

North American FJ-3 Fury - Intrepid Museum

North American FJ-3 Fury (Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum)

The FJ-3 Fury on display at the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum in New York City represents a crucial step in the evolution of naval aviation, bridging the gap between early jet fighters and the sophisticated supersonic aircraft that would follow. While bearing the "Fury" name and a superficial resemblance to the earlier FJ-2, the FJ-3 was essentially a new design, heavily influenced by the legendary F-86 Sabre.

1. Historical Background and Significance:

* **Post-WWII Jet Development:** After World War II, the US Navy rapidly embraced jet propulsion technology. The FJ-1 Fury was one of its first carrier-based jet fighters, but its straight-wing design limited its performance.

* **Korean War Influence:** The Korean War highlighted the need for more advanced jet fighters. Experience with land-based jets like the F-86 Sabre demonstrated the advantages of swept wings for higher speeds.

* **Transitional Design:** The FJ-3 Fury incorporated swept wings and other improvements, making it a significantly more capable aircraft than its predecessor. It served as a vital stepping stone towards later, more advanced naval fighters like the F-8 Crusader.

2. Technical Specifications:

* **Manufacturer:** North American Aviation

* **Crew:** 1

- * **Length:** 37 ft 9 in (11.51 m)
- * **Wingspan:** 36 ft 6 in (11.13 m)
- * **Height:** 12 ft 9 in (3.89 m)
- * **Empty weight:** 10,867 lb (4,930 kg)
- * **Max takeoff weight:** 18,507 lb (8,393 kg)
- * **Powerplant:** 1 × Wright J65-W-4 turbojet, 7,700 lbf (34 kN) thrust
- * **Maximum speed:** 680 mph (1,094 km/h) at sea level
- * **Service ceiling:** 49,000 ft (14,900 m)
- * **Armament:** Four 20 mm (.79 in) Colt Mk 12 cannons

3. Interesting Facts and Stories:

- * **"Short-Winged Sabre":** The FJ-3's resemblance to the F-86 Sabre earned it the nickname "short-winged Sabre" due to its cropped wings, necessary for carrier operations.
- * **Carrier Suitability:** Designed for carrier operations, the FJ-3 featured features like an arrestor hook and reinforced landing gear.
- * **Limited Production:** Only 538 FJ-3s were built, reflecting its role as a transitional aircraft.
- * **Training Role:** In its later service life, the FJ-3 was primarily used for advanced flight training, preparing pilots for newer, more complex fighters.

4. Its Role in History:

- * **Bridging the Gap:** The FJ-3 served as a crucial link in the development of naval jet fighters, introducing swept-wing technology and paving the way for supersonic carrier aircraft.
- * **Cold War Service:** While never seeing combat, the FJ-3 played a vital role in maintaining the

US Navy's air power during the Cold War.

* **Training Future Pilots:** The FJ-3's role as a trainer contributed to the development of skilled naval aviators who would go on to fly more advanced jets.

5. Current Condition and Display Information:

* **Location:** Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum, Pier 86, New York City

* **Display:** The FJ-3 is displayed on the flight deck of the USS Intrepid, offering visitors a close-up view of this historically significant aircraft.

* **Condition:** The aircraft is preserved in its original Navy markings and appears to be in excellent condition, although it is not airworthy.

* **Accessibility:** Visitors can walk around and view the aircraft from different angles, gaining an appreciation for its size and design. The museum provides information panels detailing the aircraft's history and specifications.

The FJ-3 Fury at the Intrepid Museum offers a fascinating glimpse into the rapid evolution of naval aviation in the years following World War II. Its presence reminds us of the crucial role transitional aircraft played in pushing the boundaries of technology and preparing for the future of air power.