



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Factual Report

Location:	SPEARFISH, SD	Accident Number:	CHI98LA235
Date & Time:	07/01/1998, 1100 CDT	Registration:	N5181Z
Aircraft:	Piper PA-22-108	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Fatal, 1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

On July 1, 1998, at 1100 central daylight time, a Piper PA22, N5181Z, sustained substantial damage during impact with the terrain approximately 5 miles south of Spearfish Airport, Spearfish, South Dakota. The pilot received fatal injuries. The passenger reported minor injuries. The airplane was being operated as a personal flight under provisions of 14 CFR Part 91 when the accident occurred.. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time and no flight plan was on file. The flight originated in Spearfish, South Dakota, about 1030, and was en route to Cheyenne, Wyoming

The passenger was a non-pilot and said that he remembered the airplane being buffeted around and descending into the trees.

The pilot survived the accident and succumbed later in the hospital.

Emergency responders and FAA inspectors were on site within two hours of the accident and said that there was no smell of fuel nor did they find any fuel leaking from the wreckage. The left fuel tank was intact and contained only unusable fuel. The fuel selector was found selected to the left fuel tank.

An inspection of the airplane subsequent to the accident failed to reveal any mechanical anomalies other than those associated with ground impact. The carburetor had some fuel in it and no water was found. Magnetos produced sparks on all plugs. A compression check was performed on cylinders and all had thumb compression. The left fuel was filled with water and a small leak was noted by the drain plug which was associated with impact damage.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	35, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Expired	Last FAA Medical Exam:	11/05/1991
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	600 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N5181Z
Model/Series:	PA-22-108 PA-22-108	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	22-8848
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1950 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:		Engine Model/Series:	O-290-D2
Registered Owner:	HARLEY OPPERMAN	Rated Power:	135 hp
Operator:	HARLEY OPPERMAN	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	RAP, 3202 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	38 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1055 CDT	Direction from Accident Site:	120°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 9500 ft agl	Visibility	10 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Unknown / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	7 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	170°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	21° C / 16° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	, SD (SPF)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	CHEYENNE, WY (CYS)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1030 CDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	STEPHEN A WILSON
Additional Participating Persons:	DAN MCKINNEY; RAPID CITY, SD
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/ .