



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

<b>Location:</b>	Columbus, GA	<b>Accident Number:</b>	NYC08CA151
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	04/03/2008, 1815 EDT	<b>Registration:</b>	N1755T
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Piper PA-28-140	<b>Injuries:</b>	2 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	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

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

Findings

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

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

### Findings

#### 3. TERRAIN CONDITION - DROP-OFF/DESCENDING EMBANKMENT

## Flight Instructor Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Airline Transport; Flight Instructor; Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	72
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	Airplane Multi-engine; Airplane Single-engine; Instrument Airplane
<b>Flight Time:</b>	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

<b>Certificate:</b>	Student	<b>Age:</b>	29
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None
<b>Flight Time:</b>	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

<b>Aircraft Manufacturer:</b>	Piper	<b>Registration:</b>	N1755T
<b>Model/Series:</b>	PA-28-140	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Operator:</b>	The Flying Club of Columbus	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Lycoming
<b>Air Carrier Operating Certificate:</b>	None	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	O-320
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	CSG, 397 ft msl	<b>Weather Information Source:</b>	Weather Observation Facility
<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual Conditions	<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	Overcast / 1000 ft agl
<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day	<b>Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:</b>	14 knots, 100°
<b>Temperature:</b>	17°C / 14°C	<b>Visibility</b>	8 Miles
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Columbus, GA (CSG)	<b>Destination:</b>	Columbus, GA (CSG)

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	Columbus Metropolitan (CSG)	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	Asphalt
<b>Runway Used:</b>	13	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	Dry
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>	3997 ft / 150 ft		

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	2 None	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None

## Administrative Information

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

**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](mailto:pubinq@ntsb.gov), or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at <http://dms.ntsbt.gov/pubdms/>.

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