



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	MT. PLEASANT, MI	<b>Accident Number:</b>	CHI99LA141
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	05/01/1999, 1415 EDT	<b>Registration:</b>	N4659T
<b>Aircraft:</b>	BARRETT BENSEN B-8	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Minor

**Flight Conducted Under:** Part 91: General Aviation - Personal

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## Analysis

The pilot was attempting a go-around from a private airstrip. In a written statement, the pilot reported, 'I was coming in for a landing at my son-in-laws private airstrip. The strip has his house and a power line on the west end and woods on the east end. His strip is 1,200 feet long, plenty long for a gyro. I had made several landings there before. In the past my landings had been to the west. Due to the wind this one was from the east. As I approached I realized I was high and would use up a lot of runway, so I decided to go around. I then eased the throttle on to full and made a right bank . (there was a street, house, power line and a river to the left). At that moment the bird went into a downward roll to the left and nothing I did stopped it. I was on the ground before I knew it'. The pilot also stated that his airspeed was 40 mph and he did not recall making a right hand climb out before. The pilot reported that there was no mechanical malfunction. Examination of the wreckage revealed the gyroplane's rotor blades exhibited a cone shape.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the inadequate rotor rpm by the pilot.

## Findings

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Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT  
Phase of Operation: GO-AROUND (VFR)

### Findings

1. (C) ROTOR RPM - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND  
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Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

## Factual Information

On May 1, 1999 at 1415 eastern daylight time, a Barrett Bensen B-8, N4659T, an experimental gyroplane, owned and piloted by a non-certificated pilot, received substantial damage on impact with terrain following a go-around attempt at a private airstrip. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident. The 14 CFR Part 91 personal flight was not operating on a flight plan. The pilot reported minor injuries. The flight departed from Shepherd, Michigan, at 1400, en route to Mount Pleasant, Michigan.

During an interview the pilot stated that he approached a private airstrip in his gyroplane "a little high", He was going to use a lot of runway and elected to perform a go-around so as not to use a lot of runway. He stated that he normally turns to the left, but there were houses in that direction, so he turned to the right. He reported that he could not stop the slow roll to the right and impacted the terrain.

In a written statement, the pilot reported, "I was coming in for a landing at my son-in-laws private airstrip. The strip has his house and a power line on the west end and woods on the east end. His strip is 1,200 feet long, plenty long for a gyro. I had made several landings there before. In the past my landings had been to the west. Due to the wind this one was from the east. As I approached I realized I was high and would use up a lot of runway, so I decided to go around. I then eased the throttle on to full and made a right bank . (there was a street, house, power line and a river to the left). At that moment the bird went into a downward roll to the left and nothing I did stopped it. I was on the ground before I knew it". The pilot also stated that his airspeed was 40 mph and he did not recall making a right hand climb out before.

The pilot reported that he held a student pilot certificate. Federal Aviation Administration records indicate a third class medical certificate on July 14, 1995 was the last medical certificate that the pilot received.

The gyroplane had accumulated a total airframe time of 682 hours since April 5, 1990. There was no record of an annual condition inspection.

The pilot reported that there was no mechanical malfunction. Examination of the wreckage by the Federal Aviation Administration revealed the gyroplane's rotor blades to exhibit a cone shape.

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Student	<b>Age:</b>	78, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Center
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	Seatbelt
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 3 Expired	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	07/14/1995
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>		<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>			

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	BARRETT BENSEN	Registration:	N4659T
Model/Series:	B-8 B-8	Aircraft Category:	Gyroplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental	Serial Number:	1
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	04/10/1999, Continuous Airworthiness	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	500 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	12 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	682 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	Volkswagen
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	1600
Registered Owner:	THURMAN BARRETT	Rated Power:	65 hp
Operator:	THURMAN BARRETT	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	MBS, 668 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	30 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1353 EDT	Direction from Accident Site:	106°
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:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	21° C / 0° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	SHEPARD, MI	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	
Departure Time:	1400 EDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

## Airport Information

Airport:		Runway Surface Type:	Grass/turf
Airport Elevation:	755 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	9	IFR Approach:	
Runway Length/Width:	1200 ft / 30 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full Stop

## Wreckage and Impact Information

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

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	MITCHELL F GALLO	<b>Report Date:</b>	11/30/2000
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	DON FINNEY; GRAND RAPIDS, MI		
<b>Publish Date:</b>			
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	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 <a href="mailto:pubinquiry@ntsb.gov">pubinquiry@ntsb.gov</a> , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at <a href="http://dms.ntsbt.gov/pubdms/">http://dms.ntsbt.gov/pubdms/</a> .		

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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](#).