



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

<b>Location:</b>	TREMONTON, UT	<b>Accident Number:</b>	FTW98FA086
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	01/03/1998, 1913 MST	<b>Registration:</b>	N23371
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Piper PA-38-112	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Instructional		

## Analysis

The noninstrument-rated private pilot, a foreign national, embarked on a solo cross-country flight to fulfill the experience requirements required for commercial pilot certification. FSS advised the pilot that VFR flight was not recommended. The pilot filed a VFR flight plan and departed Ogden, Utah. He arrived in Caldwell, Idaho, refueled, and obtained another FSS weather briefing. Again, he was advised that VFR flight was not recommended. He filed a VFR flight plan and departed Caldwell en route back to Ogden. Radar data indicated that the pilot did not track the airway to Malad City, Idaho, but instead followed a highway to the vicinity of Tremonton, Utah. There, it was seen to maneuver in a 'primary weather cell.' The wreckage was located 3 days later within 0.1 mile of the last radar contact.

## Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's continued VFR flight into instrument meteorological conditions, becoming spatially disoriented and his subsequent loss of aircraft control. Factors were the dark night and weather conditions that included obscuration and snow.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER  
Phase of Operation: CRUISE - NORMAL

### Findings

1. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - DARK NIGHT
2. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - SNOW
3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - OBSCURATION
4. (C) VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - CONTINUED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT  
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING - TURN TO REVERSE DIRECTION

### Findings

5. (C) AIRCRAFT CONTROL - UNCONTROLLED - PILOT IN COMMAND
6. (C) SPATIAL DISORIENTATION - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

## Findings

### 7. TERRAIN CONDITION - MOUNTAINOUS/HILLY

#### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private	<b>Age:</b>	25
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine Land	<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None
<b>Flight Time:</b>	314 hours (Total, all aircraft), 169 hours (Total, this make and model), 144 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 20 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 15 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 6 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

#### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Piper	<b>Registration:</b>	N23371
<b>Model/Series:</b>	PA-38-112 PA-38-112	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Operator:</b>	U.S. AVIATION	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Lycoming
<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	O-235-L2C
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Instructional		

#### Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Instrument Conditions	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Night/Dark
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	OGD, 4470 ft msl	<b>Weather Information Source:</b>	Weather Observation Facility
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	Overcast / 9000 ft agl	<b>Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:</b>	8 knots / , 110°
<b>Temperature:</b>	3° C	<b>Visibility</b>	20 Miles
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>			
<b>Departure Point:</b>	CALDWELL, ID (EUL)	<b>Destination:</b>	OGDEN, UT (OGD)

#### Wreckage and Impact Information

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

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): ARNOLD W SCOTT

Adopted Date: 12/08/1998

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](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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