



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Middletown, DE	Accident Number:	ERA09CA217
Date & Time:	12/01/2008, 1650 EST	Registration:	N276
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-32R-300	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Hard landing	Injuries:	3 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot reported that the airplane was on short final approach for landing on runway 35, when he experienced a "sudden loss of airspeed and rapid increase in descent rate that was not altered by the application of power." The airplane landed hard on the runway, all three landing gear collapsed, and the airplane slid off the left side of the runway. The wing spar and engine firewall were substantially damaged. The pilot further stated that he was flying from the right seat, which made referencing the instruments more difficult, and he "encountered windshear." The winds at an airport located 10 miles northeast of the accident airport, about the time of the accident, were recorded as 280 degrees at 17 knots, with gusts to 34 knots.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to maintain aircraft control while landing in gusty conditions.

Findings

Aircraft	Performance/control parameters - Not attained/maintained (Cause)
Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot (Cause)

Factual Information

History of Flight

Landing-flare/touchdown	Other weather encounter Loss of control in flight
Landing	Hard landing (Defining event) Landing gear collapse
Landing-flare/touchdown	Runway excursion

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Flight Instructor; Commercial	Age:	48, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane Multi-engine; Airplane Single-engine	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Without Waivers/Limitations	Last Medical Exam:	03/31/2007
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	05/14/2007
Flight Time:	2267 hours (Total, all aircraft), 155 hours (Total, this make and model), 47 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 14 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Manufacturer:	PIPER	Registration:	N276
Model/Series:	PA-32R-300	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	32R-7680095
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	7
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	09/02/2008, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3600 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3328 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	TIO-540 SER
Registered Owner:	RBF MANAGEMENT CO	Rated Power:	310 hp
Operator:	RBF MANAGEMENT CO	Air Carrier Operating Certificate:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Observation Facility, Elevation:	ILG, 74 ft msl	Observation Time:	1651 EST
Distance from Accident Site:	10 Nautical Miles	Condition of Light:	Day
Direction from Accident Site:	45°	Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 3200 ft agl	Temperature/Dew Point:	6°C / 2°C
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 4300 ft agl	Visibility	9 Miles
Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	17 knots/ 34 knots, 280°	Visibility (RVR):	
Altimeter Setting:	29.62 inches Hg	Visibility (RVV):	
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; Rain		
Departure Point:	Somerset, NJ (SMQ)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Middletown, DE (EVY)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1550 EST	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	Summit Airport (EVY)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	70 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	35	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	4488 ft / 65 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full Stop

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	2 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 None		

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Michael C Huhn	Adopted Date:	07/14/2009
Additional Participating Persons:	Peter Mirales; FAA/FSDO; Philadelphia, PA		
Publish Date:	07/14/2009		
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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