



F-35 Lightning II Program

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FIRST F-35C CATAPULT LAUNCH AT NAS PATUXENT RIVER

NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – Navy test pilot Lt. Chris Tabert flies F-35C test aircraft CF-3 off the TC-7 steam catapult at NAS Patuxent River Nov. 4. The launch was the first time the test catapult here launched an F-35C Lightning II Joint Strike Fighter. Previous catapult testing occurred in Lakehurst, N.J. The F-35C carrier variant of the Joint Strike Fighter is distinct from the F-35A and F-35B variants with its larger wing surfaces and reinforced landing gear to withstand catapult launches and deck landing impacts associated with the demanding aircraft carrier environment. Initial carrier trials for the F-35C are scheduled for 2013. The F-35C is undergoing test and evaluation at NAS Patuxent River before delivery to the fleet. (U.S. Navy photo) [Watch the video on YouTube <http://youtu.be/Gp26HGaCvel>]



Navy test pilot Lt. Chris Tabert flies F-35C test aircraft CF-3 off the TC-7 steam catapult at NAS Patuxent River Nov. 4. (U.S. Navy photo)