



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	EAGLE, MI	Accident Number:	CHI97LA241
Date & Time:	08/01/1997, 2045 EDT	Registration:	N8237R
Aircraft:	Bellanca 17-30A	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot said that he had departed with a main fuel tank selected to feed the engine. Once the airplane got above '4,500 feet,' the pilot switched to an auxiliary fuel tank. 'Fuel usage was timed using a countdown clock for each tank. Approaching Lansing, [Michigan] I requested and got flight following to Detroit. A few minutes later, my fuel countdown clock signaled time for a fuel cell change.' The pilot switched to a full tank. At that time, the engine lost power. The pilot switched to another full tank, but the engine would not start. 'I told Lansing Approach of my problem; they gave me the direction to the nearest airport, and I did the Bellanca Viking restart procedure. The plane would not restart.' The pilot declared an emergency and force landed the airplane in a cornfield. Examination of the wreckage revealed that one of the airplane's five fuel tanks was empty. The remaining fuel tanks were full of fuel. No other anomalies were revealed with the airplane.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the pilot's inaccurate fuel consumption calculations, his decision to switch fuel tanks too late, and fuel starvation.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

1. (C) FLUID,FUEL - STARVATION
2. (C) FUEL CONSUMPTION CALCULATIONS - INACCURATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) IN-FLIGHT PLANNING/DECISION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND

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

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	47
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	448 hours (Total, all aircraft), 172 hours (Total, this make and model), 387 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 35 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 12 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Bellanca	Registration:	N8237R
Model/Series:	17-30A 17-30A	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Operator:	JUG AVIATION, INC.	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None	Engine Model/Series:	IO-520-K
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Dusk
Observation Facility, Elevation:	LAN, 861 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 8000 ft agl	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	7 knots / , 250°
Temperature:	23° C	Visibility	10 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	OSHKOSH, WI (OSH)	Destination:	DETROIT, MI (DET)

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
Latitude, Longitude:			

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	DAVID C BOWLING	Adopted Date:	02/02/1998
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 pubin@ntsb.gov , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/ .		

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