

Starfighter of “Starfighters Aerospace”

On November 3, 2015 I had the great opportunity to visit the “Starfighters Aerospace” company at the Kennedy Space Center (KSC).

The Shuttle Landing Facility is the home base for Starfighters Aerospace. Its maintenance is located in the SLF 50,000 sqn feet hangar inside the Kennedy Space Center on Merritt Island, FL.

This all was possible with the great help of Wolfgang Czaia, who managed all the necessary paperwork for the permission of the visit and showed me around and told me a lot of details.



Line-up of the fleet in front of the main hangar



Wolfgang “Wolf” Czaia has logged over 2800 hours in type, out of approx. 28.000 hours total flight time in more than 150 different types of airplanes.

Since 1992, test pilot for the reproduction Messerschmitt Me262 - the world’s first operational jet fighter - conducting all FAA -certification test flights, developing normal- and emergency procedures and writing the flight manuals.

Wolfgang is a member of the Classic Jet Aircraft Association, EAA, Cascade Warbirds, the German Fighter Pilots Association, the National Space Society and the Society of Experimental Test Pilots

CF-104D 1032 104632 "N104RB" (cn 5302, sn 12632) "N104NL" / "N166TB" / "N104RB"

This two seat Canadian Starfighter was once flown by the Canadian Armed Forces since its delivery on May 1, 1962. It served the test squadron at Cold Lake for many years and when the Canadians wanted to decrease their operational F-104 fleet they sold this aircraft to the Norwegian Air Force on 23 May 1973. On 14 September that year it arrived in Norway receiving serial "4632". It served 334Skv at Bodo until its retirement on November 19, 1982 and put in storage at Sola Air Base and later on Flesland Air Station. In November 1988 it was bought by Northern Light Aircraft Corporation and brought over to the USA by C-130 Hercules on the 30th that month. The company spent a lot of hours to ready the aircraft for FAA certification. It received civil registration "N104NL" and on May 19, 1989 it made its first flight at Montgomery Airport, Alabama, with Wolfgang Czaia at the controls. After initial test flights he ferried the airplane to Mojave, California, where the airplane was kept busy with flight test work for aerospace companies and occasional passenger flights. In 1993 it was offered for sale and in 1994 was sold to Thunderbird Aviation; it was ferried to their headquarters at Deer Valley, Arizona on April 11, 1994. This company gave the aircraft an intensive service treatment removing all the paintwork and checking the complete airframe and avionics. It got a new civil registration "N166TB", which was more in line with the registration of their other aircraft. Soon after the aircraft flew again and the company received a number of interesting contracts from the US Air Force. From August 29, 1995 till mid-January 1996 it flew several test flights from Edwards Air Force Base in California. Soon after Thunderbird Aviation ceased operations, and the aircraft was sold to Rick Svetkoff who started a Starfighter demonstration team. It was bought in January 1996 and after a number of inspections in Deer Valley was flown over from Deer Valley to Clearwater, Florida on February.6, 1996. At Clearwater the aircraft received some necessary overhaul and made some taxi runs in October 1996. The real first flight was in March 1997 with Tom Delashaw on the controls. Then the aircraft went to Lakeland for a repaint on the March 10, 1997, making it ready for its first demonstration season. The team got a number of sponsors and fuel etc. was obtained via the demonstration invitations on several air shows at for example Ft Lauderdale; McDill, Louisville; Andrews, Michigan; Dayton, Oskosh etc. On May 20, 1997 its civil registration was changed from "N166TB" to "N104RB". This registration was not chosen because of the famous red baron Starfighter but it was named after the owner and his wife (Rick and Brenda). The aircraft was prepared for its new blue-white STARFIGHTERS color scheme which was applied around spring 1998; sold to the Royal Air Museum, located at Bonifay, Florida in April 2019; stored June 2021 last noted.

status November 2015: active, new wings after some cracks were found; bigger G tires and gear doors (due to lack of small tires); Starfighters colors; logo: "KANON" (a sponsor).



CF-104 1059 104759 (construction number 1059, sn 12759) "N104RN"

Lockheed Model 683-04-12, Canadair c/n 683A-1059

The CF-104 Starfighter 104759 made the first flight March 16, 1962 and was delivered to the Canadian Armed Forces on May 17, 1962 as 12759 and went to Cold Lake for flight testing with 6 ST/R OCU (Operational Conversion Unit), reseried as 104759 effective June 1970. In 1965 it went to Europe to serve the Canadian operational squadron within 1 Wing. When the Canadian phased out a number of aircraft this 104759 was struck off service May 23, 1973 and sold to Norway on May 23, 1973; taken on service by the RNoAF as CF-104 "759" on October 16, 1973, delivered October 16, 1973 to 331 Skv at Bodo AB. Later on it transferred to sister squadron 334 Skv. After it was withdrawn from use with 3,412 flight hours on November 22, 1982 it was stored at Sola Air Base. A few years later it was seen within the collection of the Norsk Teknisk Museum in Oslo in June 1989. It was seen there for the last time late May 1995. In August 2000 it was seen again, now inside a new museum building at Gardermoen AB. It could be found preserved until it was sold to Barry Johnson of the Air Defense Museum at Bagotville in Canada in 2004. It was first seen in Canada in September 2005 and it was sold in August 2006 to Rick Svetkoff of the Starfighters Demo Team who needed an extra single-seat airframe for the 2007 season. The 104759 arrived in St Petersburg in November 2006. Early 2008 it received its blue-white color scheme. Effective August 10, 2007 the aircraft received official the registration number "N104RN"; status November 2015: active (not flown lately), planned upgrade for bigger G tires and gear doors (due to lack of small tires); engine upgrade to J79-11 or -19 planned; grounded due to missing parts; latest status unknown.



CF-104 1150 104850 (construction number 1150, sn 12850) "N104JT" / "N104RD"

Canadair construction number 683A-1150, built by Canadair

The CF-104 Starfighter was received on August 20, 1963 as 12850 and went to Europe after being delivered to the Canadian Armed Forces 1 AD. Noted at Tiger Meet 69 at RAF Woodbridge with 439 sqn in August 1969; reseried as 104850 effective June 1970; PDM at Prestwick February 19, 1973 (1 CAG); struck off service May 23, 1973 with 1.921 flight hours; There it was flown until it was phased out due to shortcuts (fleet-reduction program). The aircraft was sold to Norway on May 23, 1973 and it arrived at Bodo Air Base November 19, 1973. The aircraft received serial "850" and joined the fleet of 334 Skv. On December 6, 1982 it was withdrawn from use with 3.482 flight hours when the squadron was replacing the Starfighters by F-16 jets. The 104850 was stored inside "bunker 5" at Sola Air Base. It was treated well and eventually sold (or exchanged) by IFS member Steve Alex in Bangor Maine, USA. On July 15, 1994 a Norwegian Air Force C-130 Hercules aircraft arrived in Maine, USA. The aircraft was stored in a big hangar at Bangor Maine and received maintenance and the paint was removed. After the 104 was flyworthy again it was sold to Rick Svetkoff (The Starfighters Demo Team) in July 1997. The aircraft also had received a civil registration "N104JT" (named after Jet Tech which was the name of Steve's company) In July 1997 the aircraft was brought over to the Starfighters Demo team in St Petersburg and that same month the team made 2 full engine runs. October 30, 1997 Tom Delashaw made a successful first "civil" flight with this completely bare metal aircraft. It was ready for participation in the Eglin Air Base airshow on November 2, 1997. Here it flew together with the CF-104D "N104RB" and still wearing the bare-metal color scheme with a white tail. After the first season was very successful both aircraft received a stunning blue-white "STARFIGHTERS" color scheme I 1998 which still is used today. Its civil registration had been changed to "N104RD" in 1999 (We believe the D was for Delashaw). The aircraft was always flown by the late Tom "Sharkbait" Delashaw; 2004 noted flying, 2013 flying last noted.

status November 2015: active (not flown lately), planned upgrade for bigger G tires and gear doors (due to lack of small tires); engine upgrade to J79-11 or -19 planned; logo: none; Starfighters colors.



TF-104G-M 5202 MM54251 (construction number 583H-5202, model 583-10-20) "N990SF"
TF-104G manufactured by Lockheed at Palmdale, California; airlifted to Turin; reassembled and delivered to AMI; delivery date AMI 20.4.1969; delivery date 20°Gruppo 30.4.1969, 20-15 04.1971-07.1984; IRAN 1.8.1972-14.5.1973; IRAN 30.3.1976-24.1.1977; IRAN 27.6.1980-3.11.1981; 4-34 07.1984-16.8.1996; IRAN 20.12.1985-9.10.1986; IRAN 17.10.1990-21.10.1992; IRAN + TF-104G-M conversion 29.4.1997-9.9.1999, grey camouflage scheme; delivery date 20°Gruppo 9.9.1999; 4-34 26.9.1999-29.10.2004; stored 26.3.2001-26.3.2003; delivery date 311°Gruppo 24.11.2004, RS-09 30.5.2005; RS-09 RSV final flight on July 27, 2005; stored Pratica di Mare October 2005; preserved inside a shelter at Grazzanise June 16, 2010 last noted; delivered December 2011/January 2012 to the Starfighters Inc Team in Florida; N990SF STARFIGHTERS Inc, FAA registration 01.2012; January 20, 2012 first noted at KSC, Florida; September 2013 noted; in June 2014 the aircraft was still in storage awaiting conversion; in October 2015 it was seen wearing light grey primer overall, awaiting final paint.

status November 2015: active, but not flown (MB certification and seat delivery pending), engine J79-11; logo: none; colors: grey primer, final scheme not decided (possible sponsor).



TF-104G-M **5209** MM54258 (construction number 583H-5209, model 583-10-20) "N991SF" delivery date AMI 22.10.1969; delivery date 20°Gruppo Autonomo Operativo (AO) at Grosseto AB 22.1.1970; IRAN 22.6.1973-19.6.1974; delivery date 20°Gruppo 4 Stormo "Amedeo d'Aosta" Grosseto 19.6.1974, 20-23 8.7.1974-01.1985; IRAN + R3 repair 12.7.1976-12.8.1977; IRAN 7.1.1981-4.6.1982; 4-40 17.7.1985-26.4.1988; IRAN 29.7.1986-17.9.1987; special color scheme in blue/yellow for "75.000 hours" on TF/F-104G 12.1990-28.8.1991; IRAN 28.8.1991-17.3.1994; delivery date 20°Gruppo 17.3.1994, 4-40 29.7.1994-8.7.1997; converted TF-104G-M 29.5.1997-19.7.1998 by 4°RMV; delivery date 20°Gruppo 19.7.1998; 4-40 17.7.1998-1.2.2000; IRAN 22.3.1999-21.12.2000; respray in grey camouflage scheme; delivery date 20°Gruppo 21.12.2000, 4-40 16.5.2002-21.10.2004, Pratica di Mare AB May 2004; last flight to Grazzanise 25.10.2004; withdrawn from use 26.10.2004; delivered December 2011 to the Starfighters Inc Team in Florida and got its civil FAA registration "N991SF" in January 2012; early 2014 it was painted in a light grey overall scheme with white company logos; currently being prepared for making it operational again; October 2015 painted black overall with logo "KANON" (a sponsor); January 2021 re-activation work completed and prepared for a "new" first flight again as "Black Beauty".

status November 2015: active, but not flown (MB certification pending), engine J79-11; colors: overall black; logo: "KANON" (a sponsor).



TF-104G-M 5212 MM54261 (construction number 583H-5212, model 583-10-20) "N992SF" delivery date AMI 16.12.1969; delivery date 20°Gruppo 13.1.1970; IRAN 7.11.1973-6.8.1974; 20-26 1.4.1976-07.1984, IRAN 3.1.1978-29.11.1978; IRAN 29.4.1982-3.3.1983; damaged on landing at Grosseto 2.7.1984; stored 2.7.1984-9.3.1987; 4-42 07.1985-1.9.1997; IRAN + R3 repair 9.3.1987-31.7.1992; IRAN + TF-104G-M conversion 28.7.1997-11.6.1999. grey camouflage scheme, delivery date 20°Gruppo 11.6.1999; 4-42 20°Gruppo 4°Stormo 23.7.1999-1.2.2004, stored 1.10.2000-17.4.2002; withdrawn from use Grazzanise 29.1.2004-10.10.2005 with 3.597 flight hours; this ex Italian Air Force Starfighter was delivered December 2011/January 2012 to the Starfighters Inc Team in Florida and got its civil FAA registration "N992SF" in January 2012. Early 2014 it was painted in a fragmented grey white blue overall scheme meeting specific future mission requirements. October 12, 2015 seen airworthy over Florida (first "civil" flight); February 2012 last noted.

status November 2015: active, logo: none; colors: fragmented grey white blue overall scheme, October 12, 2015 first "civil" flight.



F-104S ASA-M **MM6734** (construction number 783-1034, sn 6734, model 783) "N993SF"
36 Stormo 36-38 05.1979; 36-36 08.1979; RS-03 30.10.1984; IRAN + F-104S ASA conversion till
23.4.1990; delivery date 10°Gruppo 23.4.1990, 9-43 23.8.1990-29.2.1996; IRAN + F-104S ASA-M
conversion 29.2.1996-18.12.1997 grey camouflage scheme; delivery date 23°Gruppo 18.12.1997; 5-
37 30.2.1998-4.10.2000; 4-11 21.8.2001; IRAN 7.2.2002-25.10.2002; last overhauled F-104 delivery
from Alenia 25.10.2002; delivery date 10°Gruppo 26.10.2002, 9-30 6.11.2002-31.10.2004; RS-06
30.5.2005-18.7.2005, last flight July 2005; RS-06 storage Pratica di Mare 2.8.2005; preserved inside a
shelter at Grazzanise June 16, 2010. This F-104S was delivered December 2011/January 2012 to the
Starfighters Inc Team in Florida and got its civil FAA registration "N993SF" in January 2012 for
STARFIGHTERS Inc; early 2014 it got its new splinter camouflage paint and waits further
modifications and maintenance before becoming airworthy again. The aircraft has received a
nickname within the team as Maximus.

status November 2015: active, logo: none; colors: fragmented grey white blue overall scheme, not
flown; MB seat installed (MB certification pending), engine J79-19.



F-104B **57-1296** **5008** (construction number 283-5008, model 283-93-03) "**N65354**" delivered March 25, 1958 to the USAF, to ADC 337th FIS in March 1958, was transferred to 151st FIS Tennessee ANG in June 1960 until it retired early 1963; MAP to ROCAF on October 17, 1963 as "4105" with 8 TFS of 3 AG; returned back to the USA (after all F-104Bs retired in Taiwan) October 19, 1966. It was put on storage at MASDC until 1967. The aircraft was overhauled at Palmdale and modified by ALC at McClellan AFB in 1967 to keep it up-to-date for possible export. On July 27, 1969 it was sold to Jordan and received code "901" with 9 squadron. Later on the aircraft code "B" was added to the aircraft as "901 B". On July 1, 1977 the aircraft was withdrawn from use. In March 1990 it was inspected, while being a stored decoy, by people from Northern Light Aircraft Inc. and bought. In October 1990 it arrived in the USA and was put on storage at Dannely Field in October that year. The aircraft was sold to Thunderbird Aviation in 1994 and stored at Deer Valley, Arizona. When the N104NL (already registered as N166TB) was sold to Rick Svetkoff, it already had received US civil registration number "N65354". This F-104B it arrived at Clearwater, Florida in September 1995 by road for the "Starfighters" demonstration team at Lakeland AP, Clearwater; in storage in the hangar of the team at St. Petersburg, February 2009 noted; noted at KSC, Florida later; now preserved in main hangar "The Starfighters" demo team at Cape Canaveral grey color scheme; November 2021 last noted at NASA Shuttle Landing Facility, Cape Canaveral, Florida; donated to "Valiant Air Command" museum, Titusville, FL, USA in June 2022; stored March 2023 last noted. 🚫

status November 2015: preserved (stored); colors: none; engine J79-7.



update: March 15, 2023