



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	RAYVILLE, LA	Accident Number:	FTW98LA141
Date & Time:	03/01/1998, 1600 CST	Registration:	N4GQ
Aircraft:	Piper PA-32-300	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

During the landing flare/touchdown, the airplane was configured for the gusting wind; however, during the landing roll, the wind 'gust let up and the airplane departed the paved runway to the left side. The turf was soggy and wet and the airplane went into a ditch paralleling the runway, collapsing the nose gear before the airplane stopped.' The pilot obtained weather briefings and was aware of the crosswind conditions at the destination airport. During the landing, there was a direct crosswind from the left with the winds at 10 to 15 knots gusting at 20 to 25 knots. The pilot stated that the accident could have been prevented by landing at an alternate airport in order to land more directly into the wind. The pilot further stated that he is taking flight 'lessons in a tail dragger (tailwheel aircraft) in order to gain more experience of managing an aircraft in cross wind conditions.'

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's inadequate compensation for the gusting crosswinds. Factors were the gusting crosswinds and the pilot's lack of experience in gusting crosswinds.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - ON GROUND/WATER

Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - CROSSWIND
2. (C) COMPENSATION FOR WIND CONDITIONS - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) LACK OF TOTAL EXPERIENCE IN TYPE OPERATION - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - GUSTS
5. GROUND LOOP/SWERVE - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings

6. TERRAIN CONDITION - WET
7. TERRAIN CONDITION - DITCH

Factual Information

On March 1, 1998, at 1600 central standard time, a Piper PA-32-300 airplane, N4GQ, sustained substantial damage following a loss of control while landing at Rayville, Louisiana. The airplane was owned and operated by a private individual under Title 14 CFR Part 91. The private pilot, sole occupant of the airplane, was not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the personal cross country flight and a flight plan was not filed for the flight that departed Waco, Texas, at 1400.

During a personal interview, conducted by the investigator-in-charge, and on the Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident Report (NTSB Form 6120.1/2), the pilot reported that he obtained weather briefings prior to and during the flight and was aware of the cross wind conditions at the destination airport. During the landing on runway 36, there was a direct cross wind from the left with the winds at 10 to 15 knots gusting at 20 to 25 knots. During the landing flare/touchdown the airplane was configured for the gusting wind; however, during the landing roll, the wind "gust let up and the airplane departed the paved runway to the left side. The turf was soggy and wet and the airplane went into a ditch paralleling the runway, collapsing the nose gear before the airplane stopped."

An FAA Designated Airworthiness Representative examined the airplane. He found structural damage occurred to the propeller, nose gear, engine mount, firewall, and fuselage.

On the Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident Report, the pilot stated that the accident could have been prevented by landing at an alternate airport in order to land more directly into the wind. The pilot further stated that he is taking flight "lessons in a tail dragger (tailwheel aircraft) in order to gain more experience on managing an aircraft in cross wind conditions."

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	46, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
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 3 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	01/30/1998
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	556 hours (Total, all aircraft), 17 hours (Total, this make and model), 529 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 12 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N4GQ
Model/Series:	PA-32-300 PA-32-300	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	32-7340041
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	08/30/1997, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3400 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	104 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3500 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	IO-540
Registered Owner:	ERLE E. BARHAM	Rated Power:	300 hp
Operator:	ERLE E. BARHAM	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	, 0 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0000	Direction from Accident Site:	0°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear / 0 ft agl	Visibility	10 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	10 knots / 25 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	270°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	WACO, TX (ACT)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	(M79)	Type of Clearance:	
Departure Time:	1400 CST	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	JOHN H. HOOKS MEMORIAL (M79)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	83 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	36	IFR Approach:	
Runway Length/Width:	3699 ft / 75 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full Stop

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):	JOYCE ROACH	Report Date:	12/08/1998
Additional Participating Persons:	KELLY TEAGUE; BATON ROUGE, LA		
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 , 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](#).