



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	Morgantown, WV	Accident Number:	NYC04LA151
Date & Time:	07/01/2004, 1502 EDT	Registration:	N5345E
Aircraft:	Beech 35	Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot departed with the right fuel tank full (approximately 17 gallons) and the left tank about half full. He flew for approximately 30 minutes with the right fuel tank selected, and landed at his destination airport. The pilot departed again with the right tank selected for the return flight. As the airplane reached the end of the runway, the engine began to sputter and then lost power. The pilot performed a forced landing to a field, during which the airplane impacted trees. The pilot reported that the airplane burned more fuel when the right tank was selected, since unused fuel from the engine is returned to the left fuel tank. The pilot stated that the cause of the accident was, "fuel starvation and simple pilot error." Examination of the airplane revealed the right fuel tank was ruptured, and the left fuel tank was approximately half full. The fuel lines from the fuel pump to the fuel injector, and the line from the fuel distributor to the cylinders contained no fuel. The fuel line from the fuel selector to the fuel pump contained residual fuel only. According to the Beechcraft BE-35 Pilot's Operating Handbook, "The pressure type carburetor returns about 3 gallons per hour of excess fuel to the left main cell regardless of the cell selected." The fuel burn rate depicted in the Performance section of the Handbook was approximately 9.5 gallons per hour.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's improper fuel management, which resulted in fuel starvation and a subsequent loss of engine power.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - NONMECHANICAL
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. FLUID,FUEL - STARVATION
2. (C) FUEL MANAGEMENT - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND

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

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING AFTER TAKEOFF

Findings

3. OBJECT - TREE(S)

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	80
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	None
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	1490 hours (Total, all aircraft), 985 hours (Total, this make and model), 1490 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 8 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Beech	Registration:	N5345E
Model/Series:	35	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Operator:	Paul Tarnutzer	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None	Engine Model/Series:	IO-470
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	MGW, 1248 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	4 knots / , Variable
Temperature:	28° C	Visibility:	10 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Morgantown, WV (MGW)	Destination:	Somerset, PA (2G9)

Airport Information

Airport:	Morgantown Municipal Airport (MGW)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Runway Used:	18	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Length/Width:	5199 ft / 150 ft		

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Latitude, Longitude:	39.642778, -79.916111		

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Jill M Andrews

Adopted Date: 07/07/2005

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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