

# The Mission of 16 February, 1945

The formation plan as taken from the Pilot's Flimsey and documents in the Mission Reports and the Michele D'Aronco letter

## ABLE FLIGHT

### CHARLIE FLIGHT

Il. Yanney	22 M
12. Gaskill (f)	27R
13. Spioth	17H
21. Reichal	25P
22. Colvin	62M
23. Grogg (f)	52C
31. Mason	56G

Il. BUSCH	302 X
12. MOE	300 Z
13. Davis (f)	33 D
21. Fritts	35 F
22. Schacht (f)	46 Q
23. McCaughey	32 B

### BAKER FLIGHT

Il. McCoy	30 A
12. Marsha11 (f)	40K
13. Christian	39 J
21. Zimmerman	20 K
22. Goodwyn (f)	10 A
23. Stanford	58 I
31. Parker	64 0

## **Definitions used in this Story**

F= photographer and camera aboard  
Italics=Shot down, see story  
Radar Bombing =Mickey, Pathfinder, PFF  
Gee=Navigation via intersecting radio beams  
Letter after nose number=Radio Call  
Three digit nose number= Radar Bomb equipped. The radar antenna replaced the ball turret

## DOG FLIGHT

Il. Taylor	501 Y
12. Grose (f)	60 K
13. Mauldin	53 D
21. Latimer	63 N
22. Stewart, D (f)	61 L
23. Crockett	55 F
31. Kanar	76 G

## EASY FLIGHT

Il. Mann	79 J
12. Schnieder	86 Q
13. McLaughlin (f)	88 S
21. Locke	77 H
22. Wiemer	87 R
23. Johnson (f)	81 L
31. Smith	85 P

## **Why This Mission Report was Chosen**

At the end of August a letter was received from Michele D'Aronco who lives in Gemona Del Fiuli near Udine, Italy where many German fighters were based during the war. Nearby Osoppo airfield was used by the Germans as well as the Aviazione Nazionale Repubblicana. He goes on to say that the Fascist Air Force (Facisti) was based here as well. Also an Arado AR234B-2. twin engine jet powered scout/bomber operated for a short time from the airfield.

49th Wing Operations Order dated 15 February, 1945 (orders were issued the night before) stated that: 1) Expect 1-20 Italian flown ME-109s (Fascisti) to attack stragglers in Northern Italy. 2) Expect the possibility of harassing attack by 20 enemy single engine fighters in the Munich area. 3) few Me-262s may be airborne to harass the formation but no major effort is believed possible because pilot training in not advanced to the state where formation attacks can be made. 4) The over all plan of this mission is to destroy the Jet Aircraft program before it gets to the stage where it will be a potent weapon against allied aircraft. Training of competent pilots has been one of the bottlenecks in the program so the intent of the 49th Wing is to destroy all installation involved in servicing, as well as barracks and living quarters. The bomb load was 500 pound GP fused nose and tail.

The 484th Bombardment Group bombed Rosenheim Marshalling Yards by visual methods 16th February, 1945. Lt. Cummings of the 825th Bombardment Squadron was lead navigator. Rendezvous was good though over an overcast and was accomplished by means of Gee\* and PFF. Route out was as briefed. Key point was reached at 1045 at 16,000 feet. Weather enroute was

good, only occasionally patches of clouds were encountered and visual navigation was possible the entire route.

## **The primary target**

The primary target was obscured by clouds and a Mickey run was not possible as the radar returns were too dim to correctly identify the target. The Group leader elected to circle the target in hope it might clear but when the cloud cover remained solid, he decided to make a run on the first alternate, Rosenheim M/Y. Bombing procedure was changed from radar to visual to a course of 186. Bombing commenced from 22,000 feet and the target was hit at 1306. From here route was as briefed for return to base. The navigator reported flak at Fiume when 461st Bomb Group flew too close to that point enroute to the target. Fighter rendezvous was as briefed with P-51s escorting the formation on penetration the target and withdrawal. The group leader reported fighter cover as best he had seen to date.

\* Gee= line of sight radio beams, two beams from different locations were sent out to intersect. This indicated the point on the route to the target where the IP was to be found.

## **Pathfinder (PFF) Analysis**

The 484th Bomb Group bombed Rosenheim visually. Lt. Moody was PFF operator in A-11, Lt. Denault in A-12, Lt. Mulcahy in D-11. These were all Mickey ships identified by a three digit nose number.

The rendezvous was accomplished over the undercast by the