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## ICYMI: “A Shiny New Ride Above the Sand at the Jersey Shore”

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### A Shiny New Ride Above the Sand at the Jersey Shore

Nick Corasaniti

New York Times

It was one of the indelible images of the wrath of Hurricane Sandy: a famous Jersey Shore roller coaster reduced to a twisted, mangled wreck in the surf off Seaside Heights, its decades-old iron and steel slicing the coming waves.

It was removed months later, but the gash along the coast remained for years, the emptiness above the rehabilitated pier an ever-present reminder of the worst natural disaster to strike New Jersey in decades.

Now, perhaps quicker than some expected, there is a new coaster where the old one once stood. And this one is different. Gone are the classic dips and turns of the rickety old Jet Star, the thundering vibrations of its cars rippling through the boardwalk wood.

In its place is a shiny new ride that looks as if it was plucked from the fields in nearby Jackson, where the Six Flags Great Adventure theme park sprawls for acres. Called the Hydrus, it is a twisted green behemoth, featuring a steep inverted drop, a full loop and two more inversions. The coaster's new tracks run eerily silent, the faint hums of the rail car often drowned out by the high-pitched squeals of riders.

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"It was a very big moment," the Storino family, the owners of the Casino Pier amusement center that is home to the coaster, said in a statement. "We can now say we are fully back and can close the books on the superstorm era."

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It took nearly five years to rebuild the wooden pier for the coaster to rest on. The Jet Star was built on a part of the pier that jutted out far into the ocean. As they thought about rebuilding, venturing back out into the sea with the memory of Sandy still fresh seemed less than ideal, so the Storino family offered the town a land swap. In exchange for the right to build along the beach, the amusement park donated land to expand public parking.

The owners say the Hydrus name is an allusion to the Jet Star because it is the name of a constellation. Riders flocking to the new attraction on a recent weekend could not help but feel a pang of nostalgia as the coaster's crest offered a similar panoramic view of the Seaside shore as the old coaster.

"It was a little nostalgic, yeah, I'd say, but now it's like everything is being rebuilt up, and it's much better now, and we go on," said Ryan Heath, a 19-year-old college student from Allendale, N.J., who remembered riding the old coaster and seeing it in the ocean. "It kind of looked like the Titanic a little bit. It was bad."

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While there were no Hydrus shirts visible yet on the boardwalk, the frequent screams coming from the boardwalk were evidence that the new thrill ride, even at the seemingly steep price of \$10 a ride, was already a welcome addition.

"When we got here, we were just like, oh, we have to go on that," said Brooke Rongo, 17, from Hazlet, N.J. She was one of six young women who had arrived after their junior prom, and they were still buzzing as they walked down the wooden exit ramp from the coaster, so excited that they left a conversation with a reporter to run and ride again.

As they made their way down the boardwalk, they offered a simple and pithy assessment of the new ride, a slang phrase that could be found on plenty of those Shore shirts: "It's lit."

Full article [HERE](#).

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