Analysis
The student pilot was flying his single-seat helicopter as part of a flight of two helicopters with the intention of flying around the airport traffic pattern. Witnesses located adjacent to the accident site reported that, as both helicopters reached an altitude consistent with pattern altitude, the accident helicopter suddenly pitched down. One witness stated that the helicopter shuddered a few times and then pitched down while rolling in a clockwise rotation. The helicopter subsequently impacted flat desert terrain. Postaccident examination of the helicopter revealed no evidence of any preexisting mechanical anomalies that would have precluded normal operation.

Flight Events
Approach-VFR pattern final - Loss of control in flight
Approach-VFR pattern final - Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

Probable Cause
The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:
The pilot’s failure to maintain control of the helicopter while in the traffic pattern.

Findings
Aircraft-Aircraft oper/perf/capability-Performance/control parameters-(general)-Not attained/maintained - C
Personnel issues-Task performance-Use of equip/info-Aircraft control-Pilot - C

Pilot Information
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certificate:</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>46</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Airplane Rating(s):</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Instrument Rating(s):</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Instructor Rating(s):</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flight Time:</td>
<td>52.7 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1 hours (Total, this make and model), 4.6 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), established in 1967, is an independent federal agency mandated by Congress through the Independent Safety Board Act of 1974 to investigate transportation accidents, determine the probable causes of the accidents, issue safety recommendations, study transportation safety issues, and evaluate the safety effectiveness of government agencies involved in transportation. The NTSB makes public its actions and decisions through accident reports, safety studies, special investigation reports, safety recommendations, and statistical reviews.

The Independent Safety Board Act, as codified at 49 U.S.C. Section 1154(b), precludes the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an incident or accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report.