



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Greene, NY	Accident Number:	ERA14LA418
Date & Time:	09/01/2014, 1200 EDT	Registration:	N94SL
Aircraft:	LORENZ STEPHEN KITFOX SERIES 5	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:	Loss of control in flight	Injuries:	1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The private pilot, who had no previous experience in the airplane make and model, had purchased it about 1 year earlier and then stored it in his garage until the day of the accident. On the day of the accident, the pilot added 4 gallons of gas; he subsequently started the engine, taxied the airplane, and conducted engine run-ups for about 30 minutes to familiarize himself with the airplane. He powered up the engine three or four times, and during the last power up, the airplane lifted off. The pilot reported that he then attempted a three-point landing; this is all that he remembered about the accident sequence.

A witness reported that, after takeoff, the airplane “jerked” right and that the power settings changed. The airplane then “straightened out and smoothed out” and then continued to climb slowly to about 200 ft above the ground, at which point it banked “hard” left and then descended to impact. Another witness reported that the airplane “tipped” and “stalled” before its descent. A postcrash fire ensued, which consumed most of the airplane.

No preexisting mechanical anomalies were found that would have precluded normal operation, and the pilot reported no preexisting mechanical malfunctions or failures. Wind recorded at an airport about 10 miles from the departure airport about the time of the accident was from the direction of takeoff at 4 knots, and a witness noted that both windsocks were “dead” at the accident airport.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot’s failure to attain adequate airspeed during the initial climb, which resulted in an exceedance of the wing’s critical angle-of-attack and a subsequent aerodynamic stall. Contributing to the accident was the pilot’s lack of experience in the airplane make and model.

Findings

Aircraft	Angle of attack - Capability exceeded (Cause) Airspeed - Not attained/maintained (Cause)
Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot (Cause) Total experience w/ equipment - Pilot (Factor)

Factual Information

On September 1, 2014, about 1200 eastern daylight time, an experimental amateur-built Lorenze Kitfox Series 5, N94SL, was destroyed when it impacted terrain in Greene, New York. The private pilot was seriously injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and no flight plan had been filed for the local flight from Greene Airport (4N7), Greene, New York. The personal flight was conducted under the provisions of 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91.

According to the pilot, he and his wife purchased the airplane in October 2013, and it was stored in their garage until the day before the accident. On the day of the accident, the pilot added 4 gallons of gas before starting the engine, taxiing and performing engine run ups to familiarize himself with the airplane. He powered up the engine three or four times, and during the last time, "wind lifted the aircraft." The pilot then "tried to make 3 point ground contact and that is the last [he] remembered."

According to several witnesses, the pilot initially taxied and did control checks for about 30 minutes before taking off [from runway 25]. One witness noted that upon takeoff, the airplane "jerked" to the right, and the witness could hear changes in power settings. The airplane then "straightened out and smoothed out." About 200 feet above the ground, and while "slow, climbing, banked hard left, up on wingtip," then "continued to impact." Other witnesses stated that the airplane "tipped" and "stalled" prior to its descent.

A witness who responded to the accident stated that upon reaching the airplane, it was on fire and he pulled the pilot away from it. He asked the pilot what happened, and the pilot stated that, "wind was an issue." However, the witness further noted that at the time of the accident, "both windsocks at 4N7 were dead."

The airplane was mostly consumed in a postcrash fire.

Neither the pilot nor any witness, nor the responding Federal Aviation Administration inspector reported any preexisting mechanical anomalies that would have precluded normal operation. The pilot also checked "No" to the question "Was there mechanical malfunction/failure?" on his submitted NTSB Pilot/Operator Report. The pilot further reported no previous experience in airplane make and model.

Weather was not recorded at the airport. The nearest recorded weather, at an airport 10 nm to the southwest, at 1153, included wind from 250 degrees true at 4 knots.

History of Flight

Initial climb	Aerodynamic stall/spin Loss of control in flight (Defining event)
Uncontrolled descent	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Sport Pilot	Age:	70, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	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 None	Last Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	2400 hours (Total, all aircraft), 0.1 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Manufacturer:	LORENZ STEPHEN	Registration:	N94SL
Model/Series:	KITFOX SERIES 5	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental	Serial Number:	S 94 11 0062
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	06/07/2013, Conditional	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1180 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	239 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	Subaru
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	NSI-E81
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	100 hp
Operator:	On file	Air Carrier Operating Certificate:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Observation Facility, Elevation:	BGM, 1636 ft msl	Observation Time:	1553 UTC
Distance from Accident Site:	10 Nautical Miles	Condition of Light:	Day
Direction from Accident Site:	250°	Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 1700 ft agl	Temperature/Dew Point:	23°C / 19°C
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 3800 ft agl	Visibility	10 Miles
Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	4 knots, 250°	Visibility (RVR):	
Altimeter Setting:	30.04 inches Hg	Visibility (RVV):	
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Greene, NY (4N7)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Greene, NY (4N7)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1200 EDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	Greene Airport (4N7)	Runway Surface Type:	Grass/turf
Airport Elevation:	935 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry; Vegetation
Runway Used:	25	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	2665 ft / 200 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

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
Total Injuries:	1 Serious		

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Paul R Cox	Adopted Date:	06/16/2016
Additional Participating Persons:	Denis J Hamel; FAA/FSDO; Albany, NY		
Publish Date:	06/16/2016		
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.		
Investigation Docket:	http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=89996		

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