



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	Sparks, NV	Accident Number:	LAX06LA024
Date & Time:	11/02/2005, 0940 PST	Registration:	N26XL
Aircraft:	Schleicher ASH 26 E	Injuries:	1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

During cruise flight while in instrument meteorological conditions (IMC), the pilot lost control of his glider and experienced an in-flight breakup. The wings separated from the glider, and the pilot bailed out. The flight was planned as an attempt to set a cross-country glider record using standing lenticular wave conditions along the Sierra Nevada mountain range. The pilot was on an instrument flight plan and was cleared for a block altitude between 18,000 and 28,000 feet. The pilot reported experiencing internal canopy icing that interfered with his view through the canopy. When wiping the canopy clear of frost, he observed that the glider was approaching clouds and would shortly be in instrument conditions. The pilot turned on his emergency standby gyro (electric turn and bank), but it did not spool up completely before he entered the clouds and lost control.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's inadvertent flight into instrument meteorological conditions which resulted in a subsequent loss of control and an in-flight breakup. A contributing factor was the spool up delay for the emergency turn and bank indicator.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - CLOUDS

Occurrence #2: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

2. (F) FLIGHT/NAV INSTRUMENTS, TURN AND BANK INDICATOR - NOT OPERATING
3. (C) AIRCRAFT CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (C) VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #3: AIRFRAME/COMPONENT/SYSTEM FAILURE/MALFUNCTION
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Findings

5. (C) WING - OVERLOAD

6. DESIGN STRESS LIMITS OF AIRCRAFT - EXCEEDED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #4: MISCELLANEOUS/OTHER

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Findings

7. BAIL-OUT/EMERGENCY EJECTION - PERFORMED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline Transport; Flight Instructor; Commercial; Flight Engineer	Age:	50
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Glider	Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane Multi-engine; Airplane Single-engine; Glider; Instrument Airplane
Flight Time:	20500 hours (Total, all aircraft), 330 hours (Total, this make and model), 13200 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 120 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 45 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 0 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Schleicher	Registration:	N26XL
Model/Series:	ASH 26 E	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Operator:	On file	Engine Manufacturer:	Midwest
Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None	Engine Model/Series:	AE50R
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:	RNO, 4415 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 15000 ft agl	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	29 knots / 38 knots, 190°
Temperature:	18°C	Visibility	10 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Inyokern, CA (IYK)	Destination:	Inyokern, CA (IYK)

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Latitude, Longitude:	39.571389, -119.720833		

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Wayne Pollack	Adopted Date:	03/26/2007
Investigation Docket:	NTSB accident and incident docket 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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