National Transportation Safety Board
Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	Maricopa, AZ	**Accident Number:**	LAX04CA310
Date & Time:	09/02/2004, 1422 MST	**Registration:**	N2873H
Aircraft:	Schweizer SGS 2-33A	**Injuries:**	1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Instructional		

Analysis

The glider landed hard on touchdown. The student pilot encountered what witnesses described as a "really large" dust devil during the landing flare. Thereafter, the glider's nose pitched downward, and the glider impacted the ground hard. The student's traffic pattern approach to runway 24C had been normal. The prevailing wind was from 240 degrees, between 5 and 10 knots.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:
the pilot's encounter with a dust devil during landing flare, which resulted in a hard touchdown.

Findings

Occurrence #1: HARD LANDING
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings
1. (C) WEATHER CONDITION - DUST DEVIL/WHIRLWIND
2. COMPENSATION FOR WIND CONDITIONS - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. TERRAIN CONDITION - RUNWAY

Student Pilot Information

Certificate:	Student	**Age:**	21
Airplane Rating(s):	None	**Instrument Rating(s):**	None
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	**Instructor Rating(s):**	
Flight Time:	23 hours (Total, all aircraft), 6 hours (Total, this make and model), 6 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 6 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Schweizer	**Registration:**	N2873H
Model/Series:	SGS 2-33A	**Engines:**	0
Operator:	Arizona Soaring, Inc.	**Engine Manufacturer:**	
Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None	**Engine Model/Series:**	
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Instructional		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	**Condition of Light:**	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:		**Weather Information Source:**	Witness
Lowest Ceiling:	None	**Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:**	5 knots / 10 knots, 240°
Temperature:	39°C	**Visibility**	80 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Maricopa, AZ (E68)	**Destination:**	Maricopa, AZ (E68)

Airport Information

Airport:	Estrella Sailport (E68)	**Runway Surface Type:**	
Runway Used:	24C	**Runway Surface Condition:**	
Runway Length/Width:			

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	**Aircraft Damage:**	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	**Aircraft Fire:**	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	**Aircraft Explosion:**	
Latitude, Longitude:	33.085278, -112.161111		

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Wayne Pollack	**Adopted Date:**	10/28/2004
Note:	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.		
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.ntsb.gov/pubdms/.		

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