

= Firehawk (roller coaster) =

Firehawk is a steel flying roller coaster built by Vekoma at Kings Island in Mason , Ohio . It originally opened as X @-@ Flight at Six Flags Worlds of Adventure on May 26 , 2001 . Cedar Fair purchased Worlds of Adventure in 2004 and began efforts to downsize the park . In November 2006 , Cedar Fair announced plans to relocate X @-@ Flight . Kings Island was later revealed as the destination , and it officially reopened as Firehawk on May 26 , 2007 .

Firehawk may not have been the first Flying Dutchman model from Vekoma , a title that belongs to Nighthawk at Carowinds , but it was billed as the Midwest 's first and only flying roller coaster when it opened in 2001 . The notability was short @-@ lived , as the opening of Superman : Ultimate Flight at Six Flags Great America two years later meant it was no longer alone in the region . In addition , Firehawk 's layout is identical to Batwing , another Vekoma Flying Dutchman , located at Six Flags America in Upper Marlboro , Maryland .

= = History = =

= = = Six Flags Worlds of Adventure / Geauga Lake (2001 ? 2006) = = =

While the park was still named Six Flags Ohio , plans for a new roller coaster known as X @-@ Flight were revealed on January 4 , 2001 . Six days later , Six Flags purchased SeaWorld Ohio ? next to Geauga Lake ? with the intent of merging the two to create Six Flags Worlds of Adventure . The new venture advertised X @-@ Flight as the first Flying roller coaster in the Midwest , and it was the park 's tenth roller coaster overall ? the fifth added since 2000 . The new coaster was built on a former bus parking lot , and Geauga Lake Road had to be rerouted around the ride . Regarding the design of the attraction , Jake Bateman , Vice President and General Manager of Six Flags Worlds of Adventure , said :

Land clearing began on December 1 , 2000 , and construction on the footers began February 9 , 2001 . X @-@ Flight was originally supposed to open in early May 2001 , but due to technical difficulties , its opening was delayed . During testing , problems were discovered with several devices including the reclining mechanism on the trains and their restraints . X @-@ Flight 's media day was eventually held on May 24 , 2001 , and the ride officially opened two days later on May 26 .

Cedar Fair purchased the park from Six Flags in 2004 for \$ 145 million . They announced intentions of returning the park to its roots as a family @-@ oriented amusement park . The efforts to downsize the park eventually led to X @-@ Flight 's removal . On November 22 , 2006 , Geauga Lake park officials announced that X @-@ Flight was being dismantled to be sent to another unspecified Cedar Fair property . Moving the ride would take some time , as the final sections of track and supports wouldn 't be removed until March 2007 .

= = = Kings Island (2007 ? present) = = =

On January 22 , 2007 , green Vekoma track resembling the track of X @-@ Flight was spotted at Kings Island , a Cedar Fair park in Mason , Ohio . On February 5 , 2007 , Kings Island officially announced Firehawk as the former X @-@ Flight roller coaster from Geauga Lake . Construction was scheduled to begin later that month , and the opening was set for Memorial Day weekend later that year . X @-@ Flight 's neon green track and dark blue supports were re @-@ painted red and steel gray , respectively . It was built in an area next to Flight of Fear , creating a new area named X @-@ Base which connects to nearby area Coney Mall . Firehawk officially opened as scheduled on May 26 , 2007 . It was the first roller coaster to be introduced at the park since Cedar Fair purchased it from Paramount Parks in 2006 . The first 2 @,@ 500 riders received commemorative Firehawk T @-@ shirts .

= = Ride experience = =

= = = Track = = =

The steel track is 3 @, @ 340 feet (1 @, @ 020 m) in length , and the height of the lift is 115 feet (35 m) . There are approximately 300 sections of track colored red with steel gray supports . When the ride operated at Geauga Lake , the track was neon green with dark blue supports .

Firehawk has a total of five inversions - one vertical loop , two inline twists , and four 180 @-@ degree inline twists that are each counted as a half inversion . These 180 @-@ degree inline twists are also known as " Lie to Fly " and " Fly to Lie " elements , in which riders on their backs are flipped to face the ground or vice versa .

= = = Layout = = =

Once riders are seated and restrained , the train is tilted 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 at a 33 degree angle . 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 proceed through an over banked Horseshoe Curve element , passing the queue area . 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 enter another turn and hit two consecutive inline twists . Following the inline twists , the train enters the final helix followed by the final " Fly @-@ to @-@ Lie " element . Afterwards , the train is slowed to a stop on the brake run before returning to the station .

= = = Station = = =

The coaster features a dual station which is connected to the main track using a switch track segment (similar to a railroad switch) . Dual @-@ station operation allows for two trains to be loaded simultaneously for more efficient operation . This configuration existed since the ride debuted at Geauga Lake .

= = = Trains = = =

Firehawk currently operates with two trains . There are six cars with four seats in each row for a total of 24 riders per train . There were three trains during the ride 's first year at Geauga Lake , however only two have been used since . The third train became a parts donor for the first two . Originally , riders reclined on the lift hill ? rather than in the station ? and returned to an upright position prior to re @-@ entering the station . However , this was changed to occur in the station due to problems that arose during the ride 's first season . The trains feature the Firehawk logo on the front colored yellow and red . Previously at Geauga Lake , the X @-@ Flight logo was colored lime green and dark blue .

= = Incident = =

On August 8 , 2009 , an adult male passenger was rushed to a hospital after he was found with breathing problems following the ride . He died the same evening . The Hamilton County Coroner 's Office reported that a heart condition was the likely cause of death and ruled it natural . The ride was re @-@ opened at 12 : 10 pm on August 9 , 2009 , after an inspection by the Ohio Department

of Agriculture ? a division of the state government responsible for amusement park ride safety in Ohio . They determined the ride was operating within the manufacturer 's specifications .