



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	BELMONT [□] , WI	Accident Number:	CHI92LA194
Date & Time:	07/02/1992, 2220 CDT	Registration:	N9735J
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-28-180	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	3 Minor, 2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE PILOT DEPARTED AT NIGHT IN INSTRUMENT METEOROLOGICAL CONDITIONS WITHOUT A FLIGHT PLAN. ABOUT TEN MINUTES AFTER TAKEOFF, THE PILOT REALIZED WEATHER CONDITIONS WERE 'FAR POORER' THAN EXPECTED AND THE FOG WAS HAMPERING HIS VISION. HE CHOSE TO RETURN TO THE DEPARTURE AIRPORT, AND WAS IN A LEFT HAND TURN WHEN THE AIRPLANE IMPACTED TREES. THE PILOT STATED DUE TO THE POOR WEATHER HIS ATTENTION WAS DIVERTED FROM NAVIGATION. THE AIRPLANE HAD WANDERED SEVERAL MILES OFF COURSE, INTO AN AREA OF HIGHER TERRAIN. A POST-IMPACT GROUND FIRE ENSUED.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE PILOT'S POOR PLANNING/DECISION MAKING. RELATED FACTORS ARE THE LOW CEILINGS AND FOG, THE DARK NIGHT, THE PILOT'S INACCURATE WEATHER EVALUATION AND DIVERTED ATTENTION, AND THE PILOT'S FAILURE TO MAINTAIN CLEARANCE FROM THE HIGHER TERRAIN ENCOUNTERED.

Findings

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

Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING
2. (F) WEATHER EVALUATION - INACCURATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - DARK NIGHT
4. (C) PLANNING/DECISION - POOR - PILOT IN COMMAND
5. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - FOG
6. (F) VISUAL LOOKOUT - RESTRICTED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

Findings

7. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - HIGH TERRAIN
8. FLIGHT/NAVIGATION INSTRUMENT(S) - NOT FOLLOWED - PILOT IN COMMAND
9. (F) DIVERTED ATTENTION - PILOT IN COMMAND
10. TERRAIN CONDITION - HIGH VEGETATION

Occurrence #3: FIRE
Phase of Operation: OTHER

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	33, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	10/03/1991
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	900 hours (Total, all aircraft), 880 hours (Total, this make and model), 880 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 50 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 15 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N9735J
Model/Series:	PA-28-180 PA-28-180	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	28-3928
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	03/01/1992, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2350 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	75 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3000 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-360
Registered Owner:	TIMBER CITY FLYERS, INC.	Rated Power:	180 hp
Operator:	TIMBER CITY FLYERS, INC.	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument Conditions	Condition of Light:	Night/Dark
Observation Facility, Elevation:	DBQ, 1076 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	30 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	2118 CDT	Direction from Accident Site:	190°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown / 0 ft agl	Visibility	3 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 200 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	8 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	250°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	-18°C / -18°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	MINERAL POINT, WI (C32)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	MAQUOKETA, IA (OQW)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	2210 CDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	2 Minor, 2 None	Aircraft Fire:	On-Ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 Minor, 2 None	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	JODI L REEVES	Report Date:	06/30/1993
Additional Participating Persons:	CHET CYBULSKI; MILWAUKEE, WI		
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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