



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	LAKE WALES, FL	Accident Number:	MIA97LA157
Date & Time:	05/02/1997, 1415 EDT	Registration:	N14525
Aircraft:	Thacker STARDUSTER TOO SA300	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

During the takeoff roll, the aircraft drifted to the right, and application of left rudder did not correct the drift. The aircraft went off the right side of the runway, and the pilot aborted the takeoff. With application of left brake the aircraft nosed over in the soft ground. The pilot stated he had no mechanical difficulties with the aircraft and that he believed the tail wheel did not lock in the center detent during the start of the takeoff roll.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: failure of the tail wheel to lock in the centered detent during the beginning of the takeoff roll, which resulted in the pilot being unable to maintain directional control and the aircraft drifting off the runway and nosing over in the soft ground.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - ON GROUND/WATER
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - ROLL/RUN

Findings

1. (C) LANDING GEAR, TAILWHEEL LOCK - NOT ENGAGED
2. DIRECTIONAL CONTROL - NOT POSSIBLE
3. GROUND LOOP/SWERVE

Occurrence #2: NOSE OVER
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - ABORTED

Findings

4. TERRAIN CONDITION - SOFT

Factual Information

On May 2, 1997, about 1415 eastern daylight time, a Thacker Starduster Too SA300, N14525, registered to an individual, nosed over during an aborted takeoff at Lake Wales Airport, Lake Wales, Florida, while on a Title 14 CFR Part 91 personal flight from Lake Wales to Jacksonville, Florida. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time and no flight plan was filed. The aircraft received substantial damage and the airline transport-rated pilot was not injured. The flight was originating at the time of the accident.

The pilot stated that during takeoff on runway 6, the aircraft started drifting to the right while still at low speed. Application of left rudder did not correct the drift and the right main landing gear tire went off the edge of the runway. The aircraft was traveling at about 30 knots at this time. The aircraft continued to drift right and he aborted the takeoff. After closing the throttle he applied left brake and rudder in an attempt to turn the aircraft back onto the hard surface of the runway. Immediately upon application of the left brake the aircraft nosed over in the soft ground. The pilot stated there was no mechanical malfunctions with the aircraft and he believed that the tail wheel did not lock in the centered detent as he began his takeoff roll.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline Transport; Flight Engineer	Age:	63, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Rear
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	10/25/1996
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	15000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 30 hours (Total, this make and model), 12000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 150 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 50 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Thacker	Registration:	N14525
Model/Series:	STARDUSTER TOO SA300 STARDUSTER	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental	Serial Number:	487
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	03/19/1997, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1380 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	3 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	182 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	O-540-B2C5
Registered Owner:	ANTHONY G. COLEMAN	Rated Power:	235 hp
Operator:	ANTHONY G. COLEMAN	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	LAL, 142 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	23 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1354 EDT	Direction from Accident Site:	285°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 3500 ft agl	Visibility	6 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 25000 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	4 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	140°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	30° C / 19° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	(X07)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	JACKSONVILLE, FL (23J)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1415 EDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	LAKE WALES (X07)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	126 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	6	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	3999 ft / 100 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

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):	JEFFREY L KENNEDY	Report Date:	08/29/1997
Additional Participating Persons:	PEDRO DIAZ; ORLANDO, FL		
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 pubinquiry@ntsb.gov , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at http://dms.ntsbt.gov/pubdms/ .		

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