

The following story was prepared by the Public Relations office of the 447th at Rattlesden, sometime in early 1945. Part of the story were later used in the April 1945 issue of **Strikes** magazine

AN EIGHTH AIR FORCE BOMBER STATION, England - Laying claim to an unequalled engineering record in B-17 Flying Fortresses in the United Kingdom, the 447th Bomb Group, commanded by Colonel Wm. J. Wigglesworth of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, has six Fords each with over one hundred bombing missions and no mechanical failures. Each airplane is still flying combat missions. The major part of the credit should be given- to the crew chief a, and ground men of the five planes. Through their efforts over the past many months they have been able to keep their record well above that of other units in the Eighth Air Force. The combined planes have dropped approximately 1,728 tons of bombs-on Nazi emplacements in previously occupied Continental Europe and Germany proper, and have carried over twenty complete combat crews through their missions.



The crew chiefs of the Fortresses are Master Sergeant Michael Kaschak, 24, from 43 Hazel Street, Binghamton, New York. Sgt Kaschak's plane, "Li'l Eight Ball," has to date one hundred nine missions over Hitlerland. The plane came as a replacement to the group on 1 May 1944. It flew its first mission to Berlin on May 7th, 1944 and has returned their many times since. It has a total of 1093 hours flying time, has had eighteen engine changes, has sustained major battle damage eight times and minor battle damage ten times. The plane has returned from bombing its target eight times, but never because of a mechanical failure. It has dropped a total of 284 tons of bombs on vital objectives in Germany.



Second is Technical Sergeant Robert Orlosky, 23, from Brockway, Pennsylvania. His plane, "Milk Wagon," to date has one hundred seventeen combat missions to its credit. It has flown 1019 hours, has had fourteen engine changes and has dropped 313 tons of bombs on enemy held targets in Europe. It has never once had to turn back from bombing its target because of mechanical failure. It was assigned to the group as a replacement in June, 1944 and has seen such targets as Berlin, Merseberg, Leipzig, Ludwigshaven and many others.

Third is Master Sergeant Jack A. Berry, 23, from 2019 Clence Terrace, Fort Worth, Texas, His Fort "Royal Flush" has indeed lived up to its name by having flown one hundred eight combat missions over Continental Europe. The plane has accrued 1043 hours flying time since it came to the group as a replacement in May, 1944. It has had eight engine changes and has had to return without bombing the target only five times, never once because of a mechanical failure. It has sustained major battle damage ten times and has been credited with the destruction of two enemy fighters. Its bomb tonnage dropped on enemy targets amounts to 290 tons.



Fourth is Master Sergeant Lawrence A. Grider, 31, from Vallenia, Indiana. His Fortress, "Cock o' the Sky" has to date one hundred five combat missions to targets in Germany and previously occupied Europe. This plane is also a replacement, having come to the group in May, 1944. It has a total of 1131 hours flying time, during which period it has

had 14 engine changes. It has sustained major battle damage eight times. The plane has been forced to return from bombing its target only four times and never once because of mechanical failure. So far, it has dropped 289 tons of bombs on vital Eighth Air Force objectives in Europe.

Fifth is Master Sergeant Orval R. Young, 27, from Hooker, Oklahoma. This plane, "Dead Man's Hand," contrary to its name has never had a wounded person on board and has to date achieved one hundred ten bombing missions. It is an original plane, having come from the states with the group. It has a total of 1249 hours flying time. It has had seventeen engine changes, has sustained major battle damage eleven times and minor battle damage nineteen times. "Dead Man's Hand" has been forced to turn, back from bombing its objective nine times, but never once because of mechanical failures. So far it has dropped over 290 tons of bombs on its assigned targets.



Sixth is Master Sergeant Kenneth J. Johnson, 25, from Dane, Wisconsin. His Fort "Scheherazade" leads the sextet by virtue of having completed one hundred fifteen combat missions to Eighth Air Force targets in Germany and previously occupied Continental Europe. The plane has flown 1280 hours, has had 23 engine changes, has sustained major battle damage ten times and minor battle damage nine times. It has only had six returns from bombing its target without dropping bombs and none of these was because of mechanical failure. It has dropped 310 tons of bombs on Hitler's Europe. The plane originally was assigned to the group in the United States and has added the hazard of flying the Atlantic to its credit. The plane is still flying and should soon have the eighth Air Force record for Flying Fortresses.