



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	Phenix City, AL	Accident Number:	ATL06CA031
Date & Time:	01/01/2006, 1836 CST	Registration:	N4370P
Aircraft:	Piper PA-23-160	Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 Minor, 1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The private pilot was on a visual flight rules cross country flight when he began encountering instrument conditions. The pilot continued into the instrument conditions for about 30 minutes before asking Atlanta Approach Control for directions to the nearest airport for landing. The controller directed the pilot to two different nearby airports but both were below minimums. The pilot informed the controller that he was low on fuel and needed to land as soon as possible. The controller directed the pilot to the Columbus Metropolitan Airport, Columbus, Georgia. The pilot told the controllers that he would attempt an Instrument approach. The pilot attempted four unsuccessful approaches with the controllers talking him through each approach. On the fifth approach, at five miles from the runway the pilot stated that both engine's quit due to fuel exhaustion. The pilot called "mayday" and during the forced landing the airplane collided with trees and the ground separating the right wing, half of the left wing, and coming to rest inverted. The pilot did not report any mechanical deficiencies with the airplane during the attempted approaches.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's inadequate decision to continue VFR flight into IMC conditions, which resulted in a loss of engine power due to fuel exhaustion.

Findings

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

Findings

1. WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING
2. (C) IN-FLIGHT PLANNING/DECISION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) FLIGHT INTO ADVERSE WEATHER - CONTINUED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - NONMECHANICAL
Phase of Operation: APPROACH

Findings

4. (C) FLUID,FUEL - EXHAUSTION

Occurrence #3: FORCED LANDING
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

Occurrence #4: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING

Findings

5. OBJECT - TREE(S)

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	48
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	None
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	600 hours (Total, all aircraft), 600 hours (Total, this make and model), 600 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 30 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 12 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N4370P
Model/Series:	PA-23-160	Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Operator:	Roy T. Dawes	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None	Engine Model/Series:	O-320
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument Conditions	Condition of Light:	Dusk
Observation Facility, Elevation:	CSG, 397 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 400 ft agl	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	6 knots / , 70°
Temperature:	16° C	Visibility	1.5 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:	Light - Rain; Fog		
Departure Point:	Brooksville, FL (BKV)	Destination:	Winder Barrow, GA (WDR)

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 Minor, 1 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Latitude, Longitude:	32.421111, -85.248056		

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Butch Wilson	Adopted Date:	03/28/2006
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.nts.gov/pubdms/ .		

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