

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 21/22 November 1943 and No. 104 Squadron is heading for Aulnoye , France. Here is "R for Roger's" mission AAR. Hope you enjoy!

No. 104 Squadron (KX) Bomber Command - "R for Roger"

21/22 Nov 43

Mission 12/ TGT - Aulnoye, France, Zone 5.

Formation - Last 1/3.

Moon Phase: Crescent

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 Aulnoye, France"....

"Stormy", the Met Officer at the briefing for tonight's mission was right... Weather at take off was good and there were no problems even though No. 104 Squadron was at the tail-end of the bomber stream. Their target for tonight was the rail yards at Aulnoye in France... a relatively close target in zone 5. "Stormy" had said that the weather was closing in over the channel and there would almost certainly be 100% cloud cover all the way to the target and back. The storm must have slowed some as "R for Roger" and her crew only had about 50% cloud cover as they left the formation point and started across the Channel in zone 2.

During the stand down after the last mission "R for Roger" had received two upgrades. The first was an upgrade to their GEE navigation radar. They now had GEE-H installed which gave them more accurate navigation. The second upgrade was the installation of .50 Caliber Browning Machineguns at all gun stations... This had necessitated a couple of turret type swap outs but all the gunners were familiar with the various turret types as "Roger's" crew had done a tour in Advanced Training Group before their assignment to No. 104 Squadron. The 50s would give them more punch against the Night Fighters... There was barely enough time for a cross country training flight before the mission to verify the GEE-H installation and for "Binky" Williams to declare he was happy with the install...

WO Sidney Cartwright, Senior Erk and his ground crew had done a great job on getting "Roger" ready for the mission. "Roger" was running like a finely tuned Swiss watch. There were no maintenance problems on the mission.

Flying Officer Teddy Fernsley, pilot and "Binky" Williams had decided to go in under the cloud cover tonight in the hope that flying as low as possible might help them avoid Jerry. They successfully avoided detection crossing the channel in zones 2 and 3. As they approached the coast line Teddy could see the searchlights reflecting off of the cloud base. There were also a number of thin red lines of Anti-Aircraft shells making their way skyward, accompanied by bright pinpoint flares of red as AA shells exploded in the bomber stream above and ahead of "Roger".

Over the intercom Teddy said "Ok Guys, here we go ... Binky, I'm going down to the deck now!" Putting "Roger's" nose down the big bomber picked up speed in the dive... Teddy finally leveled off about 250 feet above the Channel ... just enough altitude to clear power lines and tall buildings when they reached the mainland. "Binky" and WO Cavendish, Bomb Aimer, were keeping a close eye on upcoming terrain both for navigation and to help Teddy locate and avoid any obstacles that might appear in their path.

"Roger" flashed in over the coastline heading inland in zone 4 at high speed. They had good dice rolls and were not detected by either night fighters or any AA gunners on the ground in time to fire at them...

Approaching zone 5, "Binky's" Navigation is spot on and they can see the glow reflecting off the cloud base from the fires started in Aulnoye by all of the bombers that came before them...

Teddy alerts the crew as they enter the target zone and begins his climb to bombing altitude. F/SGT Addington had not received any recall messages and now he moved to the Window ejection tube in the mid-section of the bomber and began dropping Window packets as they climbed into radar range for the AA guns and night fighters... The fact that No 104 Squadron is bombing "last" and the Window being dropped by F/SGT Addington gives "Roger" enough protection to avoid being targeted by the searchlights and AA Fire in the target zone.

The target zone's weather has changed to ground fog and haze as Teddy turns "Roger" onto the bomb run. The Master Bomber directs them to the correct target beacon fires for bombing. WO Cavendish takes over control of "Roger". Making the minute long straight and level run over the target, Cavendish releases the bomb load. All bombs are On-Target earning a "Well Done!" from the Master Bomber. F/SGT Addington takes the Target Strike photos and returns to dropping Window as "Roger" leaves the target... Post strike, the photos reveal that 50% of the bombs hit the targeted area.

Coming off of the target "Roger" was hit by AA Fire ... all damage was superficial. Teddy put "Roger's" nose down and went to On The Deck altitude for the dash back to the coast and across the channel.

Over the channel in zone 2 SGT MacKenzie, mid-upper Gunner spotted a German night fighter believed to be a Do-217 pass above "Roger" and continue westward. The night fighter did not attack but a few minutes later Teddy observed a long string of tracers a few miles ahead and above "Roger". The crew watched in silence as the deadly dance continued until a large "fire-y" glow could be seen and a Lancaster bomber began its final plunge into the channel ... Several

open parachutes were seen as the Night Fighter circled the area. Teddy had F/SGT Addington report the location of the crash to Air-Sea Rescue... Teddy turned away when the Night Fighter spotted "Roger" and began to make aggressive moves but the night fighter did not carry out an attack ... probably low on fuel... Upon returning to base it was learned that the Lancaster that went down in the channel was No 104 Squadron's "Bright Beach Fling" ... No one was rescued.

Photos below:

"R for Roger"

The Aulnoye Mission Map

Bomb Damage photo from "R for Roger" over the railyard at Aulnoye, France

Mission Results:

No Night Fighters shot down.

No crew members injured.

Bombs were - ON TARGET

Bomb Accuracy - 50% on target.

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

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Plane Name: "R for Roger"

