

398th Operations Officer's Report

26 August 1944

Target: Synthetic Oil Refinery
Gelsenkirchen, Germany
Secondary: Deelan, Holland

HEADQUARTERS

AAF Station 131
APO 557, U.S. Army
(K-B-2)

27 August, 1944

SUBJECT: Operations Officer's Report on Mission of 26 August 1944

TO: Commanding General, First Bombardment Division, APO 557
Commanding General, 1st Combat Wing, APO 557

1. SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS:

A. Data:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| (1) Date of Mission: | 26 August 1944. |
| (2) Target Assigned: | Gelsinkirchen, Germany |
| (3) Target Attacked: | Gelsenkirchen, Germany
A/D Delsen, Holland |
| (4) Units Participating: | 37 A/C of this group formed the 1st "A" CBW. |
| (5) Returned Early: | None |
| (6) Failed to Take-off: | None |
| (7) Lost: | None. |

2. NARRATIVE:

Lead Group 1st "A" CBW [600th]

Take-off and assembly of 1st "A" CBW was as briefed. Departure from Point A was on time, on course. At the wing assembly some confusion resulted from the 1st "B" CBW being early, but the force was gathered and got into the Division force in the proper position.

Departure from Central Point #1 was on time, on course. At Central Point #1 the 1st "B" CBW reported on time, on course and the 1st "C" CBW reported 1 1/2 minutes early, on course.

During the climb the 41st "B" CBW was positively identified and was lagging. We __ twice to get 1/2 minute behind them at Central Point #2 and shortly thereafter crossed behind them in order to be on the outside of the next turn so we could get a better interval. At the turn before the IP the CBWs preceding us did not turn until they were from 20 to 30 miles south of course.

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The primary target and surrounding check points were obscured by smoke and heavy base, making positive identification of the target impossible. The Lead and High Groups of the 1st "A" CBW proceeded to the secondary target and the Low Group bombed the secondary with poor results, and the High Group failed to drop their bombs because of a combination of mechanical failure and failure to identify the target because of very poor visibility.

Flak over the target was very heavy but inaccurate.

Weather was as briefed except for some cirrus ice fog in the route out and the extremely heavy base in the target area.

High Group 1st "A" CBW [601st]

After a two hour delay in take-off the assembly was briefed at the Debden Buncher at 15,000 feet. Some difficulty was encountered in wing assembly.

The route was flown as briefed and control points were made on time. Departed English coast at 15,000 feet. Entered enemy coast at 23,000 feet. Climbed on course arriving at the IP at 30,000 feet. Let down was started after leaving secondary target. Departed enemy coast at 26,000 feet.

The High Group failed to bomb the primary target. Edification or location of the primary was made impossible by smoke screens covering the area and very poor visibility in general. Following the Lead Group a run was made on the secondary target but due to malfunction the bombs did not release.

Further effort was made by the High Group leader to release bombs on a target of opportunity, failing in this, the lead was turned over to deputy leader. Due to 7/10 cloud coverage and regulation covering targets in enemy occupied territory a suitable target could not be bombed.

The ships that were seriously low on gas dropped their bombs safe in the Channel. The others returned with their bombs.

A/C 7338 left formation after secondary target, dropped bombs and returned alone because of engine failure.

Returned to home base in wing formation and made a normal landing.

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Flak over primary target was heavy and inaccurate. Flak over the secondary was light to moderate and fairly accurate. Light flak was also encountered in the area north of Amsterdam while searching for a target of opportunity.

No enemy aircraft were encountered. Friendly fighter support was excellent.

The weather was nearly as briefed. Visibility being poorer and lower cirrus over channel.

All aircraft of the High Group returned safely.

Low Group 1st "A" CBW [603rd]

Take-off was delayed two hours but was normal and assembly at the Debden Buncher was good, but wing assembly was poor.

The route was flown as briefed and bombing was visual, but due to a very heavy base over the target area and a failure of the lead ship and the deputy lead's VHF sets, only inconsistent contacts were possible with the lead group, and it was impossible to distinguish the MPI or target and, in searching for it, we overran it slightly dropping on a target of opportunity near the target. Evidently, the Lead and High Groups turned off the target short as we were unable to overtake them until they passed the secondary.

Friendly fighter support was excellent. No enemy A/C were sighted.

The weather was a little worse than briefed, especially over the target.

None of our aircraft are missing.

JEAN B. MILLER
Major, Air Corps
Operations Officer

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