



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	UNION PIER, MI	Accident Number:	CHI96LA325
Date & Time:	09/01/1996, 1621 EDT	Registration:	N238PW
Aircraft:	KARR TITAN TORNADO	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Fatal, 1 Minor

Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation - Personal

Analysis

The aircraft was observed conducting aerobatics over Lake Michigan near a beach at Union Pier, Michigan. During the fifth successive 'hammerhead turn' the airplane departed controlled flight and impacted the surface of the lake. A post accident examination of the airplane revealed no pre-impact anomalies.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the pilot not obtaining/maintaining altitude/clearance. Factors were the pilot not maintaining aircraft control and intentional aerobatics.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

Findings

1. (F) AEROBATICS - INTENTIONAL - PILOT IN COMMAND
 2. (F) AIRCRAFT CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
 3. (C) ALTITUDE/CLEARANCE - NOT OBTAINED/MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
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Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Findings

4. TERRAIN CONDITION - WATER

Factual Information

On September 1, 1996 at 1621 eastern daylight time, a Karr Titan Tornado, N238PW, was destroyed during impact with the surface of Lake Michigan (terrain) following a intentional low level aerobatic maneuver. The surviving passenger stated that the pilot was performing the fifth consecutive "hammerhead turn" when the accident occurred. The pilot sustained fatal injuries and the passenger minor injuries. The personal 14 CFR Part 91 flight was operating in visual meteorological conditions. No flight plan was on file. The flight departed Valpariso, Indiana, about 1521, on a local flight.

Witnesses at the scene confirmed the passenger's description of the accident, indicating that they observed the airplane doing low level aerobatic maneuvers at the time of the accident.

The Federal Aviation Administration inspector determined that the pilot was holder of a student pilot's certificate and a third class medical certificate dated March 30, 1995. On the application for that medical the pilot stated that he had a total pilot time of 36 hours.

A post accident examination of the airplane failed to reveal any mechanical anomalies. The passenger reported no mechanical problems.

The post mortem examination of the deceased pilot indicated he was afflicted with "Acute Viral Hepatitis B." There is no indication from the medical examiner's report that the disease had the potential of incapacitation for the pilot. The cause of death was indicated as from drowning.

The aircraft wreckage was released to representatives of the owner on September 5, 1996.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Student	Age:	25, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	03/30/1995
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	36 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	KARR	Registration:	N238PW
Model/Series:	TITAN TORNADO TITAN TORN	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental	Serial Number:	
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1100 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Rotax
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	582
Registered Owner:	PATRICK S. WHITE	Rated Power:	90 hp
Operator:	PATRICK S. WHITE	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:	Unknown / 0 ft agl	Visibility	0 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Unknown / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	VALPARIZO, IN (VPZ)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1521 EDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	STEPHEN A WILSON	Report Date:	05/23/1997
Additional Participating Persons:	DAVID H KEPPLER; SOUTH BEND, IN		
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](#).