

NY Daily News  
Aug 28 1989<sup>22</sup>  
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65

DAILY NEWS

# 'Stealth' was around in '45

WASHINGTON — The first “stealth” test of Northrop’s flying-wing B-2 jet bomber this summer was a remarkable success. Trouble was, four decades ago somebody else did it and nobody much cared.

Shortly after World War II, Northrop test pilot Max Skelton flew the YB-49, the forerunner to the B-2, on a grand tour of air-defense stations in the western U.S.

“Nobody found him — until he was directly overhead,” says Tim Wooldrige of the National Air and Space Museum. “The sad part is that they didn’t continue the testing.”

During World War II, Nazi designers Walter and Reimar Horten also built a jet-powered flying wing, the HoIX. It actually flew in early 1945, but later crashed when an engine failed. A copy is stored at the National Air and Space Museum’s warehouse at Silver Hill, Md.

—The Associated Press

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