



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	LAS CRUCES, NM	Accident Number:	DEN00LA003
Date & Time:	10/02/1999, 0750 MDT	Registration:	N2493M
Aircraft:	Piper PA-12	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot said that while on final approach to runway 26, engine power remained too high even though the throttle had been completely retarded. On the second approach, engine power was still too high even with the throttle closed. He initiated a second go around and when the airplane was 50 feet above the ground, the mixture control was slowly moved towards idle cutoff 'to decrease power.' The airplane touched down at high speed. Directional control was lost when the pilot became distracted, and the airplane ground looped to the right. The left wing buckled when it struck the runway, and the side loads tore off the left main landing gear and damaged the right main landing gear. It was later discovered that the clamp securing the throttle sleeve to the throttle housing had come loose, allowing the sleeve (not the cable) to move when the throttle control was operated.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's inadvertent ground loop/swerve during landing. A factor was his attention being diverted by a malfunctioning throttle control.

Findings

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

Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings

1. (C) GROUND LOOP/SWERVE - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) DIVERTED ATTENTION - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. THROTTLE/POWER CONTROL - NOT AVAILABLE
4. (F) THROTTLE/POWER LEVER, LINKAGE - LOOSE PART/BOLT/NUT/CLAMP/ETC

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

Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings

5. TERRAIN CONDITION - RUNWAY

Factual Information

On October 2, 1999, approximately 0750 mountain daylight time, a Piper PA-12, N2493M, registered to and operated by the pilot, was substantially damaged when it veered off the side of the runway while landing at Las Cruces International Airport, Las Cruces, New Mexico. The private pilot and his private pilot certificated passenger were not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and no flight plan had been filed for the personal flight being conducted under Title 14 CFR Part 91. The flight originated at El Paso, Texas, approximately 0730.

The pilot said that while on final approach to runway 26, he noticed that engine power remained too high even though the throttle had been retarded completely. He made a go around. On the second approach to the same runway, he noticed engine power was still too high with the throttle closed. He initiated a second go around and when the airplane was 50 feet above the ground, he slowly moved the mixture control towards idle cutoff "to decrease power." The airplane touched down at high speed and, according to the pilot, directional control was lost when he became distracted, and the airplane ground looped to the right. The left wing buckled when it struck the runway, and the side loads tore off the left main landing gear and damaged the right main landing gear.

The pilot later reported the clamp that secures the throttle sleeve to the throttle housing had come loose, allowing the sleeve (not the cable) to move when the throttle control was operated.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	68, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Front
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 3 Expired	Last FAA Medical Exam:	08/04/1995
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	348 hours (Total, all aircraft), 348 hours (Total, this make and model), 348 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N2493M
Model/Series:	PA-12 PA-12	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	12-1561
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	10/02/1999, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1750 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	13 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	1596 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-235-C
Registered Owner:	ROBT D BRADFORD/TOMMY G GRUVER	Rated Power:	100 hp
Operator:	ROBT D BRADFORD/TOMMY G GRUVER	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	ELP, 3956 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	48 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0751 MDT	Direction from Accident Site:	120°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear / 0 ft agl	Visibility	10 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	6 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	140°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	17°C / 3°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	EL PASO, TX (ELP)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	(LRU)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	0700 MDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	LAS CRUCES INTERNATIONAL (LRU)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	4454 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	26	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	6073 ft / 100 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full Stop; Go Around; Traffic Pattern

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 None	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	ARNOLD W SCOTT	Report Date:	06/22/2000
Additional Participating Persons:	TAMARA L BELL; ALBUQUERQUE, NM		
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 pubinquiry@ntsb.gov , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/ .		

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