

Target for Tonight
“The Phantom of the Ruhr” - Lancaster Mk 1

Multiplayer Campaign 4 Mission 20 Total Campaign Missions 80
1945 Mission 20

Tonsberg, Norway - night of April 25 morning of April 26, 1945

The Phantom of the Ruhr's 23rd Combat Mission.

Crescent Moon – weather on takeoff 'poor'.

The Phantom is crewed by:

Pilot	Rueben Woodyear	P/O
Wireless	Harvey Rumble	F/SGT
Tail Gunner	Roman Castevet	SGT
Navigator	Owen Hanks	WO
Mid-Upper	Harry Goodyear	F/SGT
Bomb Aimer	Peter Alderman	WO
Engineer	Harvey Lewis	WO

For the last few weeks, the crew of The Phantom of the Ruhr have had some much needed rest and relaxation. But a few days after reporting back to base, we are prepped for another deep penetration mission to strike a huge oil refinery near Tonsberg – the oldest city in Norway. Intel reports of a concentration camp near the city as well which we must avoid hitting. If we can destroy the oil refineries, we may just be able to end this damn war as the Germans are running out of oil, ball bearings, tanks, aircrafts and men. They must be on the verge of collapse. We've heard that their military is down to using wagons and horses to move men and equipment.

As rain and fog cover the area, take off must be extremely careful tonight. Take off time is 6 pm and we are expected to hit Tonsberg at 3:30 am with a return to base by 1 pm. Needless to say, we have packed extra coco, coffee and sandwiches. I think our Lanc is carrying more fuel than bombs tonight.

The 104th is taking up the rear of the bomber stream but the Phantom is the first plane in the rear bomber stream. Take off is rough but safely handled and soon we are leveling off at 20,500 feet.

A good portion of our journey is over the North Sea and cloud cover seems to be 5/10 or 10/10 cloud cover with lots of fog below us as well. I hope no one has to ditch this far out as it would probably be a death sentence.

By midnight we arrive west of Kristiansand and there is lots of ground fog. Thank goodness our H25 ground scanning radar is working very well so we have green screened images of the coast below us. We see sporadic searchlight beams in the distance.

Suddenly a searchlight beam or maybe multiple beams home in on the Phantom but Pilot Officer Woodyear tries some evasive action which breaks the beams and we sneak back into the darkness.

As 3:15 am we arrive over the burning oil refineries of Tonsberg. Bomb Aimer Alderman moves from his Windows position back to his bomb aimer nose position. A flak bursts hits our starboard wing flap and does minimal damage but it does rock the aircraft. Woodyear tries to hold her steady as Alderman opens the bomb bay doors and lines up for the bomb drop. The oil refineries are a hellish inferno and lights the entire plane with its red and orange glow. "Bombs dropped." 60% on target. Moderate thermal turbulence rocks the plane even at 20,000 feet. "Bomb doors closed." We turn to our return course and head back to base.

The return trip is quiet and we watch the sun come up. We land back at our base at 12:30 pm on April 26th. Debriefing then some food and bed. The minor flap damage will be repaired later this afternoon.