

## Target for Tonight

“The 'ell Cat” - Lancaster Mk 1

Multiplayer Campaign 3 Mission 10 (listed as Mission “9”) Total Campaign Mission  
50

1944 Mission 30

Wimereux, Pas-De-Calais, France - night of May 23th and morning of May 24, 1944

The 'Ell Cat's 13th Combat Mission.

New Moon – weather on takeoff 'poor'.

A whoop goes up from the bomber crews as the target for tonight was announced; emplaced German artillery fortifications in the Wimereux region of the Pas-De-Calais in France. The Yanks have already hit the Kriegsmarine HQ in Wimereux during their day light raids. With tonight's attack on the artillery positions, it is now obvious to all of us that the upcoming invasion will land at Pas-De-Calais. Already, thousands of troops, tanks, trucks and ships are gathered at British harbors ready to embark once the weather is more favorable.

We take off in sheets of rain and ground fog. The 'Ell Cat is plane number 9 in the last third of the bomber stream. It's a short mission tonight. Up at 9 pm and back to base by 1 am. Cruising altitude is 15,000 feet to 20,000 feet.

As we hit the Channel near Plymouth we begin dropping Window to confuse the German long range radar systems.

By 11 pm, we are over the Pas-De-Celais region and are on the approach to the targets. The German artillery are huge naval guns in strong bunkers so our bombs are a special design which, in theory, will destroy the bunkers. We call the bombs blockbusters. Soon the inevitable searchlights and flak bursts try and take us down. In the distance, we see that the first and second wave have done their job and fires have broken out in the area of the artillery bunkers. We drop our bombs. 32% on target. There is moderate thermal turbulence.

We make our course adjustment to head back to merry old England. Suddenly multiple searchlights target us and flak bursts around the 'Ell Cat. But like the good old cat she is, she slips past without taking so much as a nick to her paint.

Then, as pilot officer Will Dixon, tries to corkscrew the bomber out of the searchlight beams, a Ju 88 C6 outfitted with Lichtenstein Radar, Flensburg passive electronic warfare systems and Jazz Music upward firing cannons tries to get below us and rip us to shreds. Its veteran air crew gets five solid 20mm cannon hits from underneath our bomber! Our starboard wing flap is hit but suffers only superficial damage; our bomb bay doors suffer superficial damage twice; our bomb bay bomb racks suffer damage; then a walking hit through multiple sections of the bomber – nose turret guns are damaged and inoperable; our Gee receiver is destroyed; our autopilot bomb drop system is destroyed; the mid upper gunner's heating system is knocked out and the tail takes superficial damage. Luckily our evasive action takes us to a low altitude so that the Ju88 can't use its Jazz Music on us again.

We have dropped own to 3000 feet in an effort to keep everyone warm and minimize night fighter attacks from below.

We then drop down to 2000 feet and speed back over the Channel.

As we approach the English coast at around midnight, another Ju88 C6 attacks from 3 o'clock low. But its shots go wide and it misses us. It disappears into the night before coming back around from 9 o'clock low. That pilot knows what he's doing. He keeps hitting us from a blind spot in our defensive guns. But those positions also make it harder to hit our bomber and he misses again. Soon he disappears into the night.

By 1 am, we touch down at our base. The 'Ell Cat brought us back again. She is damaged but not done by any means. Tonight has brought us one more day closer to the end of the war.