



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Factual Report

Location:	Saint Marys, GA	Accident Number:	ATL04LA001
Date & Time:	10/01/2003, 1803 EDT	Registration:	N1928J
Aircraft:	Johnson Walter A Hornet	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

On October 1, 2003, at 1803 eastern daylight time, a Walter A. Johnson homebuilt Hornet experimental airplane, N1928J, registered to and operated by the non-certificated pilot, collided with the ground following a loss of engine power in St. Mary's, Georgia. The personal flight was operated under the provisions of Title 14 CFR Part 91, and visual flight rules. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and no flight plan was filed. The non-certificated pilot sustained fatal injuries and the airplane was substantially damaged. The flight originated from a private grass strip in St. Mary's, Georgia, at an undetermined time.

According to witnesses in the area, the airplane had been circling when they heard the engine sputter. The airplane descended nose down behind a stand of trees and they heard a "boom". Several witnesses in the area telephoned the 911-operator and reported the accident. Examination of the wreckage on-scene found the airplane in a nose down attitude. Examination of the engine found one of the two sparkplugs out of its cylinder hanging by the sparkplug wire. During a telephone interview with the brother of the pilot he stated that about 15 to 20 hours prior to the accident they had done some maintenance on the engine including changing the spark plugs. He further stated that he believes that the spark plugs were not tightened adequately which allowed one to "blow out causing the loss of engine power".

The Division of Forensic Sciences, Georgia Bureau of Investigation, State of Georgia conducted a postmortem examination of the pilot on October 2, 2003. The reported cause of death was "Blunt Force Injury, and the Manner of death was Accident". The Forensic Toxicology Research Section, Federal Aviation Administration, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma performed postmortem toxicology of specimens from the pilot. There was no Carbon Monoxide, no Cyanide or Ethanol detected in Blood, and no drugs detected in the Liver.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	None	Age:	52, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	None	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:			

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Johnson Walter A	Registration:	N1928J
Model/Series:	Hornet	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental	Serial Number:	0043
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	09/12/2003, Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1045 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	5 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	47 Hours at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Hirth
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	2703
Registered Owner:	Glen & Rock Readdick	Rated Power:	65 hp
Operator:	Glen M. Readdick	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	SSI, 19 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	20 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1753 EDT	Direction from Accident Site:	43°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	9 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	30°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.06 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	23° C / 17° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Kingsland, GA (PVT)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Kingsland, GA (PVT)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1803 EDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	30.757778, -81.562222

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Butch Wilson
Additional Participating Persons:	Robert R Hessler; Atlanta FSDO; College Park, GA
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/ .