



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	Pearland, TX	Accident Number:	FTW04LA226
Date & Time:	09/01/2004, 1945 CDT	Registration:	N3TW
Aircraft:	Cassutt IIM	Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The 246.6-hour pilot was conducting a series of touch-and-go landings in an amateur-built race airplane. While the airplane was turning from base leg to final within the airport traffic pattern, a witness observed the airplane "descending rapidly in a nose down" attitude through approximately 500 feet agl. The witness stated that the airplane "fell straight down in a spin" until it impacted terrain. Another witness located at the airport reported seeing the airplane turn left base at a bank angle of approximately 90 degrees. Examination of the engine and airframe were conducted by the Federal Aviation Administration and no anomalies were noted. Review of the pilot's logbooks revealed he had accumulated approximately 2 hours in the accident make/model airplane. The former owner of the accident airplane reported that the pilot had recently purchased the airplane approximately six months prior to the accident.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to maintain airspeed sufficient for flight resulting in an inadvertent stall/spin while turning from the base leg of the traffic pattern to final. A contributing factor was the pilot's lack of experience for the make/model airplane.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - BASE LEG/BASE TO FINAL

- Findings
1. (C) AIRSPEED - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
 2. (C) STALL/SPIN - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND
 3. (F) LACK OF EXPERIENCE - PILOT IN COMMAND

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

- Findings
4. TERRAIN CONDITION - GROUND

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	46
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	None
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	241 hours (Total, all aircraft), 2 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cassutt	Registration:	N3TW
Model/Series:	IIIM	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Operator:	Michael G Bernard	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None	Engine Model/Series:	O-200-A
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Dusk
Observation Facility, Elevation:	LVJ, 43 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	Calm / ,
Temperature:	27° C	Visibility	10 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Pearland, TX (LVJ)	Destination:	(LVJ)

Airport Information

Airport:	Pearland Regional Airport (LVJ)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Runway Used:	32L	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Length/Width:	4302 ft / 70 ft		

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Latitude, Longitude:	29.521111, -95.241944		

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Alexander Lemishko

Adopted Date: 02/24/2005

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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