

For those of you following the second edition of Steve Dixon's Target For Tonight! Campaign game, the date for this mission is the night of 18/19 November 1943 and No. 104 Squadron is heading for Hagen, Germany. Here is "R for Roger's" mission AAR. Hope you enjoy!

For those of you who might have rolled a "Recall" in Zone 2 like I did, here is how you can re-craft the mission using Rule 4.8 Decoy Mission or "Spoof Raid" to continue the game fun...

No. 104 Squadron (KX) Bomber Command - "R for Roger"  
18/19 Nov 43  
Mission 11/ TGT - Hagen, Germany, Zone 6.  
Formation - Front 1/3.

Crew:

Name	Rank	Position
Malcolm Fraser	Warrant Officer	Flight Engineer
William Cavendish	Warrant Officer	Bomb Aimer
Jacob Morton	Sergeant	Rear Gunner (1-Ju88c6, 2- ME-110 G4)
Alfie "Binky" Williams	Pilot Officer	Navigator
Theodore "Teddy" Fernsby	Flying Officer	Pilot
Jeremiah "Jerry" MacKenzie	Sergeant	Mid-Upper Gunner (2-Ju88c6, 1-Do-217)
Oscar Addington	Flight SGT	Wireless Operator/Gunner (Wnd) (Do-217J1)
Sidney Cartwright	Warrant Officer	Senior Erk

**"The Mission to Hagen"....**

"**BAIT!** ... That's what we are ... just bait!" thought Teddy Fernsby. It was quiet in the cockpit except for the steady humming of the Lancaster bomber's four big Rolls-Royce Merlin engines... Looking out through the cockpit's plexiglass wind screen at the dark night sky Teddy swept his eyes around the forward horizon from wing tip to wing tip. Nothing! The sky seemed empty ... There was a Big, Full "Bomber's Moon" tonight but it was just peaking out now and then from behind the 50 to 100% cloud cover that lay over the channel far below...

They were flying high tonight... 22,000 feet... much higher than Teddy liked... he was a fan of coming in low and then climbing to bombing altitude just before getting to the target. But tonight, the Group Commander had other plans for them. He had selected "R for Rodger" and the crew to lead a "Spoof" mission.

"... Because I have such great confidence in your ability to carry this off in light of your experience and training" said the Group C.O. when he had laid out the plan for the mission to Teddy..."

"Yeah, Right!" thought Teddy as he reached up to scratch an itch on his nose and realized he would have to pull off his oxygen mask to reach the pesky itch... Teddy hated to fly on oxygen... the masks were uncomfortable and the air dried out his sinuses and gave him a headache...

Shifting his thoughts back to the mission, Teddy glanced down at the instrument array in front of him and let his eyes roam over the gages... everything looked normal. He was steering a course of 065 degrees, one that the bomber stream would follow if tonight's target was Bremerhaven or Wilhelmshaven. But the true target was Hagen, Germany.

Teddy and seven other bombers from the group were selected to fly this "Spoof Mission". The first four bombers with Teddy leading would fly line abreast at a fixed altitude and spacing between the bombers while dropping chaff bundles. A second line abreast of four more bombers would fly behind Teddy's group also flying a fixed formation and altitude and dropping chaff bundles. This would give the "maximum electronic effect" on Jerry's Radar... or at least that was what their "supercargo passenger" with the "Signal Corps" tabs on his collar had said...

Teddy rubbed his temple with his free hand ... his headache was getting worse. He let his thoughts drift back to what the "Signals Guy" had said...

Window or Chaff as the Americans called it was just strips of tin foil cut to a certain length and width and dropped from a high flying airplane. As the cloud of chaff floated downward in the air it caused the radar beam to be reflected back to the German's receivers so that radar scope image looked like there was a whole lot of bombers following them. "Signals Guy" went on to say that because the Radar travelled thru air like a wave travels thru water you could actual measure the height of the wave from the trough or low point in front of the wave to the top of the wave at its crest. This was what "Signals Guy" called the Amplitude of the wave. How close together these waves crests were as they travel thru the air or water is the frequency of the wave... because the size of the tin foil strip was specific to a radar wave frequency and amplitude, the metal foil could be used to fool or "Spoof" the radar into thinking it was a bomber rather than a piece of aluminum foil..."

Dropping window had to be properly "laid" in the air behind the bomber in order for it to work against the radar. The tin foil floated down slowly in a big cloud behind the bomber. When the cloud began to dissipate or spread out too far the radar would be able to see that there were no bombers in the cloud. So the second wave of bombers flew a bit lower and dropped their chaff to fill in the gaps that began to form as the cloud drifted apart. The winds aloft played a role in dispersing the cloud too so that was why "Signals Guy" was along to work his magic and give directions on just what course and speed to fly to keep the tin foil cloud intact as long as possible. Teddy shook his head...It was all Greek to him. He would just fly the course and speed ordered by "Signals Guy" and make sure his eight bombers stayed in the proper formation...

Another thing that made Teddy think they were "BAIT!" was the eight bombers had to make the maximum amount of "electronic noise" while they were dropping chaff ... this meant radio traffic, to simulate more bombers and their Gee units active along with other electronic equipment that the Germans would monitor from an approaching bomber stream... England was helping with increased traffic to mis-direct the Germans and have them take the BAIT and go after Teddy and his fellow "Spoof-ers". Another sharp pain passed thru his sinuses ... He stopped thinking so hard about the window and just decided to fly the mission as ordered.

Just then, Binky Williams their navigator, popped up alongside of Teddy... "More orders from our "Signals Spook" said Binky as he held up a piece of paper ... "Turn to course 085 ... it seems the Jerry's are taking the Bait and launching night fighters in our direction.". Binky gave Teddy a wry smile and ducked back down into the navigator's cubby. Teddy smiled and picked up the radio mic and gave the change of direction to both waves of his formation. He waited for acknowledgements and then ordered the turn...

They continued to throw out the window bundles at the prescribed intervals...Teddy could hear Jerry MacKenzie's MUG turret making its whining sounds as Jerry searched the sky for bandits...

They were approaching the Frisian Islands just off the coast of Holland. Teddy could see a few searchlights come on to act as reference points for the Jerry night fighters ... "Good! ..." He thought "... at least we were doing our job and hopefully keeping them buggers off the rest of the bomber stream.

Just then Binky popped up again ... "Our Spook says to hold this course for another two minutes and then you can stop dropping window and turn for home... Jerry took the Bait!" Another wry smile and he was gone... Teddy passed the word to the crew and then radioed the other bombers to turn on his mark... Just as Teddy finished... MacKenzie came on the intercom ... "Looks like we have a Bandit looking us over from 1 o'clock high ..."

Teddy looked toward the indicated sector... He could see a dark spot passing thru the glow made by the "Bomber Moon" on the cloud cover... "OK Gunners, Look alive back there!" Teddy responded ... Picking up the microphone he alerted the other bombers and gave the order to stop dropping window and released them to make their turns back to England... They accomplished their mission.

All eight bombers made it back safely to England ... The weather had degraded into rain and fog but Teddy brought R for Roger" in for a safe landing. Mission credit was earned but no bombs were dropped due to the nature of the mission.

Photos below:

"R for Roger"

The Hagen Mission Map

Cloud of window dropping from a Lancaster

The Lancaster's Cockpit

Mission Results:

"R for Roger was recalled in Zone 3

Mission was flown as a "Spoof Mission"

No Night Fighters shot down.

No crew members injured.

No bombs were dropped.

"R for Roger" will be ready for the next mission.

Name: Bob Best

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Plane Name: "R for Roger"

