



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	SONOMA, CA	Accident Number:	LAX02LA100
Date & Time:	03/03/2002, 1500 PST	Registration:	N17438
Aircraft:	Aeronca C-3	Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

During the takeoff climb out, the airplane veered to the right and nose dived into a junkyard. A passenger who held a student pilot certificate, was invited by the owner to fly the airplane. The owner placed the student in the left seat, which was the side that had the flight control stick, rudder pedals, and brakes. The owner sat in the right seat, which did not have a flight control stick but did have rudder pedals. The student said there were no problems encountered during takeoff. Once they had climbed over the tress, the left wing dropped abruptly. A couple of seconds after she corrected the wings to a straight and level attitude, the pilot-in-command reached over to her side and took over the flight controls. The airplane banked and fell off to the right and struck the ground in a nose-down, left wing low attitude. Initial and follow-up examinations of the airplane and powerplant did not expose any preimpact mechanical discrepancies.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the pilot's excessive remedial control inputs in response to a passenger's control inputs, which led to a failure to maintain an adequate airspeed and an inadvertent stall/mush. The pilot's inadequate preflight decision to allow a student pilot to occupy the only seat with full flight controls was a factor in the accident.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. (F) PREFLIGHT PLANNING/PREPARATION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) FLIGHT CONTROLS - USED - PILOT PASSENGER
3. (C) REMEDIAL ACTION - EXCESSIVE - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (C) AIRSPEED - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
5. STALL/MUSH - ENCOUNTERED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Findings

6. TERRAIN CONDITION - CONGESTED/CONFINED AREA

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	55
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Multi-engine Sea; Single-engine Land; Single-engine Sea	Instrument Rating(s):	None
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	6000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 50 hours (Total, this make and model), 6000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 27 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 16 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Student Pilot Information

Certificate:	Student	Age:	17
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Instrument Rating(s):	None
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:			

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Aeronca	Registration:	N17438
Model/Series:	C-3	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Operator:	WILLIAM FIELD	Engine Manufacturer:	Aeronca
Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None	Engine Model/Series:	E-113
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	APC, 33 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	7 knots / , 100°
Temperature:	19° C	Visibility:	10 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	SONOMA, CA (0Q9)	Destination:	SONOMA, CA (0Q9)

Airport Information

Airport:	SONOMA SKYPARK AIRPORT (0Q9)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Runway Used:	26	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Length/Width:	2480 ft / 40 ft		

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Latitude, Longitude:	38.257778, -122.434444		

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): TEALEYE C CORNEJO

Adopted Date: 06/02/2004

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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