



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Factual Report

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| Location: | FAIRFIELD, PA | Accident Number: | BFO94LA083 |
| Date & Time: | 06/01/1994, 1420 EDT | Registration: | N166W |
| Aircraft: | Schempp-Hirth VENTUS-C | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Defining Event: | | Injuries: | 1 Serious |

Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation - Personal

On June 1, 1994, about 1420 eastern daylight time, N166W, a Shemp Hirth Ventus-C glider, operated by the owner/pilot, impacted terrain in Fairfield, Pennsylvania, during an uncontrolled descent. The airplane was substantially damaged. The pilot, the sole occupant, received serious injuries after falling out of the airplane while performing a maneuver. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and a flight plan was not filed. The personal flight was initiated via aero tow from the Mid Atlantic Soaring Center in Fairfield, and was conducted under 14 CFR 91. The pilot reported that he was participating in a soaring competition at the time of the accident. He descended through the "start gate" to achieve an airspeed of 110 knots. He reported that he then "... encountered [a] sudden pitch up, probably induced by the pilot and turbulence." He subsequently "experienced heavy positive G-load and heard loud cracking sound." His hand-held radio fell loose and he tried to retrieve it. He stated that he then experienced negative Gs and an abrupt pull-up. The radio broke through the canopy. The pilot stated that he could not regain control of the glider, so he released his restraint system and fell free of the airplane through the canopy Plexiglas. He deployed his parachute and landed in a tree. He then fell about 30 feet from the tree and onto the ground, causing serious injuries. According to an FAA aviation safety inspector from New Cumberland, Pennsylvania, the glider continued to descend out of control without the pilot. It impacted terrain inverted about 3/4 miles from the pilot's landing area. An inspection of the glider revealed that both wings were buckled. The canopy frame and supporting structure remained intact, and the Plexiglas in the center of the canopy was broken. The flight controls, canopy and restraint systems were functionally tested with no mechanical deficiencies noted.

Pilot Information

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| Certificate: | Private | Age: | 68, Male |
| Airplane Rating(s): | Single-engine Land | Seat Occupied: | Center |
| Other Aircraft Rating(s): | Glider | Restraint Used: | Seatbelt, Shoulder harness |
| Instrument Rating(s): | Airplane | Second Pilot Present: | No |
| Instructor Rating(s): | None | Toxicology Performed: | No |
| Medical Certification: | Class 3 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim. | Last FAA Medical Exam: | 05/15/1994 |
| Occupational Pilot: | | Last Flight Review or Equivalent: | |
| Flight Time: | 8763 hours (Total, all aircraft), 830 hours (Total, this make and model), 8500 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 24 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 18 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft) | | |

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

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| Aircraft Make: | Schempp-Hirth | Registration: | N166W |
| Model/Series: | VENTUS-C VENTUS-C | Aircraft Category: | Glider |
| Year of Manufacture: | | Amateur Built: | No |
| Airworthiness Certificate: | Experimental | Serial Number: | 343 |
| Landing Gear Type: | Tailwheel | Seats: | 1 |
| Date/Type of Last Inspection: | 11/12/1993, Annual | Certified Max Gross Wt.: | 1157 lbs |
| Time Since Last Inspection: | 19 Hours | Engines: | Unknown |
| Airframe Total Time: | 830 Hours | Engine Manufacturer: | |
| ELT: | Not installed | Engine Model/Series: | |
| Registered Owner: | SAVORY, WILLIAM J. | Rated Power: | |
| Operator: | SAVORY, WILLIAM J. | Operating Certificate(s) Held: | None |

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

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| Conditions at Accident Site: | Visual Conditions | Condition of Light: | Day |
| Observation Facility, Elevation: | MDT, 310 ft msl | Distance from Accident Site: | 36 Nautical Miles |
| Observation Time: | 1350 EDT | Direction from Accident Site: | 40° |
| Lowest Cloud Condition: | Scattered / 4000 ft agl | Visibility | 15 Miles |
| Lowest Ceiling: | None / 0 ft agl | Visibility (RVR): | 0 ft |
| Wind Speed/Gusts: | 15 knots / | Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Wind Direction: | 280° | Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Altimeter Setting: | 29 inches Hg | Temperature/Dew Point: | 28° C / 9° C |
| Precipitation and Obscuration: | | | |
| Departure Point: | | Type of Flight Plan Filed: | None |
| Destination: | | Type of Clearance: | None |
| Departure Time: | 1300 EDT | Type of Airspace: | Class G |

Wreckage and Impact Information

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| Crew Injuries: | 1 Serious | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Passenger Injuries: | N/A | Aircraft Fire: | None |
| Ground Injuries: | N/A | Aircraft Explosion: | None |
| Total Injuries: | 1 Serious | Latitude, Longitude: | |

Administrative Information

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| Investigator In Charge (IIC): | JEFFREY B GUZZETTI, |
| Additional Participating Persons: | RAYMOND STEICH; NEW CUMBERLAND, PA |
| Investigation Docket: | NTSB accident and incident dockets serve as permanent archival information for the NTSB's investigations. Dockets released prior to June 1, 2009 are publicly available from the NTSB's Record Management Division at pubinq@ntsb.gov , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/ . |