



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Preliminary Report

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<b>Location:</b>	Penn Yan, NY	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ERA15FA203
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	05/03/2015, 1134 EDT	<b>Registration:</b>	N3969L
<b>Aircraft:</b>	CESSNA 172G	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

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On May 3, 2015, at 1134 eastern daylight time, a Cessna 172G, N3969L, impacted terrain and a perimeter fence during climb after a touch and go landing at the Penn Yan Airport (PEO), Penn Yan, New York. The student pilot was fatally injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and no flight plan was filed for the flight which departed from Finger Lakes Regional Airport (OG7), Seneca Falls, New York at about 1115. The flight was conducted under the provisions of Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91.

A pilot-rated witness observed the airplane in the traffic pattern for runway 19 (5499' x 100') prior to the accident. He stated that as the airplane turned left from onto the base leg of the traffic pattern, it was in a "very aggressive slip". About the same time, he observed the windsock and estimated the winds to be from about 320 degrees, and "greater than 10 knots." He stated that while on final approach, the airplane appeared to be "high and fast." He estimated its height to be about 100 to 150 feet above the ground as it crossed over the runway threshold, and it then appeared to "float" down the runway. He then lost sight of the airplane behind terrain and obstructions, and realized that the airplane had crashed when he several minutes later saw first responders arriving at the airport. He noted that during the landing approach, the flaps appeared to be fully extended, the propeller was rotating, and the engine sounded as if it were at idle speed.

Another witness was located on a golf course adjacent to the airport, at near the mid-point of runway 19. When he first saw the airplane, it was almost abeam his position adjacent to the runway, and it looked like it was taking off. He elaborated that the engine sounded "normal," and the climb appeared normal from the time the wheels left the ground, until a height of about 50 feet. At that point the airplane began climbing at a faster rate than it had been previously, and banked to the left. The airplane also appeared to be higher and climbing faster than other airplanes he had previously observed at about the same location. The airplane then descended, while continuing the left banking arc as if the left wing was "tied to the ground with a string".

The pilot held a student pilot certificate and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) third-class medical certificate, which was issued on January 20, 2014. To date, his pilot logs had not been recovered. According to the pilot's flight instructor, the pilot had been endorsed for solo flight

around October 2014, and had accumulated an estimated 40 total hours of flight experience.

The 1135 weather observation at PEO included wind from 310 at 8 knots, 10 miles visibility, clear skies, temperature 73 F, dewpoint 37 F, altimeter setting 30.08 inches of mercury.

The airplane came to rest upright with the right wing resting on the airport perimeter fence, about 300 feet to the left of the runway centerline, about 2,800 feet from the runway 19 approach threshold. All of the major components of the airplane were accounted for at the accident site. Areas of disturbed soil and intermittent ground scars extended from the initial impact point oriented on a heading of 145 degrees magnetic. A piece of left wing navigation light was located in the wreckage path about 20 feet from the initial impact point. About 15 feet further down the path, a ground scar was found oriented 90 degrees to the path, about the length of the propeller diameter and the width of a propeller blade. About 2 feet further was an impact crater 3 feet wide and 8 feet in length containing paint chips and fragments of wind screen, followed by the main wreckage, which had come to rest oriented on a heading of about 340 magnetic.

The propeller remained attached to the crankshaft flange, and both blades displayed s-bending, chordwise scratching, and leading edge gouging. The engine remained partially attached to the firewall by its mounts. The nose landing gear was fractured and separated from the airplane at the firewall attachment point, consistent with impact. The nose section from the firewall forward had separated from the fuselage on both sides, and the windscreen was fractured and separated from the fuselage. The outboard portion left wing was deformed upward, and displayed aft crush damage consistent with ground contact. The right wing displayed a concave depression and was deformed aft beginning outboard of the wing strut.

First responders reported that upon their arrival they observed fuel leaking from the left wing in the area of the vent tube, and subsequently drained about 7 gallons from the left wing, and about 10 gallons from the right wing. Fuel samples from both tanks displayed a color and odor consistent with automotive gasoline, and a trace amount of water was detected in the sample from the left wing and in fuel recovered from the carburetor float bowl.

Flight control continuity was established from each control surface to the cockpit area. The elevator trim tab actuator position was consistent with 5-10 degrees of tab deflection in the nose up direction. The flap actuator extension was measured, and found in a position consistent with a 40-degree flap extension. The front seat tracks and seat roller brackets for both seats were checked for wear, and found to be within prescribed limits. The left seat positioning rod was found bent forward about 1-inch from the engagement end.

The engine crankshaft was rotated by hand at the propeller flange and continuity of the valve and powertrains was confirmed to the rear accessory gears. The oil screen and paper oil filter element were unobstructed and absent of metallic contamination. The spark plugs were removed and the #6 cylinder plugs displayed black-colored carbon-type fouling. Thumb compression was confirmed on all cylinders. The fuel strainer screen and carburetor inlet

screen were absent of debris. The carburetor floats were intact, and both displayed concave inward uniform deformation. The magnetos and were removed and actuated by hand, and spark was observed at each of their respective terminal leads.

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Manufacturer:</b>	CESSNA	<b>Registration:</b>	N3969L
<b>Model/Series:</b>	172G	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Amateur Built:</b>	No		
<b>Operator:</b>	On file	<b>Air Carrier Operating Certificate:</b>	None

### Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	KPEO, 903 ft msl	<b>Observation Time:</b>	1135 EDT
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Clear	<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual Conditions
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	23°C / 3°C
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:</b>	8 knots, 310°	<b>Visibility</b>	10 Miles
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	30.08 inches Hg	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Departure Point:</b>	SENECA FALLS, NY (0G7)	<b>Destination:</b>	Penn Yan, NY (PEO)

### Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal		

### Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Dennis Diaz
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	Bill Abbott; FAA/FSDO; Rochester, NY
<b>Note:</b>	The NTSB traveled to the scene of this accident.