

Mission 9 Peenemunde 5/6 September 1943
P Phoenix

"Gentlemen, this raid is absolutely necessary and if don't succeed tonight you will be back tomorrow night and every night until you ARE successful. Peenemunde is a centre for developing the latest night fighter radar systems, so it's in your own interest to get it right first time! Let me make it quite clear how important security is about this mission. If the Op is scrubbed and the target leaks out then the person responsible will be summarily shot! The Pathfinders will be using a new technique by placing red spot markers on each of the Rugen island chain to give you a reference point on the way in. They will also be using offset Tl s on the target itself so that the smoke does not obscure visibility. You bomb aimers have been given the angle of correction so make sure that you have put these into your bombsights. You will be in the first wave so there will be no excuse for failing to spot the target in the clear weather that the Met boys are predicting. Good luck."

Climbing into Phoenix still somewhat weary from the long Italian mission a couple of nights earlier and with another very long hike in front of us I wondered if the Gen about Hitler being our actual target was accurate? That might explain why we are loaded with so many incendiaries.

R Regent takes off just in front of us and then it is our turn and Phoenix lifts off as sweet as anything. As we cross the coast to the north of Great Yarmouth I get a distinct feeling that this could be the night that our luck is in.

All goes well until just north of the Frisian Islands a plane in front us, probably R Regent, explodes lighting up the night sky. Poor blighters bought it and there will be empty chairs in the mess tonight.

Short time after Fraser our MUG spots a Do217J with obvious evil intent towards us trying to circle around to our blind spot when one of our Mossies gets the jump on him and sends him flaming down like a comet. Sweet revenge for the crew of R Regent!

Window and Mandrel are doing their job and it isn't until the target zone that we encounter some opposition in the form of a bit of light flak which hits the wing bomb cells causing a sharp intake of breath but apparently doesn't cause any real damage and then damages our landing brakes making them inoperable.

Having already checked our position using the 16 red spot markers we get a good run in to the target. "Master Bomber. Master Bomber. Bomb on the green. I say again. Bomb on the green. Ignore the dummy fires to the south of the target." "Bombs gone. Smack on target!" "Wild Sau 6 low" Jock our tail gunner has already opened fire as he says this and managed to clip his Port wing. The FW190 fires wide but circles round and tries again from 6 High the

MUG and Tail gunners both manage to damage his Starboard wing and the pilot bails out just as his aircraft cartwheels over our rear section.

We had just cleared Heligoland when Fraser shouts "Corkscrew left" and tracer streaks over the Starboard side of the cockpit. He must have used the last of his ammunition because we didn't see him again.

Coming into land and tried to drop as much speed as possible but it was still a long run out without the landing brakes.

We had really earned our bacon and eggs tonight and I didn't think that we would need to go back to Peenemunde again.

Result on target 78%