

MISSION # 137

HOPSTEN A/D

21 FEBRUARY 1944

CONFIDENTIAL PRIORITY

TO: COMBOMDIV ONE AND COMBOMWIG FORTY; ATTN: A-2

FROM: COMBOMGR 92

NARRATIVE REPORT:

1. 50 bundles of USG 27 nickels dropped over Hopsten A/D 6 miles NE of Rheine at 1450 hours from 19,000 feet.
2. Strike photos indicate a concentration of bursts directly on the intersection of the two runways and the area just east of the intersection. There are also a few bomb bursts just adjacent to the Northeast, Southwest runway. Another large concentration of bomb bursts are indicated just South of the Southeast border of the A/D.
3. Enemy fighter opposition appeared to be more determined today than previously. E/A were reported first at 1420 hours 15 miles W of Nischeim and continued spasmodically until bombs away at 1457 hours. Between 1420 and 1430 no less than five attacks are reported by T/E E/A and it is interesting to note that at this time, we had no fighter support. About 35 E/A were seen in all. These were ME-109's who left the formations alone and attacked only stragglers, ME-210's, JU-88's and ME-110A who pressed home their attacks like veterans. Most attacks were from the nose from eleven o'clock to one o'clock height and level. A few beam attacks were reported. This type of attack was favored when the sun position and the contrails combined to give the E/A a tactical advantage. No unusual camouflaged was reported. The T/E fighters were colored the usual pale whitish blue. One ME-110 was this color plus the addition of orange streaks. Claims are four destroyed, one probable and one damaged.

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4. Meager inaccurate gunfire was encountered at Edmond, Lingen, Minden, Raderborn and Lippstadt. These bursts were black with few black and white bursts in Lingen area. Moderate black flak was seen in distance at Munster and Amsterdam. In target area (target of opportunity) and over IJmuiden moderate and accurate gunfire was encountered. Fire was continuously pointed and of black and white color. At 1500 near the vicinity of Lingen several white streamers rose from the ground to the approximately altitude of the formation and burst in green flashes with no smoke about two miles ahead of bombers. They might be described as appearing like rFF markers in reverse.

5. Enroute to target low scattered clouds prevailed allowing only occasional pilotage. At the primary 0710 to 1010 cloud formation prevented location of the airfield at Lippstadt. However in the area North of the primary target, only about 3/10 cloud cover existed. In the area of target opportunity only 3/10 cloud cover is reported with visibility greater than 10 miles. The lower part of the clouds were estimated at 2000 feet with tops at 5000 feet. There were sufficient breaks in the clouds on the way out to allow occasional pilotage and observation.

6. Several A/C reported eight to ten vessels in a convoy heading North on the Zuider Zee at 5240N-152 0515E at 1523 hours. One A/C reported a balloon barrage of six balloons at approximately 5240N-0537E at an altitude of about 1000 feet. One A/C reported an unspecified number of rocket attacks at 5140N-0900E. The source of these rockets was not observed so it is not known if they were launched from the ground or from A/A. The rockets left black smoke trails and ended in red flashes. One A/C reported at least two ground launched rockets which burst two miles ahead and 5000 feet above this formation which was at 20,000 feet. Long white streamers like rFF markers in reverse were seen by five members of the crew who reported that the streamers ended in green flashes.

7. A/C #411 piloted by 2nd Lt. James E. McEvoy was seen to collide with a ME-210

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at 5143N-0021E. This B-17 was seen to be in flames and disintegrated just before entering clouds. One chute ~~x~~ was seen. A/C #060 piloted by 2nd Lt. Ralph K. Skoubo was last seen over Holland with one engine out and losing altitude. An SuS was picked up from this A/C while over the Zuider Zee. This formation was without fighter support from ~~xxxx~~ 1420 to 1445 hours and during this period received constant attacks from E/A. Otherwise friendly fighter support was excellent.

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