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

S-2 NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION NBR. 194

MISSION DATE: December 16, 1944

TARGET: Innsbruck, Austria - Main Marshalling Yard

I. CHRONOLOGY

Thirty-six B-24 type aircraft took off at 0743-0810 hours to bomb the junction point of new railroad by-pass at the Innsbruck Main Marshalling Yard. One aircraft returned early due to supercharger failure. Thirty-five aircraft dropped 69 tons on the target by synchronous PFF method at 1232 hours from 24,500 - 25,000 feet. 51.75 tons dropped were 500 lb RDY type. 17.25 tons were fused with special long delay 2-12 hour fuses. Partial loads were jettisoned as follows: .75 tons due to rack malfunction. One long delay fused bomb (.25 tons) was dropped off shore south of Manduria when inspection disclosed the fuse to be loose. The early return dropped 2 tons (near Villach). This target of opportunity was partially cloud obscured and results could not be observed. Thirty-four aircraft returned to base at 1602 hours. One landed at Foggia to refuel and returned at 1707 hours.

II. ROUTE AND ASSAULT

450th rendezvoused with 98th at San Vito on course at 0904 hours and flew the briefed route to target and return. The Pathfinder of the Group lead failed 30 minutes from the target and X-Ray attack unit fell back and followed Yoke attack into the I.P. and dropped on a time delay estimate after Yoke attack dropped on PFF. A sharp left rally was executed immediately after bombs away and a course flown around Innsbruck, thence to Millstatter Lake. No escort was provided for this mission. The I.P. was covered with a 10/10 undercast and the target was obscured except for one or two small holes.

III. RESULTS

Due to undercast, no visual observation of results were possible. Interpretation of strike photos places some hits in the center section of the marshalling yard, on the north choke point, and near the south choke point. Other points can be seen in the built up area of the city.

IV. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: No encounters were reported but a single aircraft described as resembling an ME-262 was observed in the target area at 1215 at 18,000 feet, flying at right angles to the formation at exceptional speed.

B. Flak: Over the target, moderate, accurate, heavy flak was experienced. With few exceptions, no flak was reported until bombs-away and continued to follow for a approximately two minutes on the rally.

V. OBSERVATIONS

At 1320 hours from 18,500 feet, 30-40 cars were observed in marshalling yard at Villach. P-38's were bombing the city.

VI. CONCLUSION

A. Losses: None
B. Damage: 5 ships received minor flak damage.
C. Casualties: None