



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

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<b>Location:</b>	GILLESPIE, PA	<b>Accident Number:</b>	NYC00LA108
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	04/01/2000, 1500 EST	<b>Registration:</b>	N55GS
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Sportavia Putzer RF-5B	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

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## Analysis

While at an altitude of 2,500 feet, the pilot 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 observed the engine ignition switch in the off position, 'indicating the possibility that I had inadvertently touched it while operating the mechanical lever for the [propeller] pitch change.' The pilot replaced the outrigger rod and attempted a takeoff from the field. 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 revealed that the airplane departed the field on a heading of about 080 degrees. The winds reported by an airport 20 miles to the northwest were from 210 degrees at 10 knots.

## Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's improper weather evaluation, resulting in a tailwind departure.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT  
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

### Findings

1. OBJECT - TREE(S)
2. (C) WEATHER EVALUATION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. WEATHER CONDITION - TAILWIND

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Occurrence #2: ON GROUND/WATER COLLISION WITH OBJECT  
Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

### Findings

4. TERRAIN CONDITION - DIRT BANK/RISING EMBANKMENT

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	66
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Glider	<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None
<b>Flight Time:</b>	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

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Sportavia Putzer	<b>Registration:</b>	N55GS
<b>Model/Series:</b>	RF-5B RF-5B	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Operator:</b>	RUDOLF E. VOGELBERGER	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Limbach
<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	SL 1700E
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual Conditions	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	AGC, 1252 ft msl	<b>Weather Information Source:</b>	Weather Observation Facility
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	Broken / 25000 ft agl	<b>Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:</b>	10 knots / , 210°
<b>Temperature:</b>	18° C	<b>Visibility</b>	10 Miles
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>			
<b>Departure Point:</b>	MONONGAHELA, PA (P53)	<b>Destination:</b>	OAKLAND, MD (2G4)

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 None	<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>Latitude, Longitude:</b>			

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	STEPHEN M DEMKO	<b>Adopted Date:</b>	04/19/2001
<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:pubin@ntsb.gov">pubin@ntsb.gov</a> , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at <a href="http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/">http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/</a> .		

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