

= Nighthawk (roller coaster) =

Nighthawk is a steel flying roller coaster from Vekoma located at Carowinds amusement park . Originally opening as Stealth at California 's Great America on April 1 , 2000 , the roller coaster was the first flying roller coaster model in the world . In 2003 , Paramount decided to relocate the roller coaster to Carowinds . It reopened as Borg Assimilator ? the first coaster in the world to be themed to Star Trek ? on March 20 , 2004 . After Cedar Fair purchased Carowinds in 2006 , Paramount themes were soon removed from the park , and the ride was renamed Nighthawk . It is one of only three Flying Dutchman models still in existence from Vekoma .

= = History = =

= = = Paramount 's Great America (2000 ? 2003) = = =

On June 22 , 1999 , Paramount 's Great America announced Stealth as " the world 's first true flying coaster . " For Stealth to be installed , the lower flume of Logger 's Run had to be altered and the Yankee Clipper had to be removed . The ride officially opened to the public on April 1 , 2000 . On August 21 , 2003 , it was announced Stealth would close on September 1 to make room for a new water park , Boomerang Bay . The station and several footers are still located in the water park today .

= = = Carowinds (2004 ? present) = = =

On August 21 , 2003 , Carowinds announced a new flying roller coaster that would be relocated from California 's Great America . The ride 's name was not announced at the time . On January 15 , 2004 , it was announced the new roller coaster would be named Borg Assimilator and would be the first Star Trek themed roller coaster . Regarding the design of the attraction , Dale Kaetzel , Vice President of marketing and Assistant General Manager , said :

Nighthawk subsequently replaced the Carolina Sternwheeler Riverboat , a paddle boat ride that took riders around the seven themed areas of the park . It officially opened to the public on March 20 , 2004 .

Cedar Fair Entertainment Company purchased Carowinds in 2006 and did not own the rights to several licenses used by the park . In 2008 , the park renamed several attractions including Borg Assimilator . It was renamed to Nighthawk and the Star Trek theming was removed , including the black sphere that was in the pond underneath the ride . In 2009 , Nighthawk was painted with dark blue supports and yellow track .

= = Ride experience = =

= = = Track = = =

The steel track is approximately 2 @, @ 766 feet (843 m) in length and the height of the lift is approximately 115 feet (35 m) . While at California 's Great America , the track was painted red and white with steel gray supports . When the ride was relocated to Carowinds , the track was repainted black and green and the supports remained gray . After the name was changed in 2008 , the ride was once again repainted with yellow track and blue supports .

Nighthawk has a total of five inversions . It features one vertical loop , a double corkscrew , two " Lie to Fly " and two " Fly to Lie " elements . Each " Lie to Fly " and " Fly to Lie " element is counted as a half inversion . A " Lie to Fly " element is when riders are on their backs , facing the sky and they are flipped and face the ground . A " Fly to Lie " element is the opposite .

== Layout ==

Once riders are seated and restrained , the train tilts backwards into a ' lay @-@ down ' position and dispatched . The train travels backwards out of the station , turns left and travels up the 115 @-@ foot (35 m) lift hill . Once the train reaches the top of the lift hill , it dips down into a twist (called a " Lie @-@ to @-@ Fly ") that turns the trains upside down into a flying position where riders face the ground . After the twist , the train travels down the first drop , reaching speeds of 51 mph (82 km / h) . Riders then go through an over banked Horseshoe Curve element . Following the Horseshoe , the train enters a " Fly @-@ to @-@ Lie " element that turns riders back to a lay @-@ down position . After the banked turn , the ride enters the 66 @-@ foot (20 m) tall vertical loop , where riders experience 4 @.@ 3 G 's . The train then goes into another " Lie @-@ to @-@ Fly " element . Following the loop , riders go through another turn into the final " Fly @-@ to @-@ Lie " element before entering two consecutive corkscrews before making a right turn onto the brake run .

== Theme ==

While the ride was located at California 's Great America , there was no theme for the ride . When it was relocated to Carowinds in 2004 , it was built as the first Star Trek themed roller coaster in the world . It was renamed Borg Assimilator and the story was that " Borg crash @-@ landed in the middle of Carowinds and their ship ? a giant gray and black sphere ? has come to rest near the park 's new flying roller coaster . " There was a gray and black sphere located in the pond underneath the ride that the Borg crashed in . In addition to other theming , a voice was played surrounding the ride saying Borg quotes . After Cedar Fair bought the park , all the Star Trek theming was removed and the name was changed for the 2008 season .

== Trains ==

Nighthawk currently operates with two trains . Each train has six cars that have four seats in a single row for a total of 24 riders . Riders are restrained by an over the shoulder restraint and a lap bar . Riders can put on the over the shoulder restraint but a ride operator will push down the lap bar . While in the station , the trains will recline back to the laying down position .

== Incidents ==

On March 17 , 2007 , seven employees received minor injuries when their seats changed position during a test run of the roller coaster . An inspection discovered that the ride operator accidentally pushed a button controlling the seat positions while the ride was in motion . That button was later modified to only work when the ride is stopped .