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HEADQUARTERS 2d AIR DIVISION
APO 558

EE-S-4

373.2

12 March 1945

SUBJECT: Tactical Analysis of Mission 3 March 1945 - F. O. 617.

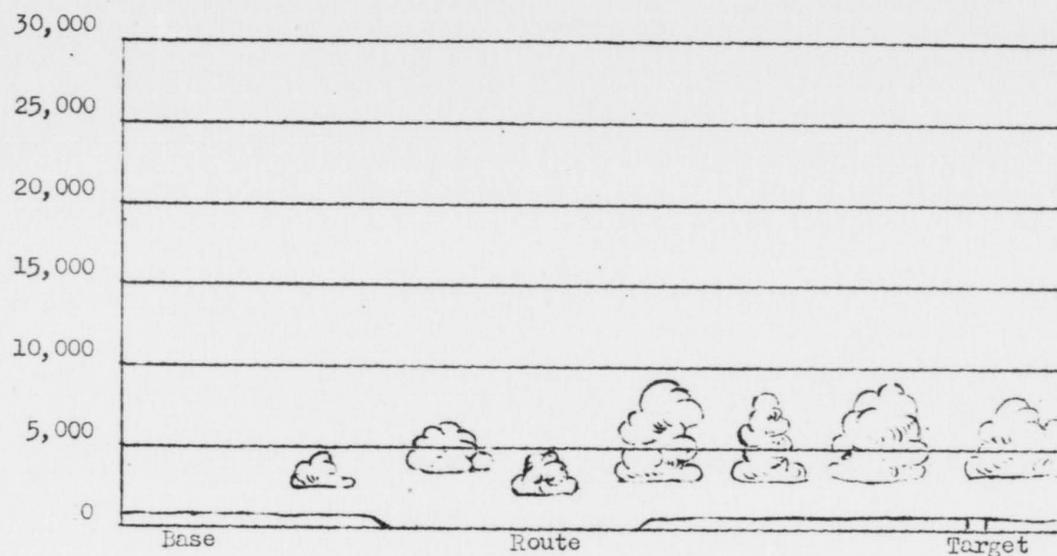
TO : Commanding Generals, All Combat Bomb Wings, This Division, APO 558.

This information is submitted for your consideration and any action you deem necessary. The deductions and remarks made below are the results of the study of mission reports and information obtained from Combat Wings and Groups.

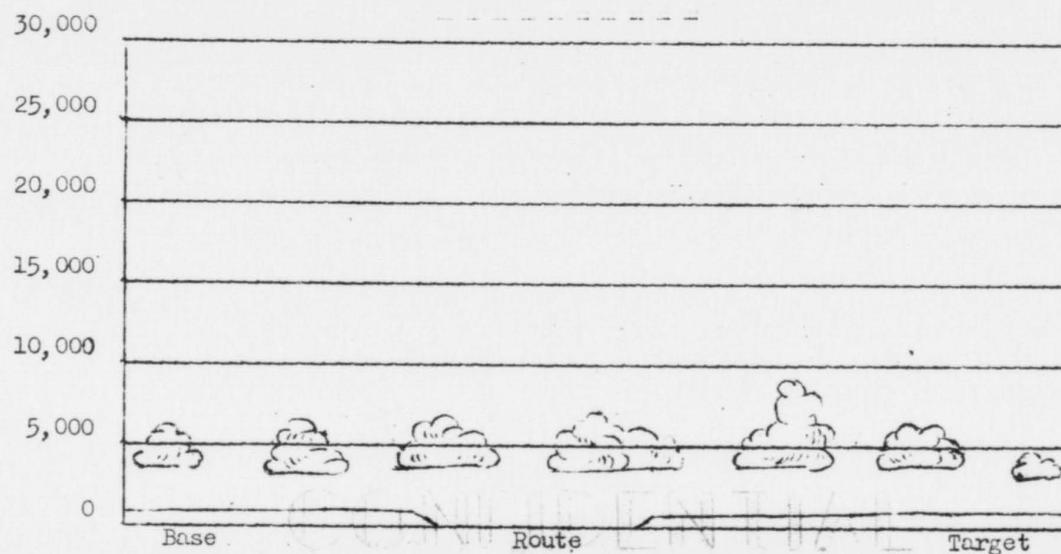
<u>BATTLE ORDER</u>	<u>PRIMARY</u>	<u>SECONDARY</u>	<u>A/C DISPATCHED</u>	<u>A/C OVER TARGET</u>
96th CBW	Nienburg (Vis.)	Lohne (Vis.)	94	90
20th CBW	Magdeburg "	Bielefeld (H2X)	70	68
14th CBW	" "	" "	70	69
2nd CBW	" "	" "	85	78
		TOTALS	319	305

1. Weather Summary

a. Forecast



b. Actual

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c. Remarks

(1) Forecast - Light non-persistent contrails above 28,000 feet.
Target winds: at 20,000 - 350/80, at 25,000 - 350/90.

(2) Actual - Winds and temperatures aloft as forecast. Light, non-persistent contrails occurred occasionally at 22,000 feet over Northern Germany on route in.

2. Take-off, Assembly and DLI

<u>Combat Wing</u>	<u>Assembly Altitude</u>	<u>First Actual Take-off</u>	<u>Briefed Time For CP 1</u>	<u>Assembly Time</u>
96th	12,000	0543	0730	1:47
20th	8,000	0611	0751	1:40
14th	8,000	0620	0753	1:33
2nd	8,000	0620	0755	1:35

a. Assemblies were normal; all Combat Wings being formed on time, and all units left the coast on time and in good order.

3. Navigation - Penetration

a. The accuracy of the landfall in was very good by all units, with the exception of the 2nd Combat Wing which was five miles right of course. The Division column at the point of entry for the Magdeburg force was nine minutes long. The 96th Combat Wing for the Nienturg Force was three minutes in length.

b. Route in to the IP by the 96th Combat Wing was generally good with the exception of being two to four miles off course. Clouds enroute were 5/10 to 6/10, but did not hamper visual aids for navigators.

c. The Magdeburg Force was generally five to twenty miles right of course on the over-water leg. Navigators tried to straighten out one turn on this leg and go straight to the first turning point before landfall, but no attempts were made to correct course until at landfall in. After landfall in, the Wings were generally five to seven miles south of course at the turning points before the IP, except the 14th Combat Wing, which at one point before the IP was fourteen miles south of course. At this time the Lead Navigator of the 14th Combat Wing reported his GEE set working, but failed to correct on course. The other Groups in this Wing corrected, and all units made the IP good. The 2nd Combat Wing, 445th and 453rd Groups, were fifteen miles south of course at one time, but did not correct on course until at 0925E-5308N. The 2nd Combat Wing did make good the IP and regained its position in the formation. The 20th Wing stayed within six miles south of course up the IP.

d. Maneuver at the IP was made good by the 96th Combat Wing to bring it in on its primary target. The Squadrons not bombing the primary used the IP given for the secondary target. The Magdeburg force made its IP's good and were on course.

e. IP to Target - The 96th Combat Wing made its runs good on target; there was 8/10 cloud coverage with clouds thickening, but visual check points were available. The units hitting the secondary reported the cloud too thick so they went to the secondary IP and bombed secondary target in good order with H2X equipment. The Magdeburg forces had good visibility on target run and visual check points for navigators were good. Runs were made in good order.

4. Bombing Analysis

a. The 96th Combat Wing bombed the primary, Nienturg R.R. Bridge, visually and secondary, Bielefeld, H2X. The lead Squadron of the 467th Group bombed the primary visually with excellent results on the Railroad Bridge and approaches. The other three Squadrons bombed the secondary, Bielefeld on H2X. The 458th, 2nd and 3rd Squadrons, bombed the primary. 6/10 cloud coverage and 25° drift on the bomb run made it difficult for the bombardiers to make good runs. After two runs on the primary, the 2nd and 3rd Squadrons dropped bombs; the lead Squadron unable to pick up the target bombed the secondary on H2X. The results of the two Squadrons, which bombed the primary, were poor to unobserved. The Lead Squadron's bombs were plotted as being twelve miles south to southeast of the secondary target.

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b. The 466th Group, 1st and 3rd Squadrons, made four runs on the primary before going to the secondary. The 2nd Squadron picked up the target for a short run. Five aircraft of the 3rd Squadron, flying in trail, dropped on smoke markers of the 2nd Squadron with excellent results. The remainder of the Group bombed the secondary on H2X.

c. The 20th, 14th and 2nd Combat Wings bombed the primary target, Rothensee Synthetic Oil Refinery at Magdeburg. The 20th Combat Wing, bombing the primary target, had two three-Squadron groups: the first group led by the 93rd and the high right position also flown by the 446th. Due to a malfunction of the C-1 auto pilot, the lead Squadron of the 93rd Group had poor bombing results. The 11 and 12 Squadrons bombed the primary target with excellent and good results respectively. Considering the results, the 93rd Group did well, hitting workshops, distillation plant, storage cylinder, docks and built-up facilities. The 448th Group had difficulties on the bomb run - with 3/10 clouds, improper uncovering of the 446th, flying HR, and an attack by one enemy fighter. Although it had these difficulties, it did an excellent job, damaging center of the refinery and blanketing key facilities. The 44th Group, leading the 14th Wing, with two Squadrons had fair and good results on the primary. The target was obscured by 2/10 clouds and heavy bomb smoke. This Group had hits on docks and roadway. The 392nd Group's Lead Squadron had good results, the HR Squadron dropped short of the target with poor results. The 491st, as a Group, did fair. The lead L/C bombs hung up, but other L/C bombs were released through RBR. The other Squadrons bombed through 5/10 clouds and heavy smoke. The 2nd Combat Wing had intense accurate flak. This hindrance, with cloud coverage and smoke, made picking up the target difficult. The Lead L/C of the 445th HR Squadron received a direct flak hit ten seconds before bombs away, but the remainder of the Squadron released on smoke markers of the 11 Squadron.

d. This was the day for bombardiers to prove that they could do the job under adverse conditions. Taking everything into consideration, this mission is a triumph for bombardiers. With adverse weather, malfunctions, flak, heavy bomb smoke, and fighters, on the bomb run, they still came through with very good results. This mission shows that knowing the target area thoroughly results in hitting the target through heavy smoke and cloud cover by utilizing every check point for synchronization.

5. Navigation - Withdrawal

a. The 96th Combat Wing made its rally good. The Magdeburg forces rallied in good order except for the 392nd and 453rd Groups, which went south of the rally point - this was due to navigation, the 392nd Group navigator had mistaken the first turning point to be the rally point.

b. Route out by the 96th Combat Wing was generally south of course due to navigation. Navigators cut the turning point short and reported wind shifts and increase in velocities. The 20th Combat Wing was within five miles of course except near Osnabruck. The B-17's forced this Wing to do a dogleg to the right for nine miles but it corrected back on course. The 14th Combat Wing was forced south of course by the B-17's but did a dogleg and corrected back. The 2nd Wing came twelve miles south of course due to navigation on route from Dummer Lake to landfall out. Clouds all along the route for both forces were 6 to 8/10 and visual check points were poor.

c. Landfall out by the 96th Wing was generally poor, being from two to fourteen miles south of course. The 96th Combat Wing's column was fifteen minutes in length, and the Wing was one hour and fifty-five minutes late due to stoozing around in the target area waiting for visual breaks. The 20th, 14th and 2nd Combat Wings all made landfall within four miles and in good order. Their column was ten minutes in length at landfall out.

6. Fighter Support

a. There were four Fighter Groups assigned as close escort for 24D Bombers with one Group as area support to the force bombing Magdeburg. The 56th Group was to escort the 96th Combat Wing, which was to stooze in the Bielefeld area until a good run could be made on the target. The 355th A and B, 361st A and B and the 4th A and B Groups were covering the remaining three combat wings as close support with the 470th Group as area patrol. Two command Mesquitos were each covered by

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two Fighters from the 56th and the 355th Groups.

7. Enemy Action Encountered

a. The 355th, 4th and 361st Fighter Groups report engagements with Jet aircraft trying to attack the Bomber stream. The 355th Group first saw three twin-Jets at 1020 and drove them off. In the target area ten jets in two sections attacked the Bombers and got away before the 355th Group could engage them. Another three-ship element of Me262's made a pass at the Bombers a few minutes later but they again got away before any contact was made. The 4th and 361st Groups report similar attacks in the target area. In most cases escorting Fighters were able to ward off Jets as they began their attacks; however, the Me262's, having such superior speed were able to make a pass and elude our Fighters unless they were near the target of the Jet's attack so that a turn into the Jets could be made. Claims of O-O-1 Jets were made, which indicates the Me262's offered very poor targets to our conventional Fighters. Our Fighter Groups suffered no loss to these attacks; however, two Bombers were observed to collide and go down after a Jet attack.

b. Flak - Moderate to accurate AA gunfire was encountered over the target at Magdeburg.

8. Losses

a. One A/C, 445th Group, received direct AA fire hit over target Magdeburg. The entire tail section was ablaze, right elevator and rudder shot away. A/C crashed in target area. Two chutes were seen.

b. One A/C, 445th Group, believed hit by AA fire over target Magdeburg. A/C observed leaving formation after target, losing altitude. Four chutes were seen.

c. Two A/C, 448th Group - One A/C believed damaged from attack by a Me262, veered out of position and collided with another A/C in its formation. Both A/C went down in area of Salzwedel before reaching target. Five chutes were seen.

9. Scouting Force

a. Nienburg

(1) Planning - Scouts were to broadcast target weather twenty-five minutes prior to target time. They were to determine the best time for attack and advise Bombers, which would then fly a holding course if a later TOT was advised.

(2) Execution - Scouts gave excellent reports but 6 - 8/10 cloud cover prevented all but four Squadrons from visual attacks. Communications were satisfactory; however, it has been suggested that if future missions are planned where only one Combat Wing is used on a special target, that Scouts be allowed to use the Combat Wing channel.

b. Magdeburg

(1) Planning - Scouts were to broadcast target weather twenty minutes prior to target time.

(2) Execution - Scouts gave excellent reports and communications were satisfactory. Target weather was 1 - 3/10 low cloud, tops at 5,000 feet and all units bombed visually.

10. Screening Force

a. Nienburg

(1) Not used.

b. Magdeburg

(1) Planning - It was planned to have the Screening Force fly with

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the main force and then pull up to 800 feet above and two minutes ahead of the main force at the IP. Expected cloud cover in the target area was 5 - 8/10.

(2) Execution - The Screening Force did not go over the target defenses, but skirted the defenses and made rendezvous with the main force at the rally point, as they are ordered to do when visual tracking by enemy gun laying equipment is possible. The cloud cover in the target area was 1 - 3/10.

11. Radar

a. H2X Analysis

<u>L/C</u> <u>Dispatched</u>	<u>L/C Over</u> <u>Target</u>	<u>Satisfactory</u> <u>For Navigation</u>	<u>Satisfactory</u> <u>For Bombing</u>
44	43	41+1	37+ 1

b. H2X operation for this mission is considered satisfactory. One H2X L/C from the 445th Group is MIA and five L/C could not bomb because of equipment malfunction. Two failures were due to personnel errors and three due to equipment failure. One H2X L/C aborted before reaching the target because of an engineering failure.

c. The 96th Combat Wing had no malfunctions or set failures on this day's operation.

12. Comments:

a. This analysis clearly indicates that although the bombing results were good, considering the difficulties, the navigation was very poor. "On course" navigation must be stressed. It is not sufficient that a navigator know where he is, he must use this information to guide his unit back to the briefed route.

By command of Major General KEPNER:

FRANCIS H. GRISWOLD
Brigadier General U.S.A.
Chief of Staff

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Robert H. Terrill
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Dep C of S for Operations

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Group 458th

STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

(Part 1)

Primary: Nienburg RR Bridge (V18)
 Ordered Targets: Secondary: Lohne R/W Center (V1a)
 Secondary: Bielefeld M/Y (H2X)

Date of Operation 3 March 1945

Division Field Order No. 617

Squadron	Sorties		Credit Sorties	Effective Sorties	Non Effective Sorties	No. A/C Bombing	Type of Tgt	Name of Target	Number and Type of Bombs on Targets	Aircraft Lost					Time of Take off	Total Time of Mis'n	Comments	
	Total	Less Unused Spares								Total	Flak	Flak & E/A	E/A	Acc				U N K
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	14	15	16	17	18	19	25	27	
14	9	9	9	9	-	9	ST	Bielefeld M/Y	32 1000 M65 18 1000 RDX	-	-	-	-	-	-	0615	203	*
2	10	10	10	10	-	10	PT	Nienburg RR Bridge	28 1000 M65 30 1000 RDX	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	10	10	9	9	1	9	PT	Nienburg RR Bridge	40 1000 M65 12 1000 RDX	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTALS	9	9	9	9	-	9	ST	Bielefeld M/Y	32 1000 M65 18 1000 RDX	-	-	-	-	-	-	0615	203	
	20	20	19	19	1	19	PT	Nienburg RR Bridge	68 1000 M65 42 1000 RDX									

NON-EFFECTIVE SORTIE SUMMARY (Part 3)

Total Non Eff Sorties	Causes of Non-Effectives					Incidents of Mechanical and Equipment Failures															Comments	
	Weather	Personne	Enemy Action	Other Non Mech.	Mech. & Equip.	Total	Engine	Oil System	Fuel System	Super-charger	Propeller & Governor	Communication	System	Guns & Turrets	Bomb Release	Bomb Bay Doors	Electrical System	Instruments	Oxygen System	Bomb-sights		A/C in general
6	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66		
1	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	

Footnote 1 NIL
 Footnote 2 NIL
 Footnote 3

HEAD SQUADRON

Beno - BOOTH
J3 : 936I
Scope-K-20

Hathorn - GOODFRIEND
J3 : 557H

RCM
Klein
Z5 : 196Q
K-21

8AF
Sharp
Z5 : 366H

RCM
Hodges
Z5 : 126L
K-22

2AD
Minor
Z5 : 578F
K-21

2AD(Cont)
Fletcher
Z5 : 120M

8AF
Nutter
Z5 : 456D
K-21

8AF(Cont)
Wallis
Z5 : 179P

SECOND SQUADRON

Bowers
J3 : 261A
Scope K-2J

8AF
Spratt
7V : 457Q
K-21

8AF
Simpson
7V : 270A
K-21

2AD RCM
Tebbs
7V : 110M
K-21

2AD RCM
Josephson
7V : 514B

2AD
Hiner
7V : 316H

8AF
Barnhart
7V : 487R

2AD RCM
Jackson, W.L.
7V : 475D
K-21

THIRD SQUADRON

Allen
J3 : 669J
Scope K-20

2AD
Hoey
J4 : 912D
K-22

8AF
Boucek
J4 : 273T
K-21

8AF
Hood
J4 : 555A

RCM
Beckstrom
J4 : 287J
K-21

2AD
Warrell
J4 : 163M

8AF
McCoy
7V : 502E

8AF
Brown
J4 : 602E

8AF
Kelly
7V : 352K

SPARES			
J3 837L	PFF Scope	R/W	28
J3 605W	Vis	R/W	28
J3 516V	Vis	R/W	28
Z5 6400			3
Z5 183U			12

Assembly Aircraft: Lt Sievertson 752nd Sq.
Marshalling Chief: Lt. Montgomery 753rd Sq.
Marshalling Crews: 752nd Lt. Perry, 753rd Lt Duriavich

MARSHALLING PLANR/W 05

Marshall to East			Marshall to West		
T/O	A/C	Disp	T/O	A/C	Disp
1	936I	R/W 28	15	457Q	44
2	697Z	2	16	567G	53
3	557H	R/W 28	17	270A	46
4	126L	8	18	514B	51
5	196Q	10	19	110M	51
6	120M	9	20	487R	44
7	179P	5	21	316H	35
8	366H	1	22	4750	46
9	456D	6	23	912D	40
10	578F	4	24	273T	38
11	261A	R/W 28	25	287J	49
12	504S	R/W 28	26	555A	45
13	669J	R/W 28	27	163M	47
14	5750	R/W 28	28	352K	37
			29	602E	43
			30	502E	39

458th Pilots and Aircraft as listed on Formation Plans

Date	Target	Pilot	458th Msn	Pilot Msn	Cmd Pilot	Ld	Serial	Last 3	RCL	Sqdn	A/C Msn	A/C Name	Comments
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	ALLEN, G	195	26		L3	42-51669	669	J	J3	16	UNKNOWN 026	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	BARNHART, L	195	15			44-10487	487	R	7V	35	Girl on surfboard (no name)	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	BECKSTROM	195	29			44-40287	287	J	J4	46	BACHELOR'S BEDLAM	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	BENO	195	13	BOOTH	L1	42-51936	936	I	J3	17	UNKNOWN 027	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	BLUM	195	27			42-50504	504	S	J3	25	UNKNOWN 019	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	BOUCEK	195	30			42-95183	183	U	Z5	83	BRINEY MARLIN	REPLACED 273
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	BOWERS	195	23		L2	44-49261	261	A	J3	6	UNKNOWN 042	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	BROWN, R	195	ABT			44-10602	602	E	J4	--	TEN GUN DOTTIE	ABORT - #2 ENG FEATHERED PILOT- RA BROWN
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	DURIAVICH	195	MSHL			--		--	--	--		MARSHALING CHIEF- 753RD
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	FLETCHER	195	20			42-95120	120	M	Z5	78	HOOKEM COW / BETTY	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	HATHORN	195	24	GOODFRIEND	D1	42-95557	557	H	J3	27	LADY PEACE	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	HEALY	195	23			42-50575	575	O	J3	23	UNKNOWN 020	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	HINER	195	9			42-95316	316	H	7V	87	PRINCESS PAT	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	HODGES	195	33			44-40126	126	L	Z5	62	SPITTEN KITTEN / SKY TRAMP	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	HOEY	195	26			42-50912	912	D	J4	14	THE TRAVLIN' BAG	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	HOOD	195	29			42-50555	555	A	J4	24	BABY SHOES	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	JACKSON, WL	195	10			44-40475	475	D	7V	29	JOLLY ROGER	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	JOSEPHSON	195	30			42-51514	514	B	7V	19	BIG CHIEF LIL' BEAVER	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	KELLY	195	10			41-29352	352	K	7V	78	WOLFE'S LAIR	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	KLEIN	195	37			42-51196	196	Q	J3	42	THE GYPSY QUEEN	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	McCOY	195	8			42-50502	502	E	7V	39	LARRUPIN' LINDA	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	MINOR	195	16			42-50578	578	F	Z5	39	SKY ROOM	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	MONTGOMERY	195	MSHL			--		--	--	--		MARSHALING CHIEF- 753RD
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	NUTTER	195	2			42-50456	456	D	Z5	39	DOROTHY KAY SPECIAL	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	O'REGAN	195	11			41-29567	567	G	7V	13	MY BUNNIE / BAMBI	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	PERRY	195	MSHL			--		--	--	--		MARSHALING CHIEF- 752ND
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	SHARP	195	1			42-100366	366	H	Z5	65	MIZPAH	OFF LOCATION
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	SIEVERTSON	195	ASSY			41-28697	697	Z	Z5	A68	SPOTTED APE	ASSEMBLY CREW - 752
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	SIMPSON	195	24			42-51270	270	A	7V	17	MY BUNNIE II	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	SPRATT	195	12			42-52457	457	Q	7V	96	FINAL APPROACH	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	TEBBS	195	28			42-51110	110	M	7V	82	TOP O' THE MARK	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	WALLIS	195	3			42-51179	179	P	Z5	69	DUSTY'S DOUBLE TROUBLE	
03-Mar-45	NIENBURG	WARRELL	195	27			42-110163	163	M	J4	64	TIME'S A WASTIN	