

SECRET
 HEADQUARTERS
 13TH COMBAT BOMB WING (H)
 APO 559

:SECRET :
 :AUTH: CO 13CBW :
 :INIT: M M. :
 :DATE: 11 Jul 44 :

Critique - Mission 7 July 1944
 Target - Merseburg, Bohlen, Kollada Germany

PLACE: HQ, 13th Combat Bomb Wing (H), TIME: 1500 9 July 1944.

PLANNING

1. Force Required:

95th Gr - Lead 17 a/c plus 1 Pff plus 3 spares
 100th A Gr - High - 17 a/c plus 1 Pff plus 3 spares
 390th A Gr - Low - 18 a/c plus 3 Spares
 100th B Gr - High in 45 B CBW - 18 a/c plus 3 spares
 390th B Gr - High in 4 B CBW - 18 a/c plus 3 spares

2. Planning:

13 CBW Assembly was from Ipswich to Bn 12

95 Gr from East at 16,000 ft
 100 A Gr - From N East at 17,000 ft.
 390A Gr - From S. East at 15,000 ft.

EXECUTION

13th CBW was assembled prior to Wing assembly line, 1 minute early at control points on assembly. Vampire Able was 4 or 5 miles South, and not formed. B-24's boxed in 13th A Wing in vicinity of Zuider Zee, where 2 planes in 390th collided. Route followed was essentially as briefed, although 10 to 15 minutes behind time. 390th B lost 4B Wing in primary target area, and tacked on to 4A Wing as low group.

BOMBING

390 A Gr dropped on primary with fair to good results
 95 Gr dropped on secondary with good results.
 100 Gr dropped on secondary with poor results.
 390B Gr dropped on last resort with good results.

Smoke screen was very effective, and prevented bombardiers from picking out target area, which resulted in the bombing of secondary and last resort targets.

OPPOSITION

1. Fighter opposition was practically nil.
2. Flak was heavy and accurate in the primary target area only.

FIGHTER SUPPORT

1. Fighter support was excellent both on route in and out.

SECRET

UNUSUAL FEATURES OF PLANNING

1. THE 3RD DIVISION AND 1ST DIVISION ASSEMBLY ROUTES WERE VERY CLOSE TO EACH OTHER. A DIFFERENCE IN ALTITUDE WAS PLANNED TO PREVENT ANY DIFFICULTY WITH ASSEMBLY. BAD WEATHER, HOWEVER, PREVENTED THE DIVISIONS FROM REACHING THEIR BRIEFED ALTITUDES OVER ENGLAND AND INTERFERENCE OCCURRED DURING ASSEMBLY.

2. DIVISION OPERATIONS MADE THE SUGGESTION TO AIR FORCE THAT THE APPROACH BE MADE FROM THE SOUTHEAST. THIS WOULD HAVE THE FOLLOWING ADVANTAGES.

- A. BETTER SELECTION OF IP, GOOD LANDMARKS IN AREA.
- B. A MORE DESIRABLE RUN THROUGH THE A.A. DEFENSES.
- C. REDUCE CONFUSION AND CONGESTION IN TARGET AREA.

STATEMENT AND EXPLANATION OF

1. FAILURE TO BOMB

- A. ALL GROUPS BOMBED.

2. BOMBING OTHER THAN PRIMARY TARGETS

A. THE 4TH "A" AND "B" COMBAT WINGS HAD TROUBLE MANEUVERING AROUND THE 1ST DIVISION GROUPS. THEY HAD TO FLY SOUTH OF THE ORIGINAL IP AND THIS PREVENTED THEM FROM BOMBING THE PRIMARY. THE 4TH WING THEN FLEW TO THE SECONDARY TARGET AND BOMBED WITH GOOD RESULTS.

B. THE 100 "A" GROUP HAD BOMSIGHT TROUBLE ON THE SECONDARY TARGET AND FINALLY BOMBED THE LAST RESORT TARGET.

3. POOR BOMBING RESULTS

- A. 100TH A, 90A, 96B, 390TH A BOMBED WITH POOR RESULTS.

(A) 100TH A HIT SHORT ON THEIR LAST RESORT TARGET. THE GROUP LOST 1000 FT. BETWEEN IP AND TARGET.

(B) 96A BOMBARDIER DIDN'T IDENTIFY THE TARGET PROPERLY AND HIS BOMBS HIT VERY SHORT OF THE PRIMARY.

(C) 96B GROUP BOMBS HIT OVER THE TARGET. INDICATIONS POINT TO THE FACT THAT THE BOMBARDIERS DROPPING ANGLE WAS INCORRECT.

(D) 388A GROUP HAD TRAFFIC TROUBLE ON THEIR TWO BOMBING RUNS AND BOMBARDIER DROPPED INTO SMOKE. BOMBS HIT WELL OVER TARGET AREA.

(E) 390A GROUP HAD BOMSIGHT FAILURE AND BOMBS WERE DROPPED LATE. DELAY CAUSED THE BOMBS TO HIT OVER.

4. OTHER DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED

A. WEATHER

1. WEATHER OVER ENGLAND BECAME VERY BAD AFTER THE GROUPS BECAME AIRBORNE. THE CEILING LOWERED AND THE DIVISION HAD TO ASSEMBLE BETWEEN 8,000 AND 10,000 FT. INSTEAD OF THE PLANNED 16,000 FT. THE DIVISION DEPARTED THE ENGLISH COAST AT 8,000 FT. AND BEGAN TO CLIMB OUT ON COURSE ACROSS THE NORTH SEA

THE WINDS WERE NOT AS BRIEFED AND THIS WITH THE DELAY
USED BY CLIMBING MADE THE DIVISION LATE THROUGHOUT
THE MISSION.

ANALYSIS OF DEVIATIONS AND DIFFICULTIES

A. ASSEMBLY

1. BAD WEATHER CAUSED THE ALTITUDE OF THE DIVISION ASSEMBLY TO BE LOWERED. THIS PUT BOTH 1ST AND 3RD DIVISIONS AT THE SAME ALTITUDE AND THERE WAS DIFFICULTY IN ASSEMBLING THE DIVISION.
2. DIVISION HAD TO DEPART ENGLISH COAST AT 8,000 FT. INSTEAD OF 16,000 FT AS PLANNED.

B. ENROUTE

1. THE CLIMB TO BOMBING ALTITUDE BEGAN ON DEPARTING ENGLISH COAST.
2. WINDSHIT AND CLIMB CAUSED DIVISION TO BE LATE AT ALL CONTROL POINTS.
3. 1ST DIVISION AND 3RD DIVISION MADE PENETRATION AS A SINGLE UNIT FLYING PARALLEL ROUTES INSTEAD OF 3RD DIVISION LEADING AS PLANNED.
4. BECAUSE THE TWO DIVISION ARRIVED IN THE TARGET AREA AT THE SAME TIME MANY WINGS HAD TROUBLE MANEUVERING FOR THEIR BOMBING RUNS.

C. BOMBING

1. HEAVY TRAFFIC CAUSED CONGESTION IN TARGET AREA AND IT WAS DIFFICULT TO MAKE GOOD BOMBING RUNS.
2. HEAVY SMOKE SCREEN COVERED THE ENTIRE TARGET AREA.
3. SMOKE FROM PREVIOUS BOMBING BUILT UP RAPIDLY AND INCREASED THE DIFFICULTY OF IDENTIFYING TARGETS.
4. MANY BOMBARDIERS FAILED TO MAKE USE OF CHECK POINTS OUTSIDE TARGET AREA AND DROPPED BOMBS INTO THE SMOKE.
5. BOMBSIGHT MALFUNCTION CAUSED TWO GROUPS TO DO POOR BOMBING.

INSTANCES OF OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE

1. NONE

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. THE FOLLOWING ARE SUGGESTIONS ON BOMBING OIL TARGETS.
 - (A) UTILIZE PATHFINDER A/C TO IDENTIFY AND BOMB TARGETS. PLANS ARE BEING CONSIDERED BY THE DIVISIONS.
 - (B) USE GRID TYPE BOMBING WITH PREVIOUSLY PICKED CHECK POINTS OUTSIDE THE TARGET AREA.
 - (C) FLY A COMBAT WING WITH ITS GROUPS STAGGERED DOWN AND 1/2 MILE IN TRAIL OF EACH OTHER. THIS WOULD ALLOW ALL THREE GROUPS TO MAKE VISUAL RUNS BEFORE THE TARGET IS COVERED WITH SMOKE. THIS FORMATION HAS BEEN PROPOSED BY 8TH AIR FORCE O.R.S.

HEADQUARTERS
NINETY FIFTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
Office of the Operations Officer

7 July 1944.

SUBJECT: Operations Officers Report, Mission 7 July 1944.

TO : Commanding General, Third Bomb Division, APO 559.

1. GENERAL NARRATIVE. The 95th Group took off from base at 0500-0520 hours to fly lead Group of 13th Combat Wing. Group assembly was planned at 16,000 feet, but due to a last minute call from 13th Wing Headquarters, Group assembly was made at the new Wing and Division assembly altitude of 10,000 feet, over the base, by 0600 hours.

Prior to reaching the first control point on the Wing assembly the 390A and 100A Groups had tacked on to the 95th completing the Wing formation. Ipswich was reached 1 minute early at 10,000 feet and Buncher 12 was reached 2 minutes early, all other control points were made on time.

The English Coast was crossed at 0711 hours, at 10,000 feet where a climb to bombing altitude was started. The Enemy coast was crossed at 0758 hours at 19,000 feet on course. The briefed course was followed to the I.P., climbing on course to 25,000 feet by 0913, where the Wing leveled off due to difficulty the formations were having keeping closed up in tight formation, reaching the I.P. at 0941 hours at 25,000 feet.

On the bomb run the Bombardier was unable to pick up the target in time due to smoke screens and haze, the Group Leader at this point decided to bomb the secondary. The I.P. for the secondary was reached at 1000 hours at 25,000 feet and bombs were away at 1003 hours from 25,400 feet. At this point a descent to 22,000 feet was started. The briefed course out was followed as closely as possible and at 0810E a descent to 20,000 feet was begun. The Wing crossed the enemy coast out at 1127 hours at 20,000 feet, starting a descent to minimum altitude at this point and crossed the English coast at Lowestoft at 1208 hours at 1,900 feet, reaching base at 1215 hours. Landings were made at 1219-1239 hours.

95th Group encountered no enemy fighter opposition, however heavy accurate tracking flak was encountered over the primary target.

2. AIRCRAFT NOT ATTACKING. Twenty one a/c including 3 spares and 1 PFF left base in formation shown in Diagram A. A/c's 42-102447, 42-97844 and 42-97232 flying as spares returned to base as ordered and are not credited with sorties.

A/c No. 42-31462 returned to base early, due to failure of oxygen system and is credited with a sortie.

Of the 17 a/c of 95 Group over the target as shown in Diagram "B"; a/c No. 2937 did not drop bombs on the secondary target due to mechanical failure. 18 a/c including 1 PFF and a/c No. 42-31462 which returned early are credited with sorties.

3. AIRCRAFT LOST. None.

LARRY L. KERR,
Major, Air Corps,
Actg. Operations Officer.

95th Group
 Diagram "B"
 Over Target

NINETY FIFTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
 Office of the Operations Officer

GROUP FORMATION FORM

DATE 8 July 1944

LEAD

RIVENBARK (PFF)

75 | 86

LOW

BASTION

60 | 98

JACOBSON

18 | 67

HIGH

DANCISIN

29 | 37

HERCHENHAHN

13 | 76

BACHUZEWSKI

60 | 85

WALKER

78 | 56

HANNUM

78 | 53

OLNEY

78 | 76

BODIN

19 | 29

GROSSHEIM

19 | 92

ROMANCHEK

81 | 78

LAJESKIE

20 | 66

GRIFFIN

71 | 54

BRAUND

18 | 76

MC CULLEY

16 | 00

CRAIG

70 | 47

EXTRA SHIPS

334 _____

335 _____

336 _____

412 _____

BRIEFING _____
 READINESS _____
 STATIONS _____
 TAXI _____
 TAKE-OFF _____
 RENDEZVOUS _____

DECLASSIFIED
 Authority MD 743005
 By SPARA Date 12-9-89

95th Group
Diagram "A"
Assembly

NINETY FIFTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
Office of the Operations Officer

GROUP FORMATION FORM

DATE 7 July 1944

LEAD

RIVENBARK (PFF)
75 | 86

LOW

BASTION
60 | 98

JACOBSON
18 | 67

HIGH

DANGISIN
29 | 37

HERCHENHAHN
13 | 76

RACHUZEWSKI
60 | 85

WALKER
78 | 56

HANNUM
78 | 58

OLNEY
78 | 76

RODIN
19 | 89

GROSSHEIM
19 | 92

ROMANCHEK
81 | 78

LAJESKIE
20 | 66

GRIFFIN
71 | 54

FLETCHER
14 | 62

BRAUND
18 | 76

MC GULLEY
16 | 00

CRAIG
70 | 47

DAY
2447

LAIRD
7844

HOFSAES
7232

BRIEFING _____
READINESS _____
STATIONS _____
TAXI _____
TAKE-OFF _____
RENDEZVOUS _____

EXTRA SHIPS

334 _____
335 _____
336 _____
412 _____

DECLASSIFIED
Authority MD 745005
By SPARA Date 12-9-89

A.T.F.

C.W.

FORMATION DIAGRAM

95TH BOMB. GROUP (H)

DATE 7-7-4

TIME

Rivenbark
25/86

Dancisin
29/37

Bastion
60/98

Jacobson
18/67

Bachuzewski
60/85

HANNUM
78/58

Hofsaes
72/32

Herchenbahr
13/76

Grossheim
19/92

Romanchek
81/78

Lajepskif
20/66

OLNEY
78/79

Bodin
19/89

Griffen
71/54

Fletcher
14/62

BRAUND
18/76

McCulley
16/00

CRAIG
20/47

EXTRA

EXTRA A

VE 04 murel Spares
G ABORT

LAIRD
78/44

Walker
78/56

Day
24/47

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 745005
By SPARA Date 12-9-09