



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Factual Report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Location: | Cottage Grove, MN | Accident Number: | CHI03LA147 |
| Date & Time: | 06/02/2003, 2007 CDT | Registration: | N52461 |
| Aircraft: | Aerostar S-77A | Aircraft Damage: | None |
| Defining Event: | | Injuries: | 1 Serious, 8 None |
| Flight Conducted Under: | Part 91: General Aviation - Business | | |

On June 2, 2003, at 2007 central daylight time, an Aerostar S-77A, N52461, operated by Wiederkehr Balloon International, Inc., experienced a hard landing after a steep approach to a field near Cottage Grove, Minnesota. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident. The pilot and seven passengers reported no injuries, and one passenger reported serious injuries. The 14 CFR Part 91 balloon ride flight was not operating on a flight plan. The local flight departed about 1900.

The pilot reported that he attempted to land in a hay field. A line was dropped to the chase crew, who were unsuccessful in slowing the balloon down. The crew released the line allowing the balloon to climb over obstacles. The pilot stated he deployed the parachute top vent to descend onto a baseball field. He deployed the aero chute vent to flare the balloon before touching down. The balloon bounced "three or four times" before coming to a stop in the upright position.

A passenger sustained a broken rib.

The ride balloon was undamaged.

Pilot Information

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| Certificate: | Commercial | Age: | 54, 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: | 12/28/2002 |
| Flight Time: | | | |

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

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|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|----------|
| Aircraft Make: | Aerostar | Registration: | N52461 |
| Model/Series: | S-77A | Aircraft Category: | Balloon |
| Year of Manufacture: | | Amateur Built: | No |
| Airworthiness Certificate: | Normal | Serial Number: | 3031 |
| Landing Gear Type: | | Seats: | 13 |
| Date/Type of Last Inspection: | 06/01/2003, Annual | Certified Max Gross Wt.: | 2700 lbs |
| Time Since Last Inspection: | 0 Hours | Engines: | |
| Airframe Total Time: | 150 Hours | Engine Manufacturer: | |
| ELT: | Not installed | Engine Model/Series: | |
| Registered Owner: | Wiederkehr Balloons International Inc. | Rated Power: | |
| Operator: | Wiederkehr Balloons International Inc. | Operating Certificate(s) Held: | None |

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

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|----------------------------------|-------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Conditions at Accident Site: | Visual Conditions | Condition of Light: | Day |
| Observation Facility, Elevation: | MSP, 841 ft msl | Distance from Accident Site: | 12 Nautical Miles |
| Observation Time: | 1953 CDT | Direction from Accident Site: | 284° |
| Lowest Cloud Condition: | | Visibility | 10 Miles |
| Lowest Ceiling: | Overcast / 20000 ft agl | Visibility (RVR): | |
| Wind Speed/Gusts: | 11 knots / | Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Wind Direction: | 260° | Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Altimeter Setting: | 29.98 inches Hg | Temperature/Dew Point: | 16 °C / 7 °C |
| Precipitation and Obscuration: | | | |
| Departure Point: | Lakeland, MN | Type of Flight Plan Filed: | None |
| Destination: | Cottage Grove, MN | Type of Clearance: | None |
| Departure Time: | 1900 CDT | Type of Airspace: | Class G |

Wreckage and Impact Information

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|---------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Crew Injuries: | 1 None | Aircraft Damage: | None |
| Passenger Injuries: | 1 Serious, 7 None | Aircraft Fire: | None |
| Ground Injuries: | N/A | Aircraft Explosion: | None |
| Total Injuries: | 1 Serious, 8 None | Latitude, Longitude: | 44.844444, -92.943056 |

Administrative Information

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| Investigator In Charge (IIC): | Mitchell F Gallo |
| Additional Participating Persons: | Dennis Crawford; FAA- Minneapolis FSDO; Minneapolis, MN |
| 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/ . |