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God Is My Co-Pilot

Hollywood, Feb. 20.

Warner Bros. release of Robert Buckner production. Stars Dennis Morgan; features Dane Clark, Raymond Massey, Alan Hale, Andrea King, John Ridgely. Directed by Robert Florey. Screenplay, Peter Milne and Abem Finkel, from book by Col. Robert Lee Scott, Jr.; camera, Sid Hickox; aerial photography, Charles Marshall; editor Folmer B. Vlangsted; technical adviser, Col. Robert Lee Scott, Jr.; special effects, Roy Davidson, Edwin DuPar, Robert Barks; music, Franz Waxman; musical director, Leo F. Forbstein. Previewed in Hollywood, Feb. 16, '45. Running time, 83 MINS.

Col. Robert L. Scott.....	Dennis Morgan
Johnny Petach.....	Dane Clark
Gen. Chennault.....	Raymond Massey
Big Mike.....	Alan Hale
Catharine.....	Andrea King
Tex Hill.....	John Ridgely
Col. Cooper.....	Stanley Ridges
Rector.....	Craig Stevens
Bob Neal.....	Warren Douglas
Sgt. Baldrige.....	Stephen Richards
Pvt. Motley.....	Charles Smith
Col. Haynes.....	Minor Watson
Tokyo Joe.....	Richard Loo
Sgt. Aaltonen.....	Murray Alper
Lt. Sharp.....	Joel Allen
Chinese Captain.....	Frank Tank
Lt. Horner.....	Paul Brook
Lt. Wilson.....	Jolin Miles
John Allison.....	Bernie Sell
Dr. Reynolds.....	William Forrest
Frank Schiel.....	Danny Dowling
Jap radio announcer.....	Philip Ahn

This is another of Warners' recent war films touching on the various fighting branches of our armed forces. As such it should do average business in the keys and play off okay down through the subsequents. Narrative uses flashback technique to condense life of Col. Robert Lee Scott, Jr., Army ace who's gained fame with General Chennault's Flying Tigers.

Air fight sequences bear an authentic stamp, although studio-made, and the thrills are good drama for the present-day market. Title derives from Scott's realization that a pilot doesn't face danger alone, and several of his real-life brushes with death sustain the belief.

There has been considerable condensation of Scott's story, taken from his best-selling book of same title, and undoubtedly commercial license has pointed up some incidents for better dramatic flavor. It's the story of a boy born to fly and spans his days from the time he first jumped off the barn with an umbrella, through model planes, West Point, flying the mail, instructing and his takeoff on a secret mission to China after Pearl Harbor. Mission is cancelled and Scott becomes attached to Gen. Chennault's Tigers. It is during this period he decides a pilot never flies alone.

Condensation was evidently more in the hands of the film editor than in the script by Peter Milne and Abem Finkel. Finished picture indicates there was considerable scissoring to hold footage to reasonable length. Robert Florey's direction manages authenticity and obtains excellent performances from the cast headed by Dennis Morgan. Latter is thoroughly likeable as Scott, the Macon, Ga., boy who took to the air to win honors. Andrea King, as Scott's wife, does an interesting job in the few scenes permitted her.

Raymond Massey is capable as Gen. Chennault. Dane Clark, as Johnny Petach, and John Ridgely as Tex Hill, show up best among the pilots. Alan Hale is a believable missionary. Murray Alper, Stanley Ridges, Richard Loo, a Nip pilot, and Philip Ahn, a Jap radio announcer, rate mention among the others.

Robert Buckner's production guidance is topflight, as are the technical functions under his wing, including Sid Hickox' camera work, the aerial photography by Charles Marshall, and special effects by Roy Davidson, Edwin DuPar and Robert Burks.

Brog.

Weekly VARIETY-