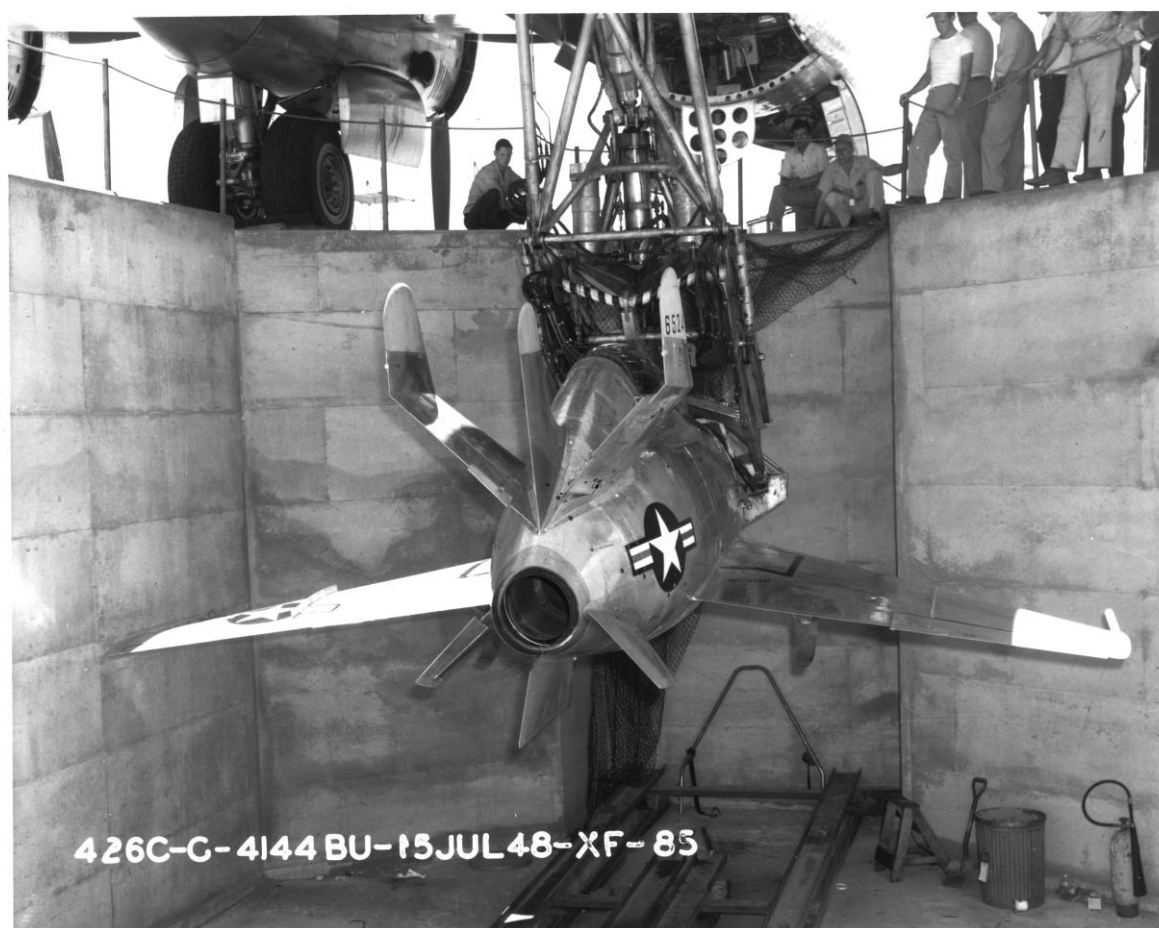
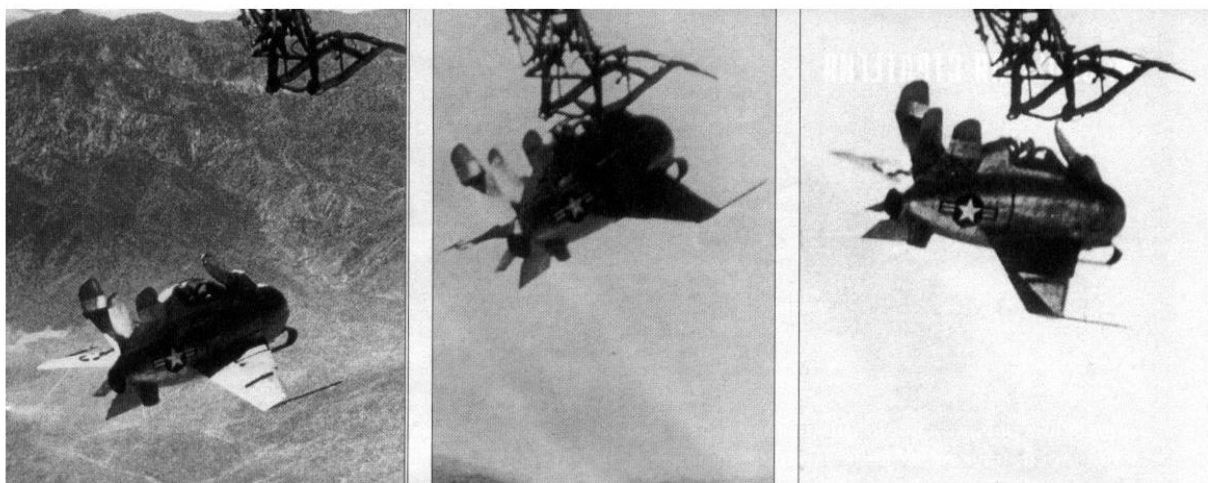


## CREDITS: The Schoch Collection

This document, edited by Cesare Brizio, was generated in February 2021 by Optical Character Recognition and subsequent manual editing of an original carbon copy from The Schoch Collection. For a better understanding of the description of the hook-up phase, two photos were added: three frames, captured by the chase plane, of the hook-up attempt that resulted in the shattering of the canopy, and one image of the loading of the XF-85 under the EB-29. The “candy bar” is the central part of the hooking bar of the trapeze. No effort was made to improve the English text, that shows a very informal structure, with alternation of 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> person and faulty punctuation.



## Minutes of the Post Flight Conference, Flight 524-1

23 August 1948

### Ed. Schoch

The release was very good. I used full back tab using back stick force about 10 to 30 pounds to hold the plane in level flight at 200 mph. The first approach to the hook was made with a rather slow closing speed. There seemed to be a tendency to over-control – to bob up and down while closing to the trapeze bar. About three attempts were made to latch on without success, so I dropped down away again and made another approach. The second approach was made with about 11,000 RPM. From the very start of the closure the closing speed seemed to be rapid, but it was hoped by the pilot that it would overcome the cushioning effect of the proximity of the B-29, and an attempt was made to strike the XF-85 hook with the bar. The attempt missed. I approached it too far forward the canopy of the 85 shattered. The 85 veered down without regaining control for about 2000 feet. The pilot's helmet blew off. The let down was made to 10,000 feet at which time the airplane speed was about 170 MPH with good control. Landing was made on Muroc Dry Lake with an approach speed of about 180 MPH on the final, slowing to about 170 just off the surface of the lake and the airplane dropped out the last few feet. The landing jar was not excessive, although in the matter of 4 or 5 G's the airplane slid ahead veering slightly to the right with the tips touching a few times on each side.

### J. McEwan (Note by Cesare Brizio: Jim McEwan was the Flight Engineer for the XF-85 test program)

The first attempt was made at about a 60° angle from the horizontal of the B-29, closing in vertically more than straight ahead. The airplane flew up to a point where it seemed it was about five feet below the trapeze bar, where the pilot was noted to increase his efforts to control the airplane. About three attempts were made to hook on. None of these attempts resulted in the airplane coming closer than two feet from the bar. The pilot then let down to try another approach. This approach was made with a higher closing speed. The pilot had about 5 MPH excess speed as he closed. He notified the crew that it appeared that he would hit the trapeze bar. From a little behind and about three feet below the bar he lunged up toward the bar. However the hook missed, the bar and the trapeze shattered the canopy. The airplane nosed up into the trapeze, and the pilot's head gear blew away, his head slumped down into the cockpit, but he recovered by pushing away from the trapeze in a rather steep, turning dive.

Col. Collins (Note by Cesare Brizio: Col. Collins flew the chase plane – I'm not sure whether or not he may be Col. Charles L. 'Chip' Collins – see <http://www.aero-news.net/index.cfm?do=main.textpost&id=b3bf1d53-d5ec-4afe-9f40-22b20fbd62cf>)

At the time of release the Chase Pilot was slightly behind the left wing of the B-29 at approximately the same level as the 85 hanging in the trapeze. Indicated speed was around 200 MPH. At the time of release the

85 dropped completely out of view. I pushed forward on the stick, picked him up again and closed within 100 feet. All during the flight while chasing, the 85 seemed to be very stable with the exception that the longitudinal control seemed to be very hard to maintain. The first attempted hook on was with an approach from the rear, approximately 10 feet below and behind the B-29 to a point approximately 2 to 3 feet from the trapeze hook, and the aircraft at this point seemed very stable. After approximately 2 minutes of attempting to hook on, the pilot broke away to the left and moved approximately 50 to 100 feet from the B-29. The B-29 made between a 10 to 15° turn to the right and the 85 made the second approach by ess-ing it into position from about 10 feet below the B-29 in an attempt to hook on. At this point it was noticed by the chase pilot that the canopy seemed to strike the hook or the collar. The canopy shattered and the pilot's helmet blew off simultaneously. The 85 nosed up slightly, winged over to the left with the nose approximately 20° down and losing approximately 3000 feet per minute. At 17,000 feet he appeared to level off, nosed up 700 to 1000 feet, leveled off again and started his descent. The descent was made at approximately 200 MPH at all times. The chase pilot had a difficult time following because of the maneuverability of the 85. The chase pilot continued on wing and at 4000 feet it was noticed that the pilot had made signs of landing on the East-West runway. At this time the chase pilot called runway and Jeep control for crash and fire equipment on runway #4. After starting his approach about 200 MPH, the pilot increased power, nosed up slightly, made his approach and leveled again. The chase pilot stayed with the aircraft until he touched ground. The 85 had high nose attitude when striking. It was noticed that the landing was very level, veering slightly to the right. I pulled up and got out.

**Les Eash** (*Note by Cesare Brizio: Lester "Les" Eash was the trapeze operator for the XF-85 test program*)  
I couldn't see well at all. I just did see him nose up and hit the hook and drop away.

### **Covington**

I was in the B-29. I got a different impression of distance than you people had. When Ed was about 15 feet below the candy stick he brought it up almost vertically. I would estimate that the two airplanes were going together at least 10 MPH. I heard Ed tell the B-29 that he was going in fast from below, I saw the canopy hit the trapeze and the trapeze go forward. I saw nothing of the descent nor the landing.

### **Ed Schoch**

Close in I had a tendency to overcontrol. I was adding power constantly.

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