

300th Mission of the 98th

The 300th combat mission of a B-24 Liberator group based in southern Italy was chalked up recently when its bomb-totin' "Libs" struck a Nazi-held railroad viaduct at Avisio, Italy, on the important Brenner Pass route.

This enviable record established in over two years of overseas operations, now finds this group one of the indestructible links in the powerful chain of the Fifteenth Arm Air Force bombing forces.

After becoming operational in August 1942, the group staged its first mission to the Egyptian Port of Mersa Matruh, then being used as a supply point for Rommel's Afrika Korps.

This was the beginning of many firsts in which this group has distinguished itself. It participated in the first bomber attack on Italy, the first low-level attack on Ploesti, the Allied attack on Nazi targets in the Rome area, and finally the invasion of southern France.

If the figure 300 doesn't look too impressive to the reader, possibly these figures will be more convincing. On the average, an operational mission was flown every other day. In that time 13,000 tons of bombs were dropped on enemy targets; roughly 15,000,000 gallons of gas were used to transport 6,163 B-24s over 10,003,950 miles. In this vast endeavor more than 30,000 manhours of flying were logged.

The group is the proud possessor of two Presidential Citations and a score of commendations for its participation in bombing attacks on every important objective in southern Germany, southern France, northern Italy, and the Balkans.

No special observance of the mission was held except that the boys did "one helluva good jo on the target."