



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	BLAIRSTOWN, NJ	Accident Number:	IAD00LA025
Date & Time:	03/04/2000, 1352 EST	Registration:	N97VT
Aircraft:	I.C.A. Brasov IS-28B2	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The glider was towed to 3,000 feet and released over a ridge where it was thermaled to 3,500 feet. After descending to 2,000 feet over the ridge to look for more thermals, the pilot decided to return to the airport. During the return to the airport, the pilot encountered wind conditions that inhibited the glider from maintaining altitude. The pilot positioned the glider to make an off airport landing in a field approximately 3 miles southeast of the airport. The glider collided with trees bordering the field, then fell to the ground. Winds were reported out of the north at 10 knots gusting to 16 knots. The pilot reported a total time of 1,250 hours, of which 380 were in gliders and 10 hours in make and model. The pilot also reported there were no mechanical deficiencies with the glider.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the encountering of wind conditions in flight that inhibited the pilot from maintaining altitude.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER

Phase of Operation: APPROACH

Findings

1. (C) WEATHER CONDITION - DOWNDRAFT
2. COMPENSATION FOR WIND CONDITIONS - NOT POSSIBLE - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT

Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING - TURN TO LANDING AREA (EMERGENCY)

Findings

3. OBJECT - TREE(S)

Factual Information

On March 4, 2000, at 1352 Eastern Standard Time, a I.C.A. Brasov IS-28B2, a glider, N97VT, was destroyed after colliding with trees during an off airport landing near Blairstown, New Jersey. The certificated commercial pilot was seriously injured and the passenger sustained minor injuries. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the local pleasure flight that originated at the Blairstown Airport (1N7), at 1300. No flight plan was filed for the flight conducted under 14 CFR part 91.

According to the pilot's written statement, he stated:

"We departed 1N7 at about 1300 and was towed to 3,000 feet msl over the ridge. We were released from the tow and thermaled to 3,500 feet msl. We lost this thermal, then descended down the ridge to see if it was working. The ridge was not working, so at 2,000 feet msl, we left the ridge and headed back to the airport. We encountered a very heavy sink on the way back, and became too low to continue to the airport. The only place to land was in a field to our right. We turned towards the field and attempted to make it. But, we hit trees in front of the field about five feet from the top. The glider then fell into the field from about 30 feet up, hitting on the left wing and cockpit. The nose was substantially damaged."

The glider landed on private property approximately 3 miles southwest of the Blairstown Airport.

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Inspectors examined the glider on-site. The FAA Inspectors reported that the glider hit the tops of the trees, dropped approximately 70 feet to the ground, and hit flat on it's belly. The cockpit was destroyed, both wings were bent upwards, and the base of the vertical stabilizer was wrinkled. There were dents along the leading edge of the right and left wings.

The aircraft was owned and operated by Aero Club Albatross. According to the club's President, the glider was launched around 1300, for a local pleasure flight. In a telephone interview, the club president reported there may have been a wind shift during the flight.

Blairstown Airport did not have weather reporting capability. At 1254, at Andover Airport (12N), Andover, New Jersey, approximately 12 miles east of 1N7, winds were variable at 6 knots. At 1354, winds were at 360 degrees, variable to 040 degrees, at 10 knots gusting to 16 knots.

The pilot held a commercial pilot certificate with ratings for airplane single-engine land and gliders. He was also a certificated flight instructor in gliders. The pilot reported a total flight time of approximately 1,250 hours, of which 380 hours were in gliders and 10 hours in make and model.

The pilot reported there were no mechanical deficiencies with the glider.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Flight Instructor; Commercial	Age:	48, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Glider	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Glider	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	11/09/1999
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1288 hours (Total, all aircraft), 10 hours (Total, this make and model), 1162 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 16 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	I.C.A. Brasov	Registration:	N97VT
Model/Series:	IS-28B2 IS-28B2	Aircraft Category:	Glider
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	104
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	03/20/1999, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1300 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	32 Hours	Engines:	Unknown
Airframe Total Time:	1412 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:		Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	AERO CLUB ALBATROSS	Rated Power:	
Operator:	AERO CLUB ALBATROSS	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	12N, 583 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	12 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1254 EST	Direction from Accident Site:	90°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear / 0 ft agl	Visibility	20 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	10 knots / 16 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	360°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	9°C / -7°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	BLAIRSTOWN, NJ (1N7)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1300 EST	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	BLAIRSTOWN (1N7)	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	372 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Precautionary Landing

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	LEAH D YEAGER	Report Date:	12/04/2000
Additional Participating Persons:	JAMES WOHLHUETER; ALLENTOWN, PA		
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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