



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Factual Report

Location:	GILLESPIE, PA	Accident Number:	NYC00LA108
Date & Time:	04/01/2000, 1500 EST	Registration:	N55GS
Aircraft:	Sportavia Putzer RF-5B	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None

Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation - Personal

On April 1, 2000, about 1500 Eastern Standard Time, a homebuilt RF-5B, a motorglider, N55GS, was substantially damaged during takeoff from a grass field near Gillespie, Pennsylvania. The certificated commercial glider pilot was not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and no flight plan was filed for the personal flight destined for the Garrett County Airport, Oakland, Maryland. The flight was conducted under 14 CFR Part 91.

According to the pilot, while at an altitude of 2,500 feet above mean sea level, he opted to change the propeller pitch from climb to cruise. While doing so, the pilot noticed a sudden power loss, and the engine shut off. The pilot attempted to restart the engine with no success and performed a forced landing to a farm field. During the landing an outrigger rod broke. The pilot also found the engine ignition switch in the off position, "indicating the possibility that I had inadvertently touched it while operating the mechanical lever for the pitch change."

After the outrigger rod was replaced and it was confirmed that there were no problems with the engine, the pilot decided the motorglider was airworthy. The pilot determined that the wind was coming from his right, and positioned the motorglider for a takeoff. After liftoff, the pilot noticed that the motorglider began to drift to the right, and struck a small tree located on the edge of the field. The motorglider veered further to the right, touched down on the ground, struck two embankments lined with fence posts, and came to rest in an adjacent farm field.

Examination of the accident site by a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector revealed that the airplane departed the field on a heading of about 080 degrees.

The winds reported at 1453, at an airport 20 miles to the northwest were from 210 degrees at 10 knots.

The FAA inspector did not find any abnormalities with the engine, nor did the pilot report any.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	66, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Glider	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	None None	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	595 hours (Total, all aircraft), 450 hours (Total, this make and model), 14 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Sportavia Putzer	Registration:	N55GS
Model/Series:	RF-5B RF-5B	Aircraft Category:	Glider
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental	Serial Number:	51031
Landing Gear Type:	Hull	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	04/12/1999, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1510 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	21 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	1000 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	Limbach
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	SL 1700E
Registered Owner:	RUDOLF E. VOGELBERGER	Rated Power:	67 hp
Operator:	RUDOLF E. VOGELBERGER	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	AGC, 1252 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	20 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1453 EST	Direction from Accident Site:	340°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown / 0 ft agl	Visibility	10 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 25000 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	10 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	210°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	18° C / 1° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	MONONGAHELA, PA (P53)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	OAKLAND, MD (2G4)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1015 EST	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	STEPHEN M DEMKO
Additional Participating Persons:	WILLIAM J KOSHAR; ALLEGHENY, PA
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/ .