



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Lafayette, TN	Accident Number:	ERA13CA400
Date & Time:	09/01/2013, 1630 CDT	Registration:	N42548
Aircraft:	MAXAIR DRIFTER DRIFTER II	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of control in flight	Injuries:	2 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot of the amateur-built, amphibious, light-sport airplane reported that the airplane accelerated and lifted off from the asphalt runway without incident; however, during the initial climb it encountered "severe turbulence." The pilot was not able to control the airplane and was attempting to return to the airport when it landed hard in a soy bean field, resulting in substantial damage to the fuselage. Postaccident examination of the airframe and engine revealed no evidence of mechanical malfunctions or failures that would have precluded normal operation; nor did the pilot report any. The pilot reported that wind at the time of the accident was light and variable, with gusts up to 8 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 during the initial climb after takeoff in gusty wind conditions, which resulted in a hard off-airport landing.

Findings

Aircraft	Performance/control parameters - Not attained/maintained (Cause)
Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot (Cause)
Environmental issues	Gusts - Effect on operation

Factual Information

History of Flight

Initial climb	Loss of control in flight (Defining event)
Emergency descent	Off-field or emergency landing
Landing	Hard landing

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private; Sport Pilot	Age:	46
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land; Single-engine Sea	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Sport Pilot With Waivers/Limitations	Last Medical Exam:	07/15/1992
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	960 hours (Total, all aircraft), 125 hours (Total, this make and model), 881 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 56 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 25 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Manufacturer:	MAXAIR DRIFTER	Registration:	N42548
Model/Series:	DRIFTER II	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Special Light-Sport; Experimental	Serial Number:	MD 2008
Landing Gear Type:	Amphibian; Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	05/26/2013, Conditional	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1100 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	25 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	255 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	ROTAX
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	912UL
Registered Owner:	David A. Gregory	Rated Power:	85 hp
Operator:	David A. Gregory	Air Carrier Operating Certificate:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Observation Facility, Elevation:	BWG, 528 ft msl	Observation Time:	1653 CDT
Distance from Accident Site:	32 Nautical Miles	Condition of Light:	Day
Direction from Accident Site:	325°	Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Temperature/Dew Point:	28°C / 21°C
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility	10 Miles
Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	8 knots, 250°	Visibility (RVR):	
Altimeter Setting:	29.84 inches Hg	Visibility (RVV):	
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Lafayette, TN (3M7)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Celina, TN (NONE)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1630 CDT	Type of Airspace:	Unknown

Airport Information

Airport:	LAFAYETTE MUNI (3M7)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	980 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	01	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	5200 ft / 75 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Luke Schiada	Adopted Date:	11/19/2013
Additional Participating Persons:	Bruce Bolton; FAA/FSDO; Nashville, TN		
Publish Date:	11/19/2013		
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=87988		

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