



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	TRAVERSE CITY, MI	Accident Number:	CHI84FA073
Date & Time:	01/01/1984, 1553 EST	Registration:	N3776T
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-28R-180	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

PRIOR TO THE FLT, THE PLT MADE A PHONE CALL TO A RELATIVE WHO LIVED NEAR THE SOUTHEAST SIDE OF LONG LAKE & SAID HE WOULD 'PASS OVER IN ABOUT 10 MIN.' AFTER HE TOOK OFF, THE ACFT WAS OBSERVED IN A LOW PASS OVER THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF THE LAKE. THE ACFT THEN CIRCLED & BEGAN A 2ND LOW PASS. ON THE 2ND PASS, IT DESCENDED LOWER, HIT THE SNOW COVERED, FROZEN LAKE, BOUNCED & CRASHED. WITNESSES SAID LIGHT SNOW WAS FALLING, BUT THE VISIBILITY WAS GOOD.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

Findings

1. (C) BUZZING - INITIATED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - SNOW
3. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - ICY
4. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - SNOW COVERED
5. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - WHITEOUT
6. (C) ALTITUDE - MISJUDGED - PILOT IN COMMAND
7. CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	28, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):		Restraint Used:	Seatbelt
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	None Unknown	Last FAA Medical Exam:	05/13/1983
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	260 hours (Total, all aircraft), 38 hours (Total, this make and model), 2102 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 103 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 55 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N3776T
Model/Series:	PA-28R-180 PA-28R-180	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	28-30088
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	06/18/1983, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2500 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	79 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	1258 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	IO-320-B1E
Registered Owner:	WARD E. SEELEY	Rated Power:	180 hp
Operator:	WARD E. SEELEY	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	TVC, 625 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	8 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1555 EST	Direction from Accident Site:	80°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Partial Obscuration / 0 ft agl	Visibility	3 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	160°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	-4° C / -9° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	TRAVERSE CITY, MI (TVC)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	SAGINAW, MI (MBS)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1540 EST	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	TRAVERSE CITY (TVC)	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	GEORGE 1 SEIDLEIN	Report Date:	
Additional Participating Persons:	R. NAVARRO; GRAND RAPIDS, MI N. GARY; GRAND RAPIDS, MI		
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/ .		

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), established in 1967, is an independent federal agency mandated by Congress through the Independent Safety Board Act of 1974 to investigate transportation accidents, determine the probable causes of the accidents, issue safety recommendations, study transportation safety issues, and evaluate the safety effectiveness of government agencies involved in transportation. The NTSB makes public its actions and decisions through accident reports, safety studies, special investigation reports, safety recommendations, and statistical reviews.

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](#).