



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	CENTERVILLE, AL	Accident Number:	ATL97LA053
Date & Time:	04/01/1997, 1622 CST	Registration:	N301A
Aircraft:	Catchot HAULER	Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot reported that takeoff and climb to 2000 feet were normal. He said that about 20 minutes after takeoff, smoke filled the cockpit. He also noticed that the engine tachometer needle had dropped to zero and the engine had lost power. The pilot, selected a nearby field for an emergency landing. The airplane collided with two trees short of the intended touchdown point. Examination of the airplane disclosed that the engine was equipped with a dual electronic ignition system. Two three-ohm coils were to have been installed on the engine (at the manufacturer) as the ignition source instead of magnetos. Examination of the coil assemblies disclosed that both assemblies had shorted and that they were not functional. Subsequent research disclosed that the three-ohm coils also require the installation of a two-ohm ballast resistor into the ignition system. No ballast resistors were installed on N301A. Also, no airworthiness certificate had been issued for this airplane.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the engine manufacturer's failure to install ballast resistors in the ignition system, which resulted in an electrical short in the dual ignition system and subsequent loss of engine power.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - MECH FAILURE/MALF
Phase of Operation: CRUISE - NORMAL

Findings

1. (C) IGNITION SYSTEM - IMPROPER
2. (C) INSTALLATION - IMPROPER - MANUFACTURER
3. (C) IGNITION SYSTEM,IGNITION COIL - SHORTED

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

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING

Findings

4. OBJECT - TREE(S)

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	53
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	7500 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1 hours (Total, this make and model), 6000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 40 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 10 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Catchot	Registration:	N301A
Model/Series:	HAULER HAULER	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Operator:	ANGUS L. CATCHOT SR.	Engine Manufacturer:	Mosler
Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None	Engine Model/Series:	82X
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KBH, 251 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 15000 ft agl	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	8 knots / , 70°
Temperature:	13° C	Visibility	15 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	BESSEMER, AL (2A3)	Destination:	WIGGINS, MS (MS06)

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	PHILLIP POWELL	Adopted Date:	01/30/1998
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/ .		

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.