



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	Ocala, FL	Accident Number:	ERA14LA180
Date & Time:	04/04/2014, 1620 EDT	Registration:	N599WT
Aircraft:	HELPLING HELEN C TANGO 2	Injuries:	1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

Witnesses reported that the engine sounded smooth and continuous at “full” power throughout the takeoff. After the airplane climbed to about 20 ft above the runway, the left canopy suddenly “popped open” and began “flapping up and down.” The pilot reported that, in response, she reduced the engine power. The airplane then began “porpoising” before it entered a steep left bank and subsequently impacted grass on the left side of the runway in a left-wing-low attitude. The pilot egressed and then crawled away from the airplane and awaited assistance. The airplane was consumed by a postcrash fire.

The left canopy was found separated from the airplane outside the fire area. The handle was found in the “open” position. The pilot reported no mechanical deficiencies with the airplane that would have precluded normal operation. She stated that, although she had used a checklist during her preflight and pretakeoff activities, which included a checklist item to ensure the security of the canopy, she “could never know” if she had failed to secure the canopy latch or if the latch had somehow malfunctioned. Fire damage to the canopy frame and latch point in the fuselage precluded a determination of what caused the left canopy to open in flight.

Flight Events

Taxi - Miscellaneous/other
Initial climb - Miscellaneous/other
Initial climb - Loss of control in flight
Uncontrolled descent - Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to maintain airplane control after the left cockpit canopy opened during takeoff for reasons that could not be determined due to fire damage.

Findings

Aircraft-Aircraft structures-Doors-Passenger/crew doors-Unintentional use/operation - C
Personnel issues-Task performance-Use of equip/info-Aircraft control-Pilot - C
Not determined-Not determined-(general)-(general)-Unknown/Not determined

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	59
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	None
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	675 hours (Total, all aircraft), 22 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Manufacturer:	HELPLING HELEN C	Registration:	N599WT
Model/Series:	TANGO 2	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Operator:	HELPLING HELEN C	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
Air Carrier Operating Certificate:	None	Engine Model/Series:	IO-360
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Observation Facility, Elevation:	OCF, 90 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Lowest Ceiling:	None
Condition of Light:	Day	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	9 knots, 280°
Temperature:	28° C / 17° C	Visibility	10 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Ocala, FL (OCF)	Destination:	Ocala, FL (OCF)

Airport Information

Airport:	Ocala International Airport (OCF)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Runway Used:	26	Runway Surface Condition:	Unknown
Runway Length/Width:	7467 ft / 150 ft		

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	On-Ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Brian C Rayner	Adopted Date:	03/17/2015
Investigation Docket:	http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=89009		

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