



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Borger, TX	Accident Number:	CEN12CA051
Date & Time:	11/01/2011, 1730 CDT	Registration:	N711W
Aircraft:	DOWNER BELLANCA 14-19-2	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of engine power (total)	Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot was on a cross-country flight at 9,500 feet mean sea level. About 20 miles from his destination, he started the descent to the airport. The pilot reported that he looked at his fuel gauge and decided to switch fuel tanks when the airplane reached 5,000 feet. As he leveled the airplane, the engine lost power before the pilot switched fuel tanks. He turned on the fuel pump and attempted to turn the fuel selector knob. However, the knob broke in half, leaving just the post. Unable to turn the post and restart the engine, the pilot elected to conduct a forced landing in an open area. During the forced landing, the left wing was nearly severed in two by impact with a tree, the landing gear collapsed, and the fuselage sustained substantial damage. After the accident, the pilot stated that he mistakenly turned the fuel gauge selector knob and not the fuel selector knob then got distracted by the knob breaking.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: A total loss of engine power due to fuel starvation as a result of the pilot's improper fuel management. Contributing to the accident was the pilot's diverted attention with the broken fuel gauge knob.

Findings

Personnel issues	Action/decision - Pilot (Cause) Attention - Pilot (Factor)
Environmental issues	Tree(s) - Contributed to outcome

Factual Information

History of Flight

Enroute-descent	Miscellaneous/other Fuel starvation Loss of engine power (total) (Defining event)
Emergency descent	Off-field or emergency landing Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	62, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 With Waivers/Limitations	Last Medical Exam:	11/09/2009
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	12/08/2010
Flight Time:	678 hours (Total, all aircraft), 32 hours (Total, this make and model), 601 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Manufacturer:	DOWNER	Registration:	N711W
Model/Series:	BELLANCA 14-19-2	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	4044
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tailwheel	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	04/02/2011, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	2501 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	CONT MOTOR
ELT:	C91A installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-470 SERIES
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	230 hp
Operator:	On file	Air Carrier Operating Certificate:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Observation Facility, Elevation:	KBGD	Observation Time:	1751 CDT
Distance from Accident Site:	20 Nautical Miles	Condition of Light:	Day
Direction from Accident Site:		Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Temperature/Dew Point:	27° C / -2° C
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility	10 Miles
Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	15 knots/ 20 knots, 180°	Visibility (RVR):	
Altimeter Setting:	29.82 inches Hg	Visibility (RVV):	
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Plainview, TX (KPVW)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Unknown
Destination:	Borger, TX	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Craig Hatch	Adopted Date:	01/18/2012
Additional Participating Persons:	Paul Arrambide; FAA FSDO; Lubbock, TX		
Publish Date:	01/18/2012		
Note:	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.		
Investigation Docket:	http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=82230		

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