



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Colo. Springs, CO	Accident Number:	DEN01LA158
Date & Time:	09/02/2001, 0815 MDT	Registration:	N2575P
Aircraft:	Balloon Works Firefly 8B-15	Aircraft Damage:	Minor
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot and his passenger took off in the balloon, leveled off at 1,000 feet, and flew south. The wind velocity increased to about 15 mph and the pilot decided to land. He chose a field in which two balloons had already landed. He briefed his passenger on the position to assume for a high wind landing. The pilot made a "stand up" landing, but a thermal caused the balloon to ascend about 30 to 40 feet. It touched down a second time and the pilot vented the envelope. According to the pilot, the "passenger's foot was out of position and twisted on impact." X-rays taken later indicated the ankle was fractured.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the passenger's failure to follow instructions given to brace for a high wind landing, and the pilot's failure to adequately monitor the passenger's actions. A contributing factor was the thermal lift.

Findings

Occurrence #1: HARD LANDING
Phase of Operation: LANDING

Findings

1. PASSENGER BRIEFING - PERFORMED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - THERMAL LIFT
3. (C) INSTRUCTIONS, WRITTEN/VERBAL - NOT FOLLOWED - PASSENGER
4. (C) SUPERVISION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

On September 2, 2001, approximately 0815 mountain daylight time, a Balloon Works Firefly 8B-15, N2575P, sustained minor damage during a hard landing near Colorado Springs, Colorado. The private pilot was not injured, but his passenger received a serious injury. 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 in Colorado Springs approximately 0745.

The following is based on a telephone interview with the pilot and the accident report he submitted. The pilot said he and his passenger were participating in the Colorado Springs Balloon Classic. They took off, leveled off at 1,000 feet, and flew south. The wind velocity increased to about 15 mph and the pilot decided to land. He chose a field in which two balloons had already landed. He briefed his passenger on the position to assume for a high wind landing. The pilot made a "stand up" landing, but a thermal caused the balloon to ascend about 30 to 40 feet. It touched down a second time and the pilot vented the envelope. According to the pilot, the "passenger's foot was out of position and twisted on impact." X-rays taken later indicated the ankle was fractured.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	34, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Balloon	Restraint Used:	
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:	07/01/2000
Flight Time:	131 hours (Total, all aircraft), 24 hours (Total, this make and model), 96 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 10 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Balloon Works	Registration:	N2575P
Model/Series:	Firefly 8B-15	Aircraft Category:	Balloon
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	F8B-436
Landing Gear Type:		Seats:	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	06/23/2001, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:	4 Hours	Engines:	0
Airframe Total Time:	198 Hours at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	Philip L. Campbell	Rated Power:	
Operator:	Philip L. Campbell	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	COS, 6184 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:	0754	Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	8 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	350°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.13 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	16°C / 11°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Colo. Springs, CO (NONE)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	0745 MDT	Type of Airspace:	Class E

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Arnold W Scott	Report Date:	02/20/2002
Additional Participating Persons:	Mark A Schofield; FAA Flight Standards District Office; Denver, CO		
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/ .		

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](#).