



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	CLERMONT, FL	<b>Accident Number:</b>	MIA98LA018
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	11/01/1997, 1548 EST	<b>Registration:</b>	N813LJ
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Saldairiaga BUCCANEER II	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

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## Analysis

Witnesses stated they observed the airplane start a steep left turn, estimated more than a 45 degree angle of bank, between 150 to 300 feet at a slow airspeed. The airplane appeared to enter an accelerated stall. The nose pitched down, and the airplane collided with the ground in a left wing low, nose-down attitude. Before the airplane collided with the ground, the engine was heard to increase to full power. Examination of the airframe and flight control assembly revealed no evidence of a precrash mechanical failure or malfunction.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: failure of the pilot to maintain adequate airspeed, while maneuvering at a low altitude, which resulted in an inadvertent stall and subsequent in-flight collision with terrain.

## Findings

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

### Findings

1. MANEUVER - INITIATED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (C) AIRSPEED - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) STALL - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND

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Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

## Factual Information

On November 1, 1997, about 1548 eastern standard time, a Saldairiaga, Buccaneer II, N813LJ, operated by a private owner as a 14 CFR Part 91 personal flight, crashed in the vicinity of Clermont, Florida. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and no flight plan was filed. The airplane was destroyed. The student pilot was fatally injured. The flight originated from Flying Gator Airpark, Clermont, Florida, about 1 hour 18 minutes before the accident.

Witnesses who knew the pilot stated they observed the airplane between 150 to 300 feet southwest of the airpark. The airplane entered a steep left turn, estimated more than a 45-degree angle of bank at a slow airspeed. The airplane appeared to enter an accelerated stall. The nose pitched down and the airplane collided with the ground in a left wing low nose-down attitude. Before the airplane collided with the ground the engine was heard to increase to full power.

Examination of the airframe, flight control system and engine assembly revealed no evidence of a precrash mechanical failure or malfunction. All components necessary for flight were present at the crash site. Continuity of the flight control system was confirmed for pitch, roll, and yaw. An examination of the engine assembly and accessories was not conducted based on statements provided by eyewitnesses indicating the engine was operating at time of impact with the terrain.

Postmortem examination of the pilot was conducted by Dr. Susan M. Rendon, Associate Medical Examiner District Five, Leesburg, Florida, on November 2, 1997. The cause of death was injuries related to the aircraft accident. Postmortem toxicology studies of specimens from the pilot was performed by the Forensic Toxicology Research Section, Federal Aviation Administration, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. These studies were negative for alcohol, basic, acidic and neutral drugs.

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Student	<b>Age:</b>	54, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	Yes
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 3 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	07/30/1996
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>		<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	500 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Saldairiaga	Registration:	N813LJ
Model/Series:	BUCCANEER II BUCCANEER	Aircraft Category:	Ultralight
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental	Serial Number:	B2B-K022
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Rotax
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	GERALD M. CROUCH	Rated Power:	
Operator:	GERALD M. CROUCH	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	LEE, 77 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	20 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1453 EST	Direction from Accident Site:	360°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear / 0 ft agl	Visibility	10 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	4 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	Variable	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	29° C / 21° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	(3WF4)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1430 EST	Type of Airspace:	Class G

## Wreckage and Impact Information

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

## Administrative Information

**Investigator In Charge (IIC):** CARROL A SMITH **Report Date:** 06/26/1998

**Additional Participating Persons:** EARNEST WILSON; 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 [pubinq@ntsb.gov](mailto: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](#).