



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Columbus, GA	Accident Number:	NYC08CA151
Date & Time:	04/03/2008, 1815 EDT	Registration:	N1755T
Aircraft:	Piper PA-28-140	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 None

Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation - Personal

Analysis

The certified flight instructor (CFI) and student pilot were practicing crosswind landings in a Piper PA-28-140. After completing the preflight checks the CFI experienced difficulty closing the top cabin door latch. After multiple attempts he was able to get the latch to lock. The student then began taxiing the airplane, but reported the brakes were, "weak." The airplane was equipped with toe-brakes on the pilot side only, which was occupied by the student. The CFI elected to continue with the flight and they performed three uneventful touch-and-go landings. During the fourth takeoff the door latch released, the CFI immediately retarded the throttle and instructed the student to apply the brakes. The student complied but reported that the brakes were not working. The CFI then attempted to slow the aircraft down by applying the center hand brake, but found it to be ineffective. The CFI applied left rudder in an effort to prevent the airplane from rolling to the end of the runway and past the overrun. The airplane departed the runway to the left, struck a drainage ditch, and rolled down an embankment. During the accident sequence the left landing gear was separated, and the left wing sustained substantial damage. The Owners Handbook for the make and model airplane stated, "The cabin door on the Cherokee is double latched, so the chances of it springing open in flight at both the top and bottom are remote. However, should you forget the upper latch, or not fully engage the lower latch, the door may spring partially open. This will usually happen at take-off or soon afterwards. An open door will not affect normal flight characteristics, and a normal landing can be made with the door open." A Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector observed tire skid marks on the runway surface that corresponded to the location of the airplane as it departed the runway.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The flight instructor's improper decision to abort the takeoff after the cabin door latch opened. Contributing to the accident was the cabin door unlatching.

Findings

Occurrence #1: MISCELLANEOUS/OTHER
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - ROLL/RUN

Findings

1. (F) DOOR - UNLATCHED

Occurrence #2: LOSS OF CONTROL - ON GROUND/WATER
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - ABORTED

Findings

2. (C) PLANNING/DECISION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND(CFI)

Occurrence #3: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - ABORTED

Findings

3. TERRAIN CONDITION - DROP-OFF/DESCENDING EMBANKMENT

Factual Information

Flight Instructor Information

Certificate:	Airline Transport; Flight Instructor; Commercial	Age:	72, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane Multi-engine; Airplane Single-engine; Instrument Airplane	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 With Waivers/Limitations	Last Medical Exam:	01/01/2007
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	07/01/2007
Flight Time:	7894 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1500 hours (Total, this make and model), 5153 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 24 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 7 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Student Pilot Information

Certificate:	Student	Age:	29, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Without Waivers/Limitations	Last Medical Exam:	03/01/2008
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	23 hours (Total, all aircraft), 23 hours (Total, this make and model), 23 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 7 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Manufacturer:	Piper	Registration:	N1755T
Model/Series:	PA-28-140	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal; Utility	Serial Number:	28-7125072
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	02/01/2008, 100 Hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2150 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	44 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	6909 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	O-320
Registered Owner:	Johnson 55TANGO LLC	Rated Power:	140
Operator:	The Flying Club of Columbus	Air Carrier Operating Certificate:	None
Operator Does Business As:	The Flying Club of Columbus	Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Observation Facility, Elevation:	CSG, 397 ft msl	Observation Time:	1751 EDT
Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles	Condition of Light:	Day
Direction from Accident Site:	0°	Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Temperature/Dew Point:	17° C / 14° C
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 1000 ft agl	Visibility	8 Miles
Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	14 knots, 100°	Visibility (RVR):	
Altimeter Setting:	30.05 inches Hg	Visibility (RVV):	
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Columbus, GA (CSG)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Columbus, GA (CSG)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1745	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	Columbus Metropolitan (CSG)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	397 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	13	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	3997 ft / 150 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Touch and Go

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	2 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 None		

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Elliott Simpson **Adopted Date:** 05/28/2008

Additional Participating Persons: Royce LeVaughn; FAA FSDO; Atlanta, GA

Publish Date:

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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