

A
TRAGIC
NAVIGATION
ERROR

DON WHITEFIELD
DEPUTY LEAD NAVIGATOR
W.L. UEBELHOER PILOT
SEPT. 27, 1944

KASSEL MISSION

September 27, 1944

Don Whitefield - 445*

This replot of the mission was from log provided by R.F.Gelvin, who copied same from archives in Delaware. As deputy lead navigator this recap of mission to bombs away gives us correct happening, but from bombs away until approximately 20 minutes later the navigation presents two or three possible happenings.

THE MISSION

06.20 Take off

06.50 Circling Buncher B-6

07.55 Depart B-6

08.03 Depart English coast

08.10 Gee Fix Control Point One

08.14 Start turn and climb

08.20

08.27 Three Gee fixes over Channel

08.35

08.47 10 knots inland from coast control point 2-10K north Amsterdam
Holland

08.52 ½ Mickey fix

08.58 ½ Mickey fix. 17K beyond control point 3. Start turn to heading
CP 4.

TRACK FROM 0858 ½ TO CONTROL POINT 4 TO I.P.

0858 ½ Mickey fix

902 Mickey fix

911 Mickey fix

0917 Mickey fix 6 K due east of control point 4

0929 Mickey fix Initial Point – Fix 5 K North West I.P.

From the 0917 fix there are two overlays to show track to bombs away

Various Winds

These various times and distances
Were used to check that wind
Recorded in log
285/65K

0835 – 0858 ½ 280/60K

0847 – 0902 275/75K

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The above check showed the
Wind recorded in log as close

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The first overlay is the plot (using wind from log) from the 0917 fix to the I.P. -- To bomb drop -- To rally point -- To the 1003 Fighter attack. This was by dead reckoning.

The second overlay is from Mickey fix at I.P. to bomb drop.

NOTE: Mickey fix at 0957 is off.
D.R. for 1003 is off.

A possible answer to the bad D.R. position, is the 12 minute lapse before a true heading of 210 was recorded in the log at 1057. There must have been a large turn to the right before coming around to the 210 heading. A log entry would not have been made as long as the compass continued to turn.

To establish the general area of the attack, I went to the mickey fixes from 1016 to 1029 ½ for a ground speed of 145K.

(Also a short run wind of 265/85K)

Then using a plot of 65 degrees (180 degrees from the fix line track of 245) Using the 1016 fix for a period of 13 minutes we get 31 ½ K. This gives us a line of intersection with the D.R plot line for an approximate area of attack.

DEAD RECKONING

FROM MICKEY FIX AT 09.17 TO GROUP RALLY POINT

09.17 TO 09.22

T.C 150
T.H. 162
ALT 23,000
TEMP -29
IAS 140
TAS 202
GS 245
DRIFT PLUS 12

5 MIN 21K

09.22 TO 09.29

T.C. 168
T.H. 185
ALT 23,000
TEMP -29
IAS 140
TAS 202
GS 225
DRIFT PLUS 17

7 MIN 26K

09.29 TO 09.41 ½

T.C. 77
T.H. 67
ALT 23,000
TEMP -29
IAS 144
TAS 209
GS 263
DRIFT - 10

12 ½ MIN 55 K

09.41 ½ TO 09.45

T.C 50
T.H. 35
ALT 23,000
TEMP -29
IAS 144
TAS 209
G.S 235
DRIFT -15

3 ½ MIN 14 K

09.45 TO 10.03

T.C. 190
T.H. 210
ALT 22,500
TEMP -29
IAS 144
TAS 204
G.S 200
DRIFT PLUS 20

18 MIN 60 K

You will notice that at 1029 ½, we turned south about 12K and went to a heading of 259. The reason for the shift not known.

The mighty 445 now consisted of 2 to 4 aircraft on the briefed course to home.

We made our first turn at 1041 -- 3K off position. The second turn at TP 5 was on course at 11.11.

We departed coast at Ostende at 11.54

English coast at Southwold at 12.40 ½

Landed 12.56

HAD WE BEEN FORCED TO TAKE LEAD, DUE TO
TROUBLE WITH LEAD SHIP.

At mickey fix near I.P. the course to target was 102 and showed less than one degree of drift. Also the turn would have put us almost through the I.P. With an indicated ground speed of 273K, our ETA to target would have been 8 1/2 minutes.

NOTE; We were 5 minutes late at the
I.P. from briefed time.

TO THOSE WHO HAVE FORGOTEN OR NEVER KNEW.

THE FOLLOWING IS THE NAVIGATION PROCEDURE ON A
PATHFINDER SHIP FOR THE BOMB RUN.

1. The pilot turns on heading to target from D.R. navigator.
 - a. ship put on auto pilot
 - b. bombay doors opened
 - c. visual check of door opening
2. Mickey operator and bombardier now control ship
3. Bombardier can control direction from Norden bomb sight,
4. Mickey operator gives the bombardier course corrections and range to target hacks. Bombardier sets this information in bomb sight for toggle time.
5. Bombs released
 1. Bomb bay doors closed.
 2. Visual check to see if all bombs released and doors fully closed.
 - 2a. Pilot takes control and DR navigator gives heading to rally point.

HEADINGS DEPUTY LEAD WOULD HAVE USED IF IN THE LEAD

Mickey Fix 0829

TC 102
TAS 209
Drift 0 to -1
GS 272K
TH 102
ETA 8 ½ M
Dist 38 1/2K

0830 ½ Turn

TC 92
TAS 209
Drift -4
GS 270
TH 088
ETA 8 ½ M
Dist 38 K

The 102 heading at the mickey fix would have been
Used since it would have put us almost through the IP

