



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	Roanoke, TX	Accident Number:	FTW03LA143
Date & Time:	05/03/2003, 1500 CDT	Registration:	N9789D
Aircraft:	Piper PA-18A-150	Injuries:	1 Minor, 1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Instructional		

Analysis

During the takeoff climb of the 3rd or 4th touch and go, "the engine lost power and began to sputter." Prior to the flight, according to the cockpit fuel sight gauges observed by the private pilot, the left fuel tank indicated approximately 3/4 full of fuel, and the right tank indicated approximately 1/2 full of fuel. The private pilot, who was receiving instruction for a tailwheel endorsement, stated the fuel selector was selected to the left fuel tank at the time the engine lost power. After the engine lost power, the flight instructor initiated a forced landing to a field. During the forced landing, the airplane impacted trees and terrain, and came to rest on its nose. Examination of the airplane revealed the fuel system was intact, the left main fuel tank was empty, the right main fuel tank contained "plenty of fuel," and the fuel was clear of contaminants.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The flight instructor's inadequate in-flight planning/decision resulting in fuel starvation and the loss of engine power. A contributing factor was the lack of suitable terrain for the forced landing.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. (C) IN-FLIGHT PLANNING/DECISION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND(CFI)
2. (C) FUEL SYSTEM - STARVATION

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

Findings

3. OBJECT - TREE(S)
4. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - NONE SUITABLE

Flight Instructor Information

Certificate:	Flight Instructor; Commercial	Age:	30
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane Multi-engine; Airplane Single-engine; Instrument Airplane
Flight Time:	1490 hours (Total, all aircraft), 156 hours (Total, this make and model), 1374 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 140 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 50 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	43
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	260 hours (Total, all aircraft), 8 hours (Total, this make and model), 160 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 30 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 11 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N9789D
Model/Series:	PA-18A-150	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Operator:	Marcair	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None	Engine Model/Series:	O-320
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Instructional		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Weather Information Source:	Pilot
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	2 knots / , 180°
Temperature:	32 °C	Visibility	10 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Roanoke, TX (52F)	Destination:	(52F)

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor, 1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Latitude, Longitude:	33.049722, -97.232222		

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Aaron M Sauer

Adopted Date: 09/13/2005

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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