



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	Darby, MT	Accident Number:	WPR15LA036
Date & Time:	11/07/2014, 0900 MST	Registration:	N84462
Aircraft:	CHAMPION 7AC	Injuries:	2 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The commercial pilot reported that he was attempting to land the light sport airplane on a private grass airstrip surrounded by mountainous terrain. While maneuvering for landing, the airplane suddenly entered into a steep, right-wing-low bank. The wings then leveled momentarily before the airplane impacted the ground. The passenger in the rear seat of the airplane stated that he felt a downdraft or windshear just prior to impact. A post-accident examination of the airplane found no anomalies that would have precluded normal operation.

The pilot reported the wind as light and variable with 5-10 knot gusts; however, he stated that during previous flights in the area, he experienced unexpected severe gusts and terrain-induced turbulence, followed by complete calm.

The airplane was not equipped with a stall warning system or flaps. Since the airplane was maneuvering for landing approach at low airspeed, a sudden gust of wind or shift in wind speed or direction could have resulted in a rapid loss of airspeed, followed by an aerodynamic stall as the airplane reached its critical angle-of-attack. Due to the airplane's low altitude, the pilot likely did not have sufficient time to recover from the stalled condition prior to impacting terrain.

Flight Events

Approach-VFR pattern final - Aerodynamic stall/spin
Approach-VFR pattern final - Loss of control in flight

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

The pilot's failure to maintain airspeed while maneuvering in gusting wind conditions, which resulted in the airplane exceeding its critical angle of attack and experiencing an aerodynamic stall.

Findings

Aircraft-Aircraft oper/perf/capability-Performance/control parameters-Airspeed-Not attained/maintained - C

Personnel issues-Task performance-Use of equip/info-Aircraft control-Pilot - C

Environmental issues-Conditions/weather/phenomena-Wind-(general)-Effect on operation - C

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	60
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	1750 hours (Total, all aircraft), 372 hours (Total, this make and model), 1750 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 11 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Manufacturer:	CHAMPION	Registration:	N84462
Model/Series:	7AC	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Operator:	On file	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
Air Carrier Operating Certificate:	None	Engine Model/Series:	C85
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Observation Facility, Elevation:	KMSO, 3026 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 8000 ft agl
Condition of Light:	Day	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	4 knots, 230°
Temperature:	8°C / 2°C	Visibility	10 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	CONNER, MT (4U7)	Destination:	Conner, MT

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Van McKenny	Adopted Date:	12/12/2016
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.		
Investigation Docket:	http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=90370		

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), established in 1967, is an independent federal agency mandated by Congress through the Independent Safety Board Act of 1974 to investigate transportation accidents, determine the probable causes of the accidents, issue safety recommendations, study transportation safety issues, and evaluate the safety effectiveness of government agencies involved in transportation. The NTSB makes public its actions and decisions through accident reports, safety studies, special investigation reports, safety recommendations, and statistical reviews.

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