



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	FORKS TOWNSHIP, PA	Accident Number:	NYC96LA095
Date & Time:	05/01/1996, 1330 EDT	Registration:	N5030S
Aircraft:	Piper PA-28-R200	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The certified flight instructor (CFI) and the private pilot, her husband, had flown a previous flight that day and practiced maneuvers at altitude. After a refueling stop, they departed for another training flight. The private pilot performed two practice power off landings from the downwind to runway 18. During a third practice forced landing, with the landing gear extended, the CFI took over the controls. When the airplane developed a high sink rate during the turn to final, the CFI realized that the airplane was low and slow. The CFI stated that she advanced the throttle, but the engine did not respond. The airplane's right wing struck a 25-foot-high pole at the edge of an open field, about 12 feet above the ground and 900 feet from the approach end on the runway. The private pilot stated that during the approach he thought that they were getting 'too slow and too low,' and when full power was applied the engine response 'sounded strange.' Examination of the wreckage revealed no preimpact failure of the airframe or engine.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the flight instructor's misjudgment of distance and altitude, and delay in performing remedial action.

Findings

Occurrence #1: UNDERSHOOT

Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - BASE LEG/BASE TO FINAL

Findings

1. EMERGENCY PROCEDURE - SIMULATED - PILOT IN COMMAND(CFI)
2. (C) DISTANCE/ALTITUDE - MISJUDGED - PILOT IN COMMAND(CFI)
3. (C) REMEDIAL ACTION - DELAYED - PILOT IN COMMAND(CFI)

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT

Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - BASE LEG/BASE TO FINAL

Findings

4. OBJECT - UTILITY POLE

Factual Information

On May 1, 1996, at 1330 eastern daylight time, a Piper PA-28-R200, N5030S, was substantially damaged during a simulated forced landing to the Easton Airport, Forks Township, Pennsylvania. The flight instructor and private pilot received serious injuries. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the local training flight that departed Easton, about 1300. No flight plan had been filed for the flight conducted under 14 CFR Part 91.

In the NTSB Form 6120.1/2, the certified flight instructor (CFI) stated that she and the private pilot, her husband, had flown a previous flight that day and practiced maneuvers at altitude. The airplane was then landed, refueled, and they departed for another training flight. During the second training flight the private pilot performed two practice power off landings from the down wind. The CFI further stated:

"...He started this maneuver on a very wide down wind to 18. The third time, I took the airplane, kept it in closer to the runway and pulled the power back. On the turn to final, the airplane suddenly developed a fast sink rate. I gave immediate full throttle (gear was down, checklist for landing complete.) There was a slight sputter of the engine...Full throttle and nothing happened. Sink rate not arrested. Saw the pole and tried not to hit it with fuselage..."

A Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Inspector interviewed the CFI and private pilot the day after the accident. In the FAA Inspector's summary of the interview, the CFI stated that during the turn to final, she realized that she was low and slow and advanced the throttle to full power and that the engine response "did not seem right." The private pilot stated that during the approach he thought that they were getting "too slow and too low," and when full power was applied the engine response "sounded strange."

Several witnesses observed the airplane flying low before impact. One witness stated:

"...I saw a plane through the trees which appeared to be flying at an extremely low altitude in relation to the airport. As I came into the clearing I noticed my suspicion was correct. The plane was dangerously low and I clearly witnessed the plane's right wing smash into the telephone pole..."

The airplane's right wing struck a 25 foot high pole, about 12 feet above the ground, 900 feet from the approach end of the runway.

Examination of the wreckage by FAA Inspectors revealed no pre-impact failure of the airframe or engine. One FAA Inspector's report stated:

"...The propeller was damaged by impact and showed leading edge damage and rotation marks on the forward face of the propeller blades...No malfunction of the engine was evident or could be duplicated..."

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Flight Instructor; Commercial	Age:	64, Female
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane Single-engine; Instrument Airplane	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	12/03/1995
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1282 hours (Total, all aircraft), 956 hours (Total, this make and model), 1066 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 8 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 8 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N5030S
Model/Series:	PA-28-R200 PA-28-R200	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	28R20035776
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	03/15/1996, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2600 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	6 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3627 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	IO-360-C1C
Registered Owner:	DOROTHY & JAMES REGAN	Rated Power:	200 hp
Operator:	DOROTHY & JAMES REGAN	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	ABE, 394 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	11 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1356 EDT	Direction from Accident Site:	250°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 6500 ft agl	Visibility	10 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	10 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	190°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	17° C / 3° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	(N43)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1300 EDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	EASTON (N43)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	399 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	18	IFR Approach:	
Runway Length/Width:	1953 ft / 50 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full Stop; Simulated Forced Landing; Traffic Pattern

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	2 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	ROBERT L PEARCE	Report Date:	11/25/1996
Additional Participating Persons:	MICHAEL O HANSON; ALLENTOWN, PA		
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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