

Target for Tonight On Line Campaign  
"The 'ell Cat" - Lancaster Mk 1  
Multiplayer Campaign 3 Mission 5 Total Campaign Mission 45 1944 Mission 25  
Karlsruhe, Germany - night of April 14 and morning of April 15, 1944  
The 'Ell Cat's 8th Combat Mission.  
Full Moon – weather on take off 'good'.

With only a two day reprieve between missions, we are assigned to be part of a massive 500 plane bomber attack on Karlsruhe, Germany. This will be an area bombing of the city which will focus on the weapons factories in the city. This will be a long mission and will take us to the Rhine River area. We are expected to be in the air at 7:30 pm, hit the city at around 1 am and then back to base by dawn.

We are bomber 7 in the middle bomber stream. Take off at 7:40 was normal and The 'ell Cat's engines are purring perfectly.

The night is clear and the springtime weather is good as a full moon shines down on us. Our gunners test their guns as we swing over the Channel. Bomb Aimer Evans takes his 2nd position over the window drop chute which also acts as a toilet. Soon foil packets of window are being dumped to help disguise our position from the German long range radar systems. As we approach Belgium, our bomber stream has reached its mission operational height of 24,000 feet. We leave behind no contrails – that will help on a dangerous mission under a full moon with no clouds.

Suddenly as we approach Antwerp, searchlights spring to life and our bomber is washed with blinding white light – then the flak starts. The flak is extremely heavy this evening and our bomber is buffeted by the blasts but we make it through unscathed. That may have used one of our nine lives as we leave the searchlights and flak behind us.

As we approach Luxembourg, we encounter 10/10 cloud cover. There is no mission recall received so our voyage continues. In the distance, we see searchlights illuminating the clouds. This is what the German's call "Corpse Blankets" as these lights will show the exact location of the bombers to high flying night fighters just as light shows maggots on the blanket used to wrap a corpse. As we pass the Luxembourg flak zones, the 10/10 cloud cover continues. We hope that this will break over the target but by utilizing our H2S ground scanning radar, we have a pretty good picture of what's beneath those clouds.

An hour later, the clouds break to 5/10 and we see a city burning ahead of us. Hot globes of flak are shooting up from the ground all over the area. These globes then explode in huge black masses of shrapnel. Evans gets into his bombing position as the bomber is buffeted by explosions. Naturally, our bombers begin leaving contrails. Perfect timing, right? The pathfinders have done their work as have the bombers flying ahead of us. The city is mostly obscured by both clouds and massive plumes of smoke which reach up from the ground like fingers in the night. Sgt. Bishop, our Navigator, reports that we are right on target. Evans opens the bomb doors and readies his finger on the drop button. "Bombs dropped. 40% spot on. Bomb

doors closed.” Thermal turbulence buffets The 'Ell Cat as she makes her turn to her return course.

We leave both Karlsruhe and our contrails behind as we head back towards Luxembourg. Evans starts dropping windows again as we slip into the night. Sgt Moss breaks out the Spam sandwiches and coffee and passes the much needed food and drink out to the crew.

Just as we clear the coast about 200 miles away from Rotterdam, our Monica tail warning radar begins to chirp in the intercom system and Warrant Officer Collier's voice is also heard over the intercom “Monica has a visual fix on a night fighter approaching from 6 o'clock low. 1000 feet out.”

Corp. Naylor's four .303 machine guns rattle to life as his tail guns rip into the Me 100 F4 and walk shots from its cockpit down to its tail! The older Luftwaffe aircraft dips its right wing and the pilot is seen bailing out. The gunner and radar operator appear to go down with the two engine night fighter. That's our second kill out of 8 missions! “Good job George!” exclaims PO Dixon.

The rest of the flight is uneventful and we land back at Norwich at 5:40 am.