

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

Multiplayer Campaign 3 Mission 19 Total Campaign Missions 59
1944 Mission 39

Heilbronn, Germany - night of September 1st morning of September 2nd, 1944

The Phantom of the Ruhr's 2nd Combat Mission.

Full Moon – weather on takeoff 'good'.

The Phantom is crewed by:

Pilot	Rueben Woodyear	P/O
Wireless	Harvey Rumble	F/SGT
Tail Gunner	Peter Wilson	SGT
Navigator	Owen Hanks	WO
Mid-Upper	Harry Goodyear	F/SGT
Bomb Aimer	Archie Smothers	WO
Engineer	Fred Ray	WO

Well, what we thought was happening has actually happened. The techs have found out that the Germans have been able to home in on our Monica tail warning radar. So a few days ago, all the Monica systems were removed from our bombers. Many are grumbling about this as Monica provided an extra set of eyes watching our 6.

Now, as our ground forces free more and more of Europe from the clutches of the Nazis, we are to do an area bombing attack against Heilbronn in Germany. Apparently, Heilbronn is a major rail hub for the German military.

At 8 pm, we take off and join the bomber stream. The Phantom is bomber number 11 in the tail end of the bomber stream.

The trip over the sea and France, Belgium and Luxembourg is mostly routine and quiet. German night fighter activity has decreased remarkably as we have gained control of the air.

As we fly southwest of Bonn, the Phantom shudders as an Me110 night fighter fires its Jazz Music Cannons into the underbelly of the bomber. Fred Ray, our tail gunner, reports that his heating system has gone out and then lets out a scream; our starboard wing takes a wing root hit; the bomber's nose section takes superficial damage; shrapnel hits our flight engineer in the nose causing some superficial bleeding; some holes are poked in the bomb bay doors; our tail gunner doesn't report in after the attack. When checked on, he was found to have bled out. The Me 110 disappears into the night.

As we approach Heilbronn, we see fires in the distance as well as searchlights and the ever-present flak bursts. We line up on the target flairs dropped by the pathfinders. Archie opens the bomb bay doors and drops the load on the target. 50% of the bombs fall on target. We make our turn to the return course.

Our return trip is uneventful but very quiet as we are all dealing with the loss of Fred. A good man who leaves behind a family who loved him and friends who cared about him.