF on axis of 160 degrees T.C. Then to 49.30N-18.00E to 47.10N-20.11E to base. Rain, snow and severe icing conditions were encountered on the route back.

Aircraft #907 of Baker element flew route as briefed to I.P. Then target was attacked on axis of 160 degrees T.C. Strong drift was responsible for axis of attack and in ralling right after dropping bombs plane flew over Moravska Ostrava, then to Split and from there to Vis. Weather enroute was cirro-stratus to 20,000 feet and target was 10/10 covered.

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S-2 Narrative Report (Continued)

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I. ROUTE AND ASSAULT (continued)

Charlie element went on briefed course to vicinity of I.P. and turned there because of clearing weather. The PFF equipment in the #2 ship went completely out soon after take off and PFF in lead ship was not working well. Run on target of opportunity (thought to be Puchar, 49.05N-18.20E) was made on axis of 106 degrees and an erratic course flown back to base.

III RESULTS

Able element made good 10 minute PFF run on primary with unobserved results.

Baker element (one aircraft) made good 6 minute run on alternate. Tail gunner reported column of black smoke rising through undercast as they left target area.

Aircraft #907 of Baker element. Unobserved. Good 15 minute run made by PFF.

Charlie element made dubious run on target of opportunity as PFF not functioning too well.

IV. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: At 1020 hours at 24,000 feet at 49.10N-19.00E one ME-109 observed low at 3 o'clock on reciprocal of our course. It did not attack.

Aircraft #907 of Baker element. One unidentified single engine fighter at 24,000 feet in target area flew off to right of ship from 1030 hours to 1100 hours, but made no attacks.

B. Flak: Able element experienced intense and inaccurate heavy type flak at primary target. Three salvos of about thirty bursts each and about thirty seconds apart were low at 12 o'clock; level at 9 o'clock (2000 yards wide); and level at 6 o'clock.

Plane in Baker element reported slight and inaccurate flak (two groups of about 15 burst) ahead of them on bomb run at alternate target.

Aircraft #907 of Baker element. Intense and accurate heavy type flak was experienced at target. Some particularly large white bursts observed and some red bursts. On leaving target aircraft flew over Moravska Ostrava when intense and accurate heavy type flak was experienced.

Charlie element experienced intense and accurate heavy type flak at Nova Buna (48.27N-18.29E) but ship was not holed.

V. OBSERVATIONS

None

VI. CONCLUSION

- A. Losses: None
- B. Damage: See I, CHRONOLOGY - Aircraft #907 of Baker element.
- C. Casualties: None
- D. Victories: None