



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Knox City, TX	Accident Number:	FTW04LA070
Date & Time:	02/02/2004, 1630 CST	Registration:	N8936W
Aircraft:	Piper PA-28-235	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

During a cross-country flight, the 194-hour private pilot decided to land in a field at his ranch. Upon landing in the field, the left main landing gear tire sunk into the soft ground and the pilot lost control of the aircraft. The aircraft turned to the left and the pilot employed right rudder in an unsuccessful attempt to counter the left turn. The pilot reported that the field was "soft."

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's attempt to land on terrain not suitable for landing. A contributing factor was the soft terrain.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - ON GROUND/WATER

Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings

1. (C) UNSUITABLE TERRAIN OR TAKEOFF/LANDING/TAXI AREA - ATTEMPTED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings

2. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - SOFT

Factual Information

On February 2, 2004, approximately 1630 central standard time, a Piper PA-28-235 single-engine airplane, N8936W, owned and operated by a private individual, was substantially damaged following a loss of control while landing in a pasture near Knox City, Texas. The private pilot, who was the sole occupant, was not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and a flight plan was not filed for the Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91 personal flight. The flight originated from Terrell Municipal Airport (TRL) near Terrell, Texas, at approximately 1430, with Knox City as its intended destination.

According to the 194-hour pilot, who was attempting to land in an open field at his ranch, at approximately 1430, after receiving weather information from Fort Worth Center, he departed Terrell Municipal Airport with the intent to land at his ranch located 8 miles west of Knox City. When the pilot arrived at the area where he planned to land, he performed a fly-by to look for any obstructions in the field. The field appeared to be flat and open and the pilot executed a normal descent and landing.

The pilot added that he properly flared the airplane and touched down on the main gear, with the nose gear touching down approximately 30 feet later. The pilot added that after firmly on the ground, he pulled all power and the aircraft rolled approximately 300 feet.

According to the pilot, the aircraft then veered to the left and he applied right rudder, but the pilot was not able to stop the left turn. The pilot stated that approximately 30 feet later, the right wing impacted the ground and the nose gear collapsed. The aircraft spun around and then the left wing and propeller impacted the ground. The pilot stated that the ground was "soft," and the left main tire appeared to have sunk into the soft ground.

Examination by an FAA inspector, who responded to the accident site, revealed that the left wing forward spar was fractured and the aft spar was bent. Further examination revealed that the forward section of the left wing root separated from the fuselage. The nose gear was found folded inside the wheel well.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	42, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
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--no waivers/lim.	Last Medical Exam:	04/08/2002
Occupational Pilot:	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:		
Flight Time:	194 hours (Total, all aircraft), 108 hours (Total, this make and model), 120 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Manufacturer:	Piper	Registration:	N8936W
Model/Series:	PA-28-235	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	28-10503
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3000 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-540
Registered Owner:	Robert J. Crowell	Rated Power:	235 hp
Operator:	Robert J. Crowell	Air Carrier Operating Certificate:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Observation Facility, Elevation:	TRL, 474 ft msl	Observation Time:	1633 CST
Distance from Accident Site:		Condition of Light:	Day
Direction from Accident Site:		Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Temperature/Dew Point:	9° C / -2° C
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility	10 Miles
Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	10 knots, 310°	Visibility (RVR):	
Altimeter Setting:	30.21 inches Hg	Visibility (RVV):	
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Terrell, TX (KTRL)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Knox City, TX	Type of Clearance:	VFR
Departure Time:	1530 CST	Type of Airspace:	Unknown

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None		

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Alexander Lemishko **Adopted Date:** 06/02/2004

Additional Participating Persons: Brian Fricker; FSDO Lubbock, Texas; Lubbock, 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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