



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	San Antonio, TX	Accident Number:	FTW03LA200
Date & Time:	07/01/2003, 1040 CDT	Registration:	N84426
Aircraft:	Champion 7AC	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

While flying over a wild animal orphanage and observing the animals, the pilot stated that he started losing altitude after completing a turn. The pilot added that he "straightened it out, but he still couldn't maintain altitude." The airplane came to rest nose down in a wooded area inside the animal sanctuary. The IIC calculated the density altitude to be approximately 3,288 feet at the time of the accident.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to maintain minimum required airspeed while maneuvering, resulting in an inadvertent stall of the airplane.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

Findings

1. (C) AIRSPEED(VS) - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (C) STALL - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND

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

Findings

3. TERRAIN CONDITION - GROUND

Factual Information

On July 1, 2003, about 1040 central daylight time, a Champion 7AC single-engine airplane, N84426, was substantially damaged when it impacted the ground following a loss of control while maneuvering near San Antonio, Texas. The 761-hour private pilot received serious injuries and his passenger was not injured. The airplane, registered to and operated by the pilot, was operating under 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and a flight plan was not filed for the personal flight, which originated from San Geronimo Airpark (8T8), near San Antonio, Texas at 1000.

On the Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident Report (NTSB Form 6120.1/2), the pilot stated that he was flying over a wild animal orphanage at about 1,500 feet observing the animals when he started losing altitude after completing a turn. The pilot added that he "straightened it out, but he still couldn't maintain altitude." The airplane came to rest nose down in a heavily wooded area inside the animal sanctuary.

According to the FAA inspector that interviewed the pilot after the accident, the pilot's wife stated that he previously told her that he thought that he stalled the airplane.

With a temperature at 33 degrees Celsius, field elevation approximately 1,000 feet, and an altimeter setting of 30.01 inches of Mercury, the investigator-in-charge (IIC) calculated the density altitude to be 3,288 feet at the time of the accident.

Examination of the airplane by an FAA inspector, who responded to the accident site, revealed structural damage to the wings and wing struts. The nose section of the airplane, the propeller, landing gear, and fuel tank were also damaged.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	68, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	10/25/2002
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	12/26/2002
Flight Time:	761 hours (Total, all aircraft), 761 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Champion	Registration:	N84426
Model/Series:	7AC	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	7AC3123
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	01/22/2003, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1220 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	36.6 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	2945 Hours as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	A65-8
Registered Owner:	Louis Viggiano Jr.	Rated Power:	65 hp
Operator:	Louis Viggiano Jr.	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	SAT, 1000 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	15 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1053 CDT	Direction from Accident Site:	270°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 6000 ft agl	Visibility	10 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	7 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	70°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.01 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	33°C / 21°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	San Antonio, TX (8T8)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	San Antonio, TX (8T8)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1000 CDT	Type of Airspace:	Class C

Airport Information

Airport:	San Geronimo Airpark (8T8)	Runway Surface Type:	Unknown
Airport Elevation:	1040 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Unknown
Runway Used:		IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	29.452222, -98.781111

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Frank McGill	Report Date:	11/25/2003
Additional Participating Persons:	Edward J Trayhan; San Antonio, Texas; San Antonio, TX		
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/ .		

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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](#).