



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	BUCKEYE, AZ	Accident Number:	LAX95LA092
Date & Time:	02/01/1995, 1500 MST	Registration:	N8950N
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-32-300	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE PILOT EXPERIENCED A LOSS OF ENGINE POWER WHILE CRUISING AT 6,500 FEET. ATTEMPTS TO RESTART WERE UNSUCCESSFUL AND A FORCED LANDING WAS MADE TO A FIELD. THE FUEL SELECTOR WAS FOUND POSITIONED ON THE LEFT TIP TANK WHICH CONTAINED 11 GALLONS OF FUEL. THE RIGHT FUEL TANK WAS FOUND EMPTY. THE ENGINE WAS STARTED AND IT RAN FOR ABOUT 5 MINUTES AT 1,500 RPM WITH NO PROBLEMS NOTED.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: a loss of engine power for undetermined reasons.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - NONMECHANICAL
Phase of Operation: CRUISE - NORMAL

Findings

1. REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

Occurrence #3: GEAR COLLAPSED
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

Findings

2. TERRAIN CONDITION - OPEN FIELD

Factual Information

On February 1, 1995, at 1500 hours mountain standard time, the pilot of a Piper PA-32-300, N8950N, experienced a loss of engine power and made a forced landing into a dirt field damaging the nose and main landing gear near Buckeye, Arizona. The aircraft was substantially damaged and the pilot was not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the pleasure flight. The aircraft departed Mesa, Arizona, at 1430 hours for a flight to Riverside, California.

According to the pilot, he lost engine power while cruising at 6,500 feet, about 30 minutes after takeoff. Attempts to restart were unsuccessful. The pilot selected a field south of the freeway and landed, damaging the aircraft.

A Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector examined the fuel tanks afterwards. He found that the right main fuel tank was empty, the right tip tank was full; the left main fuel tank had 15 gallons, and the left tip tank had 11 gallons of fuel remaining. The fuel selector was found positioned on the left tip tank.

The inspector supervised the starting of the engine. It started on the first attempt and ran at 1,500 rpm for about 5 minutes without any problems noted. The pilot wrote in his report that fuel line cavitation was suspected.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	59, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt
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:	03/03/1993
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	6035 hours (Total, all aircraft), 300 hours (Total, this make and model), 7 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N8950N
Model/Series:	PA-32-300 PA-32-300	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	32-7740751
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	02/01/1995, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3400 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	1 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	2254 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	IO-540-K1G5
Registered Owner:	HARRY E. BROWN	Rated Power:	300 hp
Operator:	HARRY E. BROWN	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	, 0 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0000	Direction from Accident Site:	0°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 25000 ft agl	Visibility	50 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	Calm /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	24° C / 6° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	MESA, AZ (FFZ)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	RIVERSIDE, CA (RAL)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1430 MST	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): R G MUCHO Report Date: 08/23/1995

Additional Participating Persons: CHARLIE PRICE; SCOTTSDALE, AZ

Publish Date:

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/>.

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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. A factual report that may be admissible under 49 U.S.C. § 1154(b) is available [here](#).