

B-17 Queen of the Skies Tournament at Total-Con 31: February, 2017

This Avalon Hill solitaire staple was played in the amphitheatre at Total Con on Friday, February 17th, 2017.. Each participant commanded a four-engined Boeing B-17E bomber, which they named, with a total of ten picked crew members. Another mission will be flown at Total Con 32 on Friday at 1pm.

Nine bombers gathered by squadron over England and all made it over the target, the railyards at Hamm, with six of nine “on-target”, while three had no bombs within a 1,000 yards of the aim point. One bomber with pilot, co-pilot & engineer already done, went down. Only one crewman was able to jump and he drowned in the channel.

In each of the flights, the lead bomber meant they had an extra ME-109 at '12 O'clock High', as did each squadron's tail plane at 'Six O'clock' for every wave of fighters both to, and from the target.

Gamemaster John Haskell reports the winner of the tournament was Peter K., flying “Miss Adventures” with 30% and four fighters downed and all crew home. A close second by our own Rob K. in “Flak Bait” with bombs on target and five fighters destroyed. Scott R. earned third place by bringing home all but one of his crew members on “Boston Bomber”, knocking out two fighters and dropping 5% of his bombs ‘on target’.

The ‘Hard Luck’ and the highest bomb percentage was John J. R. in “Andrea Gay” with 40%, however his ship was destroyed and all hands lost. Pete K's “Miss Adventures” took *‘most-damage & returned-home’* recognition and still dropped 30% on target..

Other planes had mixed results: Kate K's “Kates Krates” had the best name and though it could not drop bombs due to damage, shot down a Folke Wolfe and returned. Tim K. in “Tim's Tomb” had 20% bombs on target taking oxygen system, wing root and tail wheel hits along with one engine. Nathaniel W's “Shellable” lost an engine too, lost heat and though it didn't hit the target, its gunners took out five fighters. Bob W's “Queen Bea” dropped 20% on target, destroyed two fighters and took damage, including one engine out.

The 367th Squadron will rise to hit a target(s) in occupied Europe at the next Total Con and Ellis Con.

Statistics from this flight:

Six planes had some bombs on target: 16% average, high of 40%, though one-third (3) had no bombs within 1000 feet of aim point, mostly due to flak hits or injured bombardiers causing ‘off target’ result.

Casualties: One of nine bombers (11%), two crew seriously wounded though recovered (2%), 13 *deaths* of 90 (14%), ten in one plane, both waist gunners in another.

Damages from waves of German fighters: 7 gun positions knocked out (10%), two radio/intercoms out, bomb controls damaged, fuel tank leak and two engines shot-out of surviving planes

German fighters: 19 destroyed, 27 damaged from after-action reports
Rob K's "Flak Bait" and Nathaniel W's "Shellable" each shot down five.