

Sabre Jet Classics



Volume 14, Number 3

Fall 2006

*Inside: Record Breaking Sabre's,
Movie Stars,
An F-86 Tops 70,000 feet, more*

A publication of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association

SabreJet Classics

volume 14, number 3
Fall 2006
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(front cover) F-86A-1 #47-611 shares the ramp at the North American Aviation plant at Inglewood, California with other brand new Sabres wearing the Zinc Chromate Yellow primer applied during the outdoor portion of the assembly line. 47-611 is the holder of the World's Absolute Speed Record from 1948 through 1952. (credit - NAA archives)

next issue
?



SabreJet Classics

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THE PRESIDENT'S NOTEBOOK

We received our first reunion registration form last week. I am looking forward to receiving a lot more and having a great turn out. The 16th Reunion registration form is in the summer issue (vol. 14-2) and this issue. You may also download it from our web site SABRE-PILOTS.ORG. Be sure and register early. If you have to cancel we will refund your money if we receive your call NLT 12:00 hours, PST April 8, 2007. Call me, Dan, Bob, or Dick.

We have had a long hot summer in Vegas with no rain to speak of for over a year. I'm pretty good at staying inside my air conditioned house and reading. I reread General Tommy Franks' book,

"American Soldier": and "Warlord, No Better Friend, No Worse Enemy" by Ilaio Pantano. Both books present different views and perspectives of the Iraq war. I don't know who the first guy was to come up with the stupid idea of 'rules of engagement' in combat, but I'll bet he wasn't getting shot at.

Bill Studer purchased an F-86H for static display in the Lakeville Minnesota Veterans Memorial. The dedication will take place Veterans Day November 11, 2006. I have written Sabre Pilot Minnesota members and asked them to consider attending the dedication. I would like to give special thanks to Bill Studer for helping preserve and perpetuate the proud

history of the F-86 and the pilots who flew it.

When you move try to remember to send us a change of address card. The Post Office loves to send your magazine back to us for \$2.16.

Printing and reproduction cost have increased dramatically in the last six years and will continue to rise. To decrease expenses I have decided to delete the Associate members from the *Sabre Jet Classics* mailing list.

Looking forward to see you at the reunion

JERRY R. JOHNSON
President
F-86 SABRE PILOTS ASSOCIATION

Folded Wings

Eldon L. Barnes, December 15th, 2005
Raymond O. Barton, unknown date
William J. Caffery, May 2006
Edward J. Hughes, April 16th, 2006
John H. Regan, July 25th, 2006
Charles W. Stark, October 16th, 2006
J. Frank Street, unknown date

POLICY STATEMENT

The F-86 Sabre Pilots Association does not participate in any solicitation and/or endorsement not controlled by, or for the sole benefit of, the association. Readers are cautioned to be wary of any representation in conflict with this policy.

from the editor

Hello again from your editor. Thought I'd take a few lines to encourage all you guys that are involved in a formal squadron or unit organization, to hold your reunions in conjunction with the 16th F-86 Sabre Pilots Reunion next April. Not only is it convenient, since I know you all will be in attendance anyway, but it's much cheaper in every way.

You won't have to go to the bother of setting up a host hotel/motel. All the expense and headaches of putting together the banquet, raffle, and other events, are also all taken care of. And you'll be able to meet a lot of guys that maybe weren't in your formal squadron, but with whom you were acquainted over the years. And maybe there'll be some people in attendance that you always wanted to meet.

So please, it's not too late to organize your own mini-reunion within the 14th Sabre Pilots Reunion, whether it's your pilots class, unit, base, even another airplane or war. Just remember to notify the Reunion people that you are going to do something extra so we can make proper arrangements.

In this issue, you'll see a short article about "Reel Sabre's", i.e. movies in which the F-86 starred or played a significant role. It is by far, not anywhere near being complete. I wrote it off the top of my head using what few photos I have in the files. If anyone has photos of any of the actors/actresses that appeared in movies like *The Hunters* or *The McConnell Story*, or has stories about flying in the movies, or knows about other Hollywood films that featured the F-86 in any way, please contact your editor via email or at the address on page 2.

Future articles: We're starting to get near the bottom of the files with regard to new stories. So if you have a story about flying the F-86, be it combat in Korea or as one of the Cold War Warriors flying the D or H model, we want to hear from you. And always remember, if you have photos and/or color slides that fit with your story, please include them when you submit your story.

There will be one more issue of *SabreJet Classics* before the 16th Reunion. However, this is the last issue to include the Reunion Registration forms. So please take a moment to fill it out and send it to the Reunion address. Do NOT send it to me. Eventually it will get to the right people but it'll be an added delay for me to forward it along.

Looking forward to meeting all you guys again in Las Vegas next April.

Larry Davis
editor

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sabre reunions

16th Sabre Pilots Assn. Reunion
April 9th thru 12th, 2007,
at the Monte Carlo Hotel & Casino,
Las Vegas, NV.

FILL OUT YOUR REGISTRATION SHEETS AND
GET THEM IN NOW!

letters to the editor

I've had several emails and phone calls regarding the photo on page 8 of the Summer issue, vol. 14-2 showing the F-86A inflight refueling with a KB-29 tanker. Yes I do know the difference between a "probe & drogue" system and the "flying boom" system. For whatever reason, my mind was thinking about probe & drogue but my eyes were looking at a flying boom. Thus my fingers, working in conjunction with a mispaced brain cell, wrote "probe & drogue" in the caption. It is indeed, the Boeing-designed Flying Boom that everyone is familiar with. Especially if you flew Thuds or Fox 4s in Vietnam.

from Emilee Mason
(Mrs. Carson Mason II)

It is with deep, heartfelt sadness that I must inform you that Bill died 8 February 2006. He spent 17 years of his military life flying jet fighters, and loved reliving those days. He completed his last official flight in a 48th FIS F-102A on 30 August, 1970; and "folded his wings" thirty-six years later still "talking flying".

He would have enjoyed your article about "Alley Cat Zero" in the Spring 2006 issue. Bill and I were newly weds when he was assigned to the 62nd at the time that "Alley Cat Zero" was the squadron mascot. I remember the kitten very clearly, and her notorious 'supersonic flight' and award. I am enclosing a photograph of Major Garrett and Alley Cat Zero wearing her special helmet, plus her paw print placed on the back of the photo.

God speed and safe landings to all.



from David Menard

Our very own Bruce Hinton stands next to the F-86A Sabre at the National Museum of the US Air Force at Wright Patterson AFB, OH. The F-86A has been painted in the markings of the Sabre that Col. Hinton flew on 17 December 1950, when he became the first Sabre pilot to shoot down a MiG-15.

For any of you that have not visited the new National Museum of the US Air Force, you will be amazed. The F-86 Sabre Pilots have a memorial in the outdoor park. And plenty of Sabres are mixed in with almost every type of airplane ever flown by the US Air Force or Army Air Force. A highly recommended trip. How was it Bruce? (credit - USAF)

Not looking real excited in her special helmet, "Alley Cat Zero" and Major Garrett give the thumbs up (well paw's up!), after going supersonic in a 62nd FIS F-86D. The story can be found in Sabrejet Classics, vol. 14-1. Below is her paw print. (credit - Emilee mason)

Alley Cat zero
Major R. C. Garrett
62nd F.I.S.
O'Hare International Airport
August 1953



SABRES AROUND THE WORLD

The Republic of Korea Air Force began receiving F-86 Sabres in June 1955. Many were veterans of the combat in Korea flown by pilots of the U.S. 5th Air Force. (below) This ROKAF F-86F was flown during the Korean War by 51st FIG ace Lt.Col. George Ruddell, who scored 8 MIG victories in the airplane then named "MIG Mad Mavis". This photo was taken at Clark AB, Phillipines, in December 1957 during a SEATO gunnery meet. (bottom left) During the late 1950s, the ROKAF received at least 40 F-86D all-weather interceptors. The aircraft were modified to fire the Aim-9B Sidewinder during the early 1960s. This F-86D is assigned to the 10th FW at Suwon. (below right) In 1958, 5th AF began phasing out the RF-86F recon Sabre in favor of RF-100A and RF-101 aircraft. The RF-86Fs were delivered direct to bases in South Korea. This RF-86F was assigned to the 10th FW at Suwon AB as late as May 1968. (credits - Merle Olmsted, Stephen Miller, and Stephen Miller)





F-86F #52-4608 was pulled from the line and modified with the addition of a Rocketdyne AR2-3 rocket engine under the fuselage, whereupon the Sabre was redesignated JF-86F. Several North American test pilots flew the rocket-assisted Sabre including J.O. Roberts, Jim Brooks, and Jay Hanks. (credit - NAA)

WHAT? AN F-86 AT 70,000 FEET!

by TOM GILL

In 1959, I was a really 'wet behind the ears' Flight Test engineer working for North American. I'd just jumped the fence from Lockheed because NAA had all kinds of aircraft and missile work that looked like it would stretch on forever.

NAA decided to make an attempt to sell the F-86 to Japan as an interceptor. However, at that time there were many more advanced aircraft available like the F-100, F-104, and F-4, which was almost ready to become operational. The F-86 would need a little help to play with the big boys.

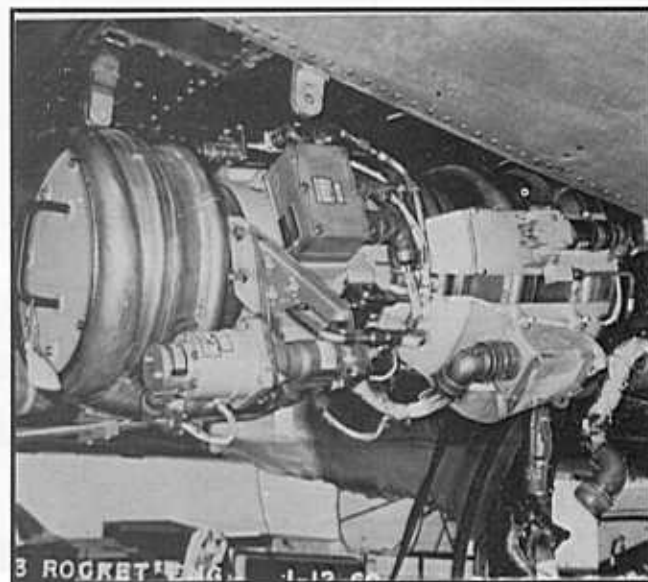
So, a Rocketdyne AR-2 engine was fitted to the underside of an F-86F. The installation didn't appear to be a 'clean' assembly. In fact, one of the engineers likened it to a 1912 bathtub! Wing tanks were added to carry hydrogen peroxide as an oxidizer for JP-4. The airplane was delivered to NAA Flight Test at Palmdale.

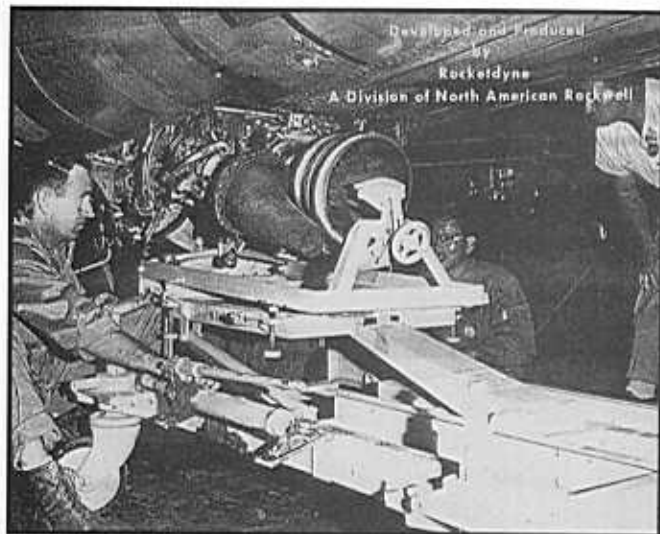
The rocket was small. I couldn't get my hand inside the nozzle. I don't recall the weight of the rocket, but it wasn't much. The rocket was about 2 1/2 feet long, and less than 1 1/2 feet high. But WOW! Over 5000 lbs. of thrust at any altitude!

We were trained on handling the hydrogen peroxide. It wasn't the kind you find at the drug store. The concentration was 90%, and very unstable. All of the plumbing, including the drop tanks, was passivated stainless steel, with Teflon seals. Several demonstrations were made to illustrate the instability. The instructor put two drops on a man's boot, then went on with the training session. After a few moments, the boot was on fire!

Another demonstration was made after dark on the flight line. The wind was coming in off the snowy Tehachapi's at about 25 knots. And the temperature was about 40° - not exactly the best conditions to light a fire without a match. About an inch of JP-4 was placed in a drip pan. Then a shot glass full of peroxide was placed on a board over the pan. A long string was used to upset the shot glass into the JP. But when the string was pulled nothing happened.

The Rocketdyne AR2-3 engine installation under the JF-86F fuselage. The AR2-3 was a throttleable rocket that produced between 3,000 and 6,000 pounds of thrust. (credit - NAA/Rocketdyne)





Rocketdyne technicians install the AR2-3 under the JF-86F. The AR2-3 used normal JP-4 fuel mixed with hydrogen peroxide as an oxidizer. The rocket duration was approximately 2.3 minutes at full power. (credit - NAA/Rocketdyne)

Someone suggested they repeat the demo except use a PINT of peroxide instead of a shot glass full. The instructors limited the demo to no more than 2 ounces. The string was pulled and literally everything disappeared, including the board, in a cloud of smoke and debris.

A special ground run-up area was prepared which included all the necessary tie downs as well as safety equipment to handle the fuel mix. Lots of water was available for washing down the area as well as a person shower that was something to behold.

Engine runs were conducted and the airplane was readied for testing. During the engine run-ups, it was possible to see "mach diamonds" in the rocket exhaust. I counted as many as 7 diamonds during one of the runs. And plenty of noise too!

North American test pilot J.O. Roberts fires the AR2-3 during engine tests at Edwards AFB in 1960. Note the front tire has lifted off the runway. Normally, the pilot flew the JF-86F to 35,000 feet on J47 power, then fired the rocket. From brake release to 60,000 feet took 16.7 minutes, at which time the Mach meter read an astonishing 1.22. The JF-86F made 31 test flights. (credit - NAA)



The JF-86F on the pad at Edwards AFB in early 1960, showing the distinctive shape of the AR2-3 housing. Engineers remarked that it looked like a "1912 bathtub". (credit - USAFM)

Jim Brooks was assigned to the project as test pilot. During the initial flights, we tried to determine the best climb schedule so the design flight profile could be confirmed. Brooks' comments - "You could sure surprise an enemy by falling out of the sky from above them in an F-86!" Apparently, the flight profile after burnout was pretty much ballistic. Service ceiling on the J47 engine was limited to about 28,000 feet. (Hydrogen Peroxide is much heavier than JP-4, so our gross weight was way up, as was the drag due to the '1912 bath tub'.

Typical flight profile was to climb near the service ceiling on jet power, then light the rocket. There was enough fuel in the wing tanks to burn the rocket for 3 minutes. But in those 3 minutes, you went from 28,000 to 70,000 feet. Beyond that, it was pretty much a free fall.





The JF-86F in a hangar at Edwards AFB in the Spring of 1960 after being modified to launch the AIM-9B Sidewinder missile. The 200 gallon underwing tanks held the hydrogen peroxide oxidizer. Reliability of the JF-86F/AR2-3 approached 100%, but supersonic interceptors like the F-104 Starfighter made the combination obsolete. (credit - NAA)

A group of four Japanese Air Self Defense Force colonels visited the plant for the demo flights. The one that flew the test flight was almost able to match the Jim Brooks' efforts, and if I recall correctly, he actually did better the best flight profile on one run.

The maintenance officer was one of the most curious men I have ever known. He carried a note pad all of the time, sketching everything he saw - door hinges, latches, components, and anything else he saw. He did create amusement for all of us one day. In the engine run-up area, the personnel shower became a focus of his attention. This was a good shower with at least four speay nozzles in the top. In the center was a prominent break-over bar. When it was pushed aside, lots of water came from every direction.

The Japanese officer became very interested in the shower and began examining it very closely, too closely. Upon noting his interest in the device, the other officers were alerted to his actions. He disappointed no one,

especially the other Japanese who laughed the loudest when he was the wettest.

Despite the increase in performance, the Japanese did not buy the rocket Sabre, opting instead for the Lockheed F-104J. But without a doubt, that Sabre was impressive!

There were other rocket-assisted F-86s. During the Korean War, at least three Sabres had triple RATO bottles mounted internally under the J47. They were combat tested by the pilots of the 4th FIG in 1952. Cliff Jolley and Karl Dittmer both flew the modified Sabres in combat. Both said the installation worked well for acceleration against the MiG, but then you were hauling around about 600 extra pounds after the rockets burned out, which threw the aircraft CG out of whack.

In June 1956, Air Force authorized North American to install an Aerojet rocket engine in a large pod under the fuselage. At this time we know very little about the flight tests of this airplane.



F-86E-773 AEROJET ROCKET ENG. INST. 6-1-56 S.O. 9028-C-1A



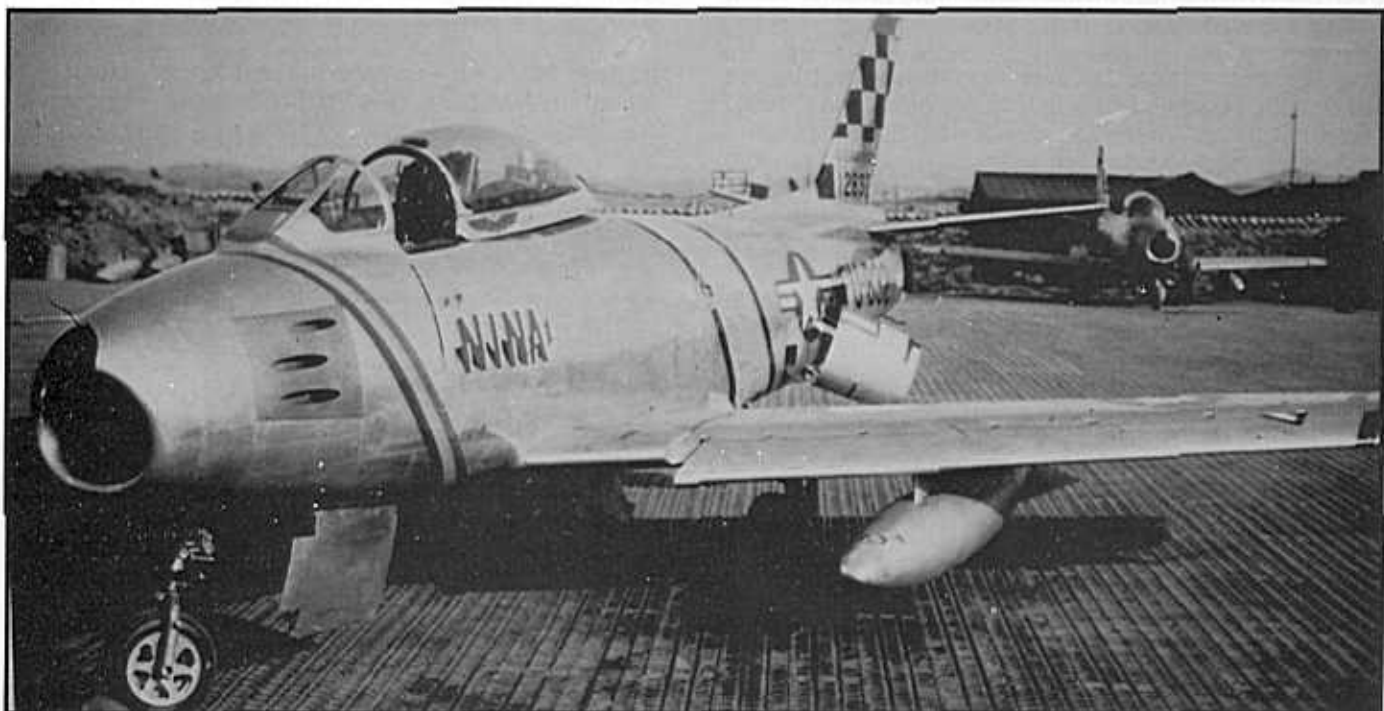
F-86E-773 AEROJET ROCKET ENG. INST. 6-1-56 S.O. 9028-C-1A

Aces & Their Aircraft

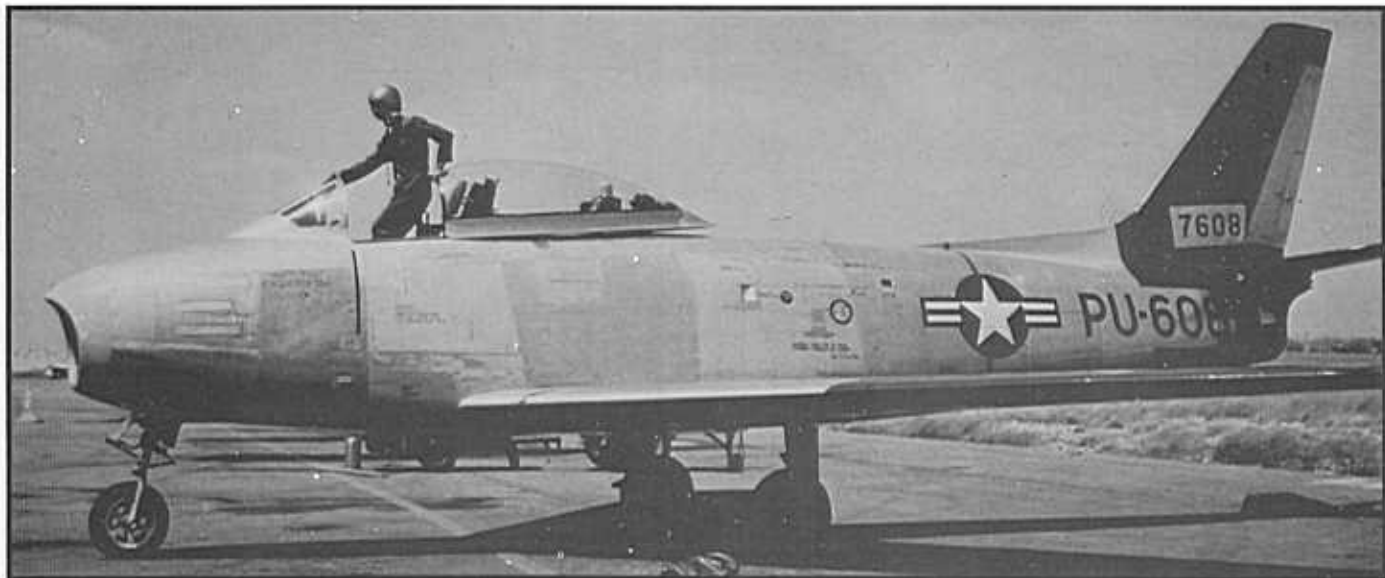
The war in Korea saw no less than forty men that were proclaimed "Ace", meaning that they had shot down at least five enemy aircraft. Thirty-nine of flew the F-86 Sabre. The lone non-Sabre ace was Lt. Guy Bordelon, USN, who flew an F4U-5N Corsair night fighter. Beginning with this issue, SabreJet Classics will feature these men and/or their aircraft. There are several significant names that we cannot show, simply because we have no photo coverage of them or their aircraft. One of these is Major George Davis, who was awarded the Medal Of Honor in addition to shooting down 14 enemy aircraft. Anyone with photos of any of the aces and/or their aircraft, please contact Editor, SabreJet Classics, at the address/email on page 2.



Lt.Col. Royal Baker, and his crew chief, A2C Holland, stand beside his F-86E-10, "Angel Face and The Babes/The King". Lt.Col. Baker shot down 11 MiG-15 jets, shared two others, and a North Korean LA-9 prop fighter, to become the 21st "Ace" of the Korean War with a total of 13 victories. (credit - USAF)



Colonel Robert Baldwin, flew several different F-86Es and Fs bearing the nickname "Nina", when he scored at least 5 victories as Commander of the 51st Fighter Interceptor Group in 1953. Col. Baldwin was famous for giving away his victories to his wingmen after he had scored his 5th MiG. "Nina II" was his first Sabre in Korea and shows 2 red star victories under the windscreen. (credit - USAF)



Still wearing the "P for Pursuit" buzz number, Major Robert L. Johnson stands in the cockpit of F, oops I mean P86A-1 #47-608 at the 1948 National Air Race in Cleveland, Ohio. Maj. Johnson broke the World Speed Record with an average speed of 669.480 mph. But the record was disallowed due to problems that negated the third run of four. (credit - NAA)

RECORD BREAKERS

by Larry Davis

Throughout the history of manned flight on this wonderful little planet of ours, there have always been attempts to set a new record and put the pilots name in the record books. The most often heard about records were World Speed and/or Altitude records. But there were many others of lesser fame involving cross-country flights, distance records, round the world records, etc..

The F-86 Sabre in all its many models, and the pilots that flew them, were involved in setting or resetting many such records. The first one was of course, the breaking of the speed of sound by George Welch while test flying the XP-86 Sabre. Was it done before Chuck Yeager's famous flight in the Bell X-1 rocket plane? Some people say yes, Welch broke the speed of sound on the very first test flight in the XP-86 on 1 October 1947. Others say no, Welch did not break the sound barrier until later that month AFTER Yeager did it in the X-1. Whatever the date, it was the first time that a jet aircraft had done it during a normal flight.

However, on 5 September 1948, an F-86A Sabre would break the World Speed Record, albeit unofficially. On that date, Major Robert L. Johnson flew F-86A-1 #47-608, a production F-86A, over a closed course set up at the 1948 National Air Races that were held in Cleveland, Ohio. The previous record was 650.796 mph held by the Douglas D-558-1 Skystreak, a Navy experimental aircraft, set on 25 August 1947.

The rules specified that the record attempt would be flown over a closed course, 3 km. in length, at an altitude no greater than 165 feet. The pilot had to cover the course twice in each direction during one continuous flight. But problems prevented Major Johnson from officially setting a new record. Only three of the runs were timed, as other aircraft kept breaking into the closed course. But the average speed was 669.480 mph, easily breaking the record. It just wasn't official.

The Air Force knew they had the record in hand so they immediately set up another attempt. This time it would be over the desert test base at Muroc Dry Lake, later known as Edwards AFB. On 15 September 1948, Major Johnson took off in another production F-86A-1, #47-611. Flying at an altitude ranging from 75 to 125 feet, Major Johnson made the required number of timed runs. The slowest run was 669.830 mph, while the fastest was 672.762 mph. Major Robert Johnson and the F-86A Sabre held the new World Speed Record at an average of 670.97 mph - with a production aircraft.

P-86A #47-608 on the tarmac at Cleveland Municipal Airport during the 1948 National Air Race. The Sabre was a standard production aircraft, one of a batch of 17 P/F-86A-1s used for flight tests. (credit - Wm. J. Balogh Jr.)





Major Johnson's P-86A on the Cleveland flightline prior to the attempt to break the existing World Speed Record, then held by the Douglas D-558-1 Skystreak at 650.796 mph. However, problems during the record runs, such as other aircraft intruding into the record course, prevented the record from being certified. (credit - Wm. J. Balogh Jr.)



Following the record flights at Cleveland, the Sabre returned to its duties as a flight test aircraft. It is seen here later that summer, inside the Climatic Hangar at Eglin AFB where the temperature was -65° F. (credit - USAF)

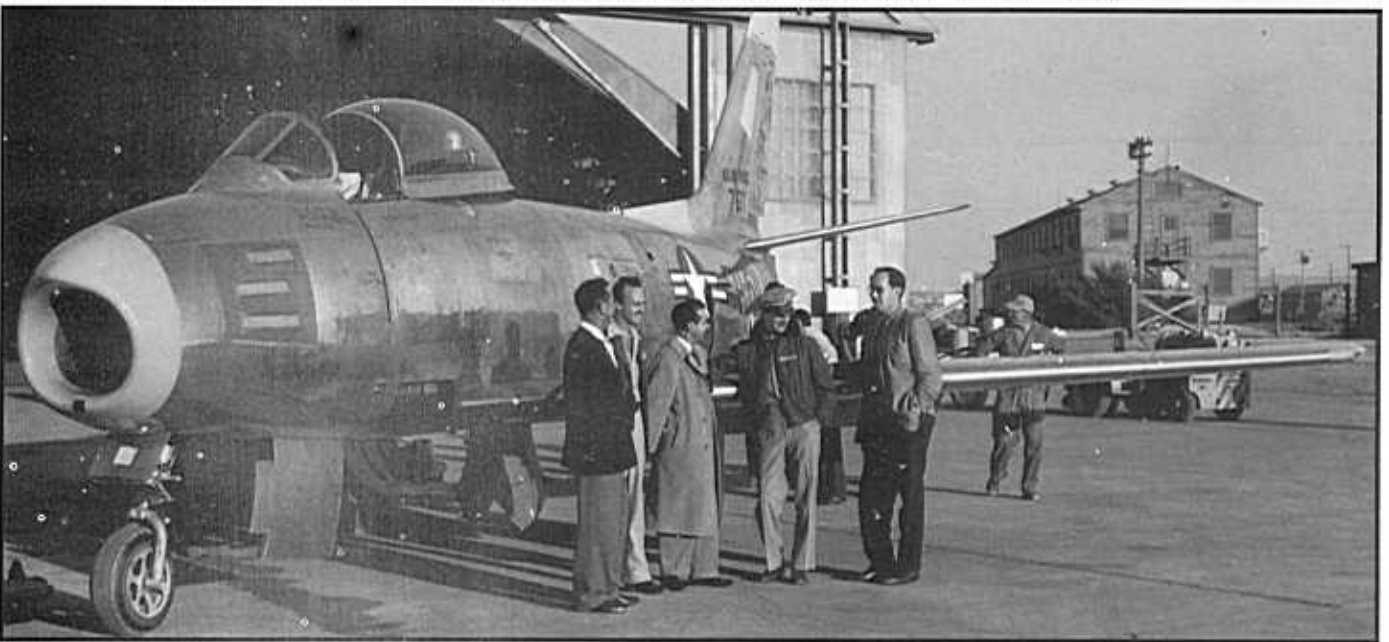


A second F-86A-1, #47-611, was also at the 1948 Cleveland National Air Race. This aircraft would break the World Speed Record 10 days later, and hold it for the next four years. (credit - Larry Davis collection)

Next in the line of Sabre record breakers would be Colonel Fred Ascani and the F-86E, specifically F-86E-10 #51-2721. Col. Ascani was assigned to the 6510th Air Base Wing at Edwards AFB, California in 1951, the same year that the F-86E was introduced into the Air Force inventory. The F-86E-10 used the -13 engine rated at 5200 lbs of thrust and had the "all-flying tail" that kept the Sabre under control at transonic speeds.

In the Summer of 1951 Air Force wanted to show off the newest in the Sabre lineage. Col. Ascani was ordered to take two F-86E-10s, #51-2721 and -2724, to the National Air Races, held on 17 August 1951 in Detroit, Michigan, and attempt to set a new closed course record. The 100 km. closed course was set up and the timers installed.

Maj. Robert Johnson (in flight suit) is congratulated by North American Aviation representatives following his record breaking flight on 15 September 1948. Maj. Johnson flew F-86A-1 #47-611 over a 3 Km closed course set up over the Salton Sea dry lake in Southern California, at an average speed of 670-97 mph. (credit - NAA)





Following the record breaking flights of 15 September 1948, #47-611 returned to the normal business of testing new systems, including launch tests of 5" HVAR rockets. (credit - USAFM)

Col. Ascani used -2721 for the record attempt. At the end of the day, Col. Ascani and -2721 owned the new record with a speed of 635.686 mph. Again the record was set in a production F-86E Sabre. And just to prove it, Air Force included #51-2721 in the next shipment of Sabres that were sent to Korea, where it was assigned to the veteran 51st Fighter Interceptor Group at Suwon AB.

The F-86D all-weather interceptor Sabre was the first to have an afterburner installed, giving this version of the Sabre much more thrust than any previous variant. The F-86D used the J47-33 with afterburner, which produced 7650 lbs of thrust in AB. The F-86D would become the primary air defense interceptor for well over a decade. In the Fall of 1952 Air Force put on a public demonstration (read that 'for the benefit of the Soviet's) of the much greater speed their new interceptor possessed.

F-86E-10 #51-2721 sits on the flightline at Detroit-Wayne Airport during the 1951 National Air Races. Col. Fred Ascani brought the F-86E all the way from Edwards AFB to make an attempt on the 100 Km World Speed record. Col. Ascani broke the record with a speed of 635.686 mph. Although assigned to the 6510th Air Base Wing at Edwards, the Sabre was a regular production Sabre. (credit - Wm. J. Balogh Jr.)



Sometime during 1950, #47-611 was reassigned to the test squadron at Wright Air Development Center near Dayton, Ohio. The near aircraft, #47-610, with the flashy sunburst paint job, belongs to an air demonstration team that flew out of Wright ADC. (credit - WPAFB archives via David Menard)

On 19 November Captain J. Slade Nash, flying F-86D-20 #51-2945 that was assigned to Edwards AFB, took off from El Centro NAS and headed for the Salton Sea, another dry lake bed, where a 3 km course had been set up. Capt. Nash took the F-86D up to 1000 feet, then nosed down and crossed the entry point of the 3 km. course at 100 feet! 9.6 seconds later Capt. Nash exited the course and made a tight 3G turn and headed back for the second run.

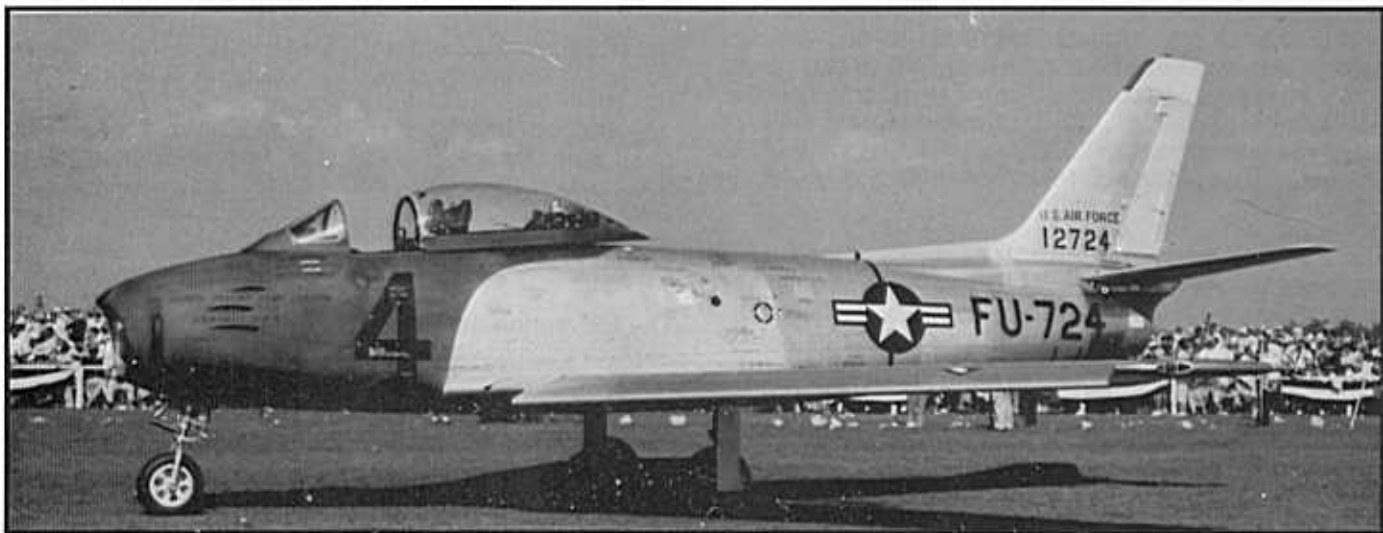
The Federation Aeronautique Internationale rules called for four consecutive passes on the record attempt. After the four passes were made and verified, Capt. Nash and the F-86D held a new World Absolute Speed Record with an average speed of 698.505 mph, breaking the old record held by Maj. Richard Johnson and the F-86A back in 1948.. When the day was finished, Capt. Nash and the Sabre Dog went back to Edwards AFB and continued their daily routine of testing the new interceptor.

Test pilots all. (L-R) Chuck Yeager, Fred Ascani, and Jack Ridley at Edwards AFB in 1952. (credit - Dick Starinchak)





Two photos of the same aircraft at the same moment in time, but different results. The difference in color on the nose is due to different film types. On the left is a photo taken with Kodak Tri-X film: while the photo on the right was taken using an orthochromatic type film. The F-86E was a companion bird to Col. Ascani's record holder, and was also assigned to the Flight Test Center at Edwards. (credits - Peter Bowers and Wm. J. Balogh Jr.)



Showing the world that U.S. Air Force Sabre's set records in production aircraft, the world record holder, "Lady Margeret", takes off from Suwon AB during Spring 1952 after being assigned to the 25th FIS, 51st FIG. Destination - MIG Alley! (credit - USAF)

Still later in the combat career of #51-2721, it was appropriately named "This'll Kill Ya", when assigned to a 25th FIS Element Leader. The Sabre and crew are sitting 5 minute alert at Suwon during early Fall 1952. (credit - Larry Davis collection)





Capt. J. Slade Nash returns to El Centro NAS following his record breaking flight on 19 November 1952. Capt. Nash flew the F-86D over the Salton Sea 3 Km closed course at an average speed of 698.505 mph, easily breaking Maj. Johnson's old record set in the F-86A. (credit - USAF)

Capt. Nash's record didn't stand long. On 16 July 1953, Lt. Colonel William Barnes, Air Material Command pilot representative at the North American Aviation Los Angeles plant, would make a record attempt. Again using the 3 km closed course set up over the Salton Sea dry lake bed, Lt. Col. Barnes made the FAI required four passes in F-86D-35 #51-6145, breaking the sonic barrier on each pass. His four passes were timed at 720.574, 710.515, 721.351, and 710.350 - an average of 715.697 mph - over 17 mph faster than Capt. Nash's record

Capt. J. Slade Nash prepares to exit F-86D-20 #51-2945 at El Centro NAS, after setting a new World Speed record on 19 November 1952. Capt. Nash covered the 3 Km course at an average speed of 698.505 mph. His altitude ranged between 75 and 125 feet during the record runs. (credit - NAA)

flights. Not only was Lt. Col. Barnes' F-86D a production airplane, he flew the record course with full combat loading including twenty-four 2.75" rockets in the tray!

Over the life span of the Sabre, from 1947 thru 1972, Sabres' held a number of other records. In January 1954, Colonel Willard Millikan, Commander of the DC Air National Guard, set a coast to coast speed mark in a standard F-86F. The story of Col. Millikan's flight can be found in *SabreJet Classics*, vol. 6, no. 3. Another coast to coast record was set by a California Air National Guard





Two World record holders shake hands as Capt. Nash is congratulated by Col. Fred Ascani following his record breaking flight on 19 November 1952. (credit - NAA)

F-86A under the code name of "Boomerang". The story of that flight will be forthcoming in *SabreJet Classics*.

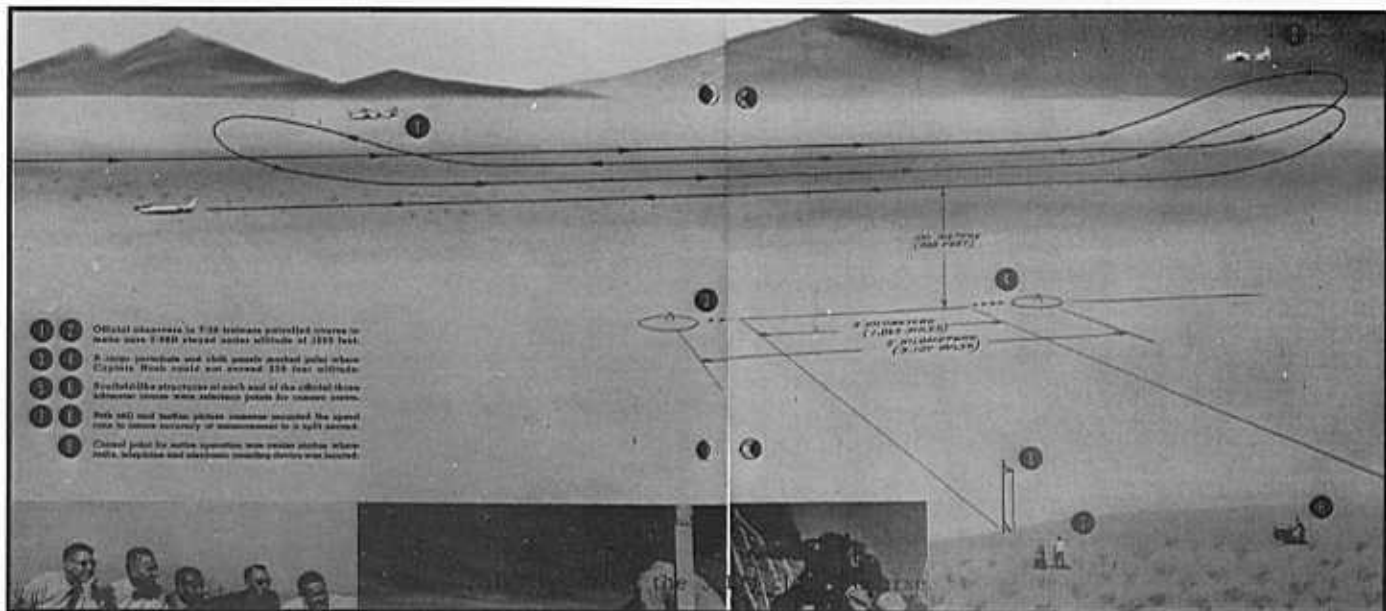
Records are made to be broken and within a few years all the Sabre records had been broken. Technology had put other airplanes into the supersonic speed range and it wasn't long before the World Record was well over 1000 mph. However, for at least eight years, the F-86 Sabre was the world's fastest production airplane.



Lt.Col. William Barnes in the cockpit of F-86D-35 #51-6145, following his record breaking flight on 16 July 1953. Lt.Col. Barnes averaged 715.697 mph over the Salton Sea 3 Km course. (credit - NAA)



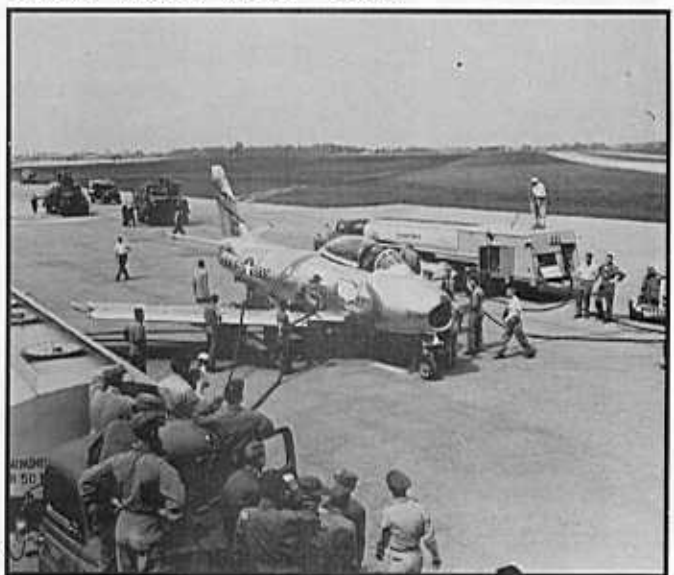
Lt. Col. Barnes flashes through the timing traps at Salton Sea dry Lake. Lt.Col. Barnes averaged 715.697 mph on four passes. (credit - NAA).



The World Record holder is back at work as a flight test aircraft assigned to the 6510th ABW at Edwards AFB during the late Summer of 1953. Lt.Col. Barnes was an Air Material Command pilot representative to the North American Inglewood plant. (credit - NAA)

Col. Willard Milliken flew this F-86F during a cross-country record flight during 1954. The story of Col. Milliken's flight can be found in *Sabrejet Classics*, vol. 6, no. 3. (credit - Larry Davis collection)

Lt. John Conroy, a pilot in the 115th Squadron, California ANG, made a 5085 mile cross-country round trip flight from Van Nuys to New York and back, in 11 hours 26 minutes on Armed Forces Day 1955. The complete story of Lt. Conroy's flight will be covered in a future issue of *Sabrejet Classics*. (credit - USAF)





The air and ground crews from *The Hunters* pose in front of "Col. Moncavage's" Sabre nicknamed "Monkey" at West Palm Beach, Florida. The pilots are from the 3527th and 3528th Combat Crew Training Squadrons based at Williams AFB in 1957-58. (back L-R) Bill Madison, Bill Whelchel, Archie Lorensen, Ron Yost, Jack Gibbons, 'Moose' Mosley, John Basler, and George Panas. George Panas flew as "Col. Moncavage" in the film. (credit - Bill Whelchel)

SABRES IN THE "REEL WAR"

Over the years the F-86 Sabre has starred, co-starred, and played bits part in many a motion picture. Hollywood films included Howard Hawks' *Sabre Jet*, which starred Robert Stack. In that movie, Sabres both played themselves and were the "MiGs". The film was shot at Nellis AFB in the early 1950s. It documented the story of both the fighter pilots in Korea and the wives they left behind. I was a little puzzled about the unit that flew F-80 Shooting Stars one day and F-86 Sabres the next, with a few RF-80s thrown in.

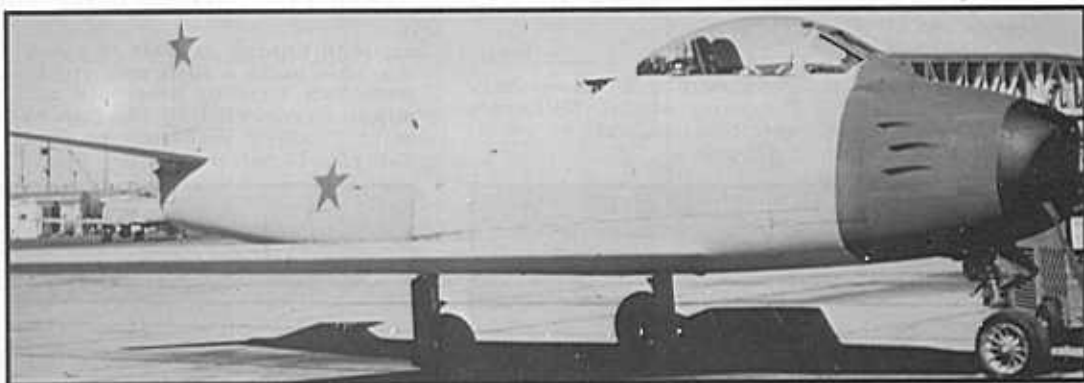
And who can forget *Jet Pilot*, which starred John Wayne and a very luscious Janet Leigh, who even made a flight suit look sexy. Oh yes, and the men and aircraft of the 1st Fighter Group at March AFB. Janet Leigh could ALMOST make you forget about flying and the Sabres. I

sure would like to know how the Russkies got a T-33 to fly all the way from Siberia to March AFB, California, non-stop!

The Hunters, starring Robert Mitchum as Cleve 'Iceman' Saville, and Robert Wagner as Ed Pell, with an assortment of Orientals flying F-84F 'MiGs'. *The Hunters* was also shot at Nellis in 1957. Loosely based on the novel written by James Salter, who actually did fly with the 4th FIG in Korea. The movie had some incredible aerial scenes. My favorite is when Saville is about ten feet behind Monkey Moncavage in a mock dogfight - "Major Saville, this is Colonel Moncavage! Now Break Off!"

And of course, we had *The McConnell Story*, which starred Alan Ladd as Joe McConnell, and June Allyson

An F-86 "MiG" from the movie *Sabre Jet*. (credit - Ron Kelly)



In the movie *The Hunters*, the "MiGs" were F-84Fs out of Luke AFB, Arizona. (credit - Brian Baker)





F-86As that were assigned to the Fighter School at Nellis AFB, were painted with standard FEAF yellow and black bands similar to those found on Korea-based Sabres for *Sabre Jet*. Most of these airplanes were used for the multiple flight aerial shots in the movie. (credit - Dick Gilbert)

as his wife "Butch" McConnell. In this movie, the Sabres came from Nellis, while the "MiGs" were 366th FBW F-84Fs out of Alexandria AFB.

The star of *Bombers B-52* was the big BUFF of course. But Efrem Zimbalist Jr. flew an F-86 named "Lucky Lady" at the beginning of the film. The film also starred Karl Malden as his mechanic and Line Chief; and Natalie

Wood, who was stunning as Malden's daughter and Zimbalist's girl friend.

Air Force pilots and crews flew all the airplanes in these movies. Does anyone have any photos of the Sabres or "MiGs", or any of the stars from these movies that they'd like to share with our readers. Contact the editor to make arrangements. There will be a feature article on the filing of *The Hunters* in a future issue.

(L) Efrem Zimbalist Jr. and Karl Malden exchange words on the "Korean airbase" during the early portion of the movie *Bombers B-52*. Zimbalist played the part of a fictitious ace, Capt. Jim Herlihy, who later became the B-52 Wing Commander. (R) Karl Malden, confers with other crew chiefs about the status of Herlihy's Sabre "Lady Luck". (credit - John Campbell)





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