



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	Bryant, AR	<b>Accident Number:</b>	CEN16LA347
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	09/03/2016, 1500 CDT	<b>Registration:</b>	NONE
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Haggenmacher Bensen	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Defining Event:</b>	Loss of control in flight	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

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## Analysis

The private pilot, who did not hold a gyroplane rating, was conducting a local personal flight in the gyroplane. A witness, who was an experienced gyroplane pilot, reported seeing the pilot make a high-speed flyby over the airport. The witness added that, as the pilot turned the gyroplane onto the left base leg for the active runway, it started to "porpoise" and that the gyroplane then pitched up, nosed over, entered a "power push-over" attitude, summersaulted, and impacted terrain.

The witness stated that the pilot had not flown for some time and lacked sufficient proficiency and skills to operate a gyroplane of this type and that the pilot was inexperienced and had low flight time in gyroplanes; no gyroplane flight time was recorded in the pilot's logbooks. He added that the pilot had a "macho attitude" and could not be told anything and that, although most of the gyroplane pilots had landed that day because of air turbulence in and around the airport vicinity and he had tried to talk the pilot into not flying because of the air turbulence, the pilot conducted the flight anyway. The pilot should not have chosen to fly in such conditions, especially given his lack of experience flying gyroplanes, and his decision to do so contributed to the accident.

## Probable Cause and Findings

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

The pilot's loss of gyroplane control during an intentional high-speed pass, which resulted in the gyroplane porpoising and impacting terrain. Contributing to the accident was the pilot's decision to conduct the flight in an aircraft in which he had little experience flying despite knowing that air turbulence existed in and around the airport.

## Findings

<b>Aircraft</b>	Performance/control parameters - Not attained/maintained (Cause)
<b>Personnel issues</b>	Aircraft control - Pilot (Cause) Decision making/judgment - Pilot (Factor) Qualification/certification - Pilot (Factor)
<b>Environmental issues</b>	Clear air turbulence - Decision related to condition (Factor)

## Factual Information

### HISTORY OF FLIGHT

On September 3, 2016, about 1500 central daylight time (CDT), a Benson B-8M gyroplane, no registration number, impacted terrain about ¼ mile from the Saline County Airport (SUZ), Bryant, Arkansas. The pilot, the sole occupant on board, was fatally injured. The gyroplane was destroyed. The gyroplane was registered to and operated by the pilot under the provisions of 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 91 as a personal flight. Visual meteorological conditions (VMC) prevailed at the time of the accident, and no flight plan had been filed. The local flight originated from SUZ moments before the accident.

In a telephone interview with the investigating Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector, a witness, an experienced gyroplane pilot, stated that the accident pilot did a high speed flyby heading south and was turning east onto a left base leg for runway 2 when it began to "porpoise." It pitched up, nosed over, and entered a "power push-over" attitude, summersaulted, and impacted terrain.

The witness stated that the pilot had not flown for some time and lacked sufficient proficiency and skills to operate a gyroplane of this type. The witness said the pilot was inexperienced, low time, and was not rated in the gyroplane. He said the pilot had a "macho attitude" and could not be told anything. He said most of the gyroplane pilots had landed because of air turbulence in and around the airport vicinity. He tried to talk the pilot into not flying because of the air turbulence, but the pilot went ahead and flew anyway.

### PERSONNEL (CREW) INFORMATION

The 76-year-old pilot held a private pilot certificate with an airplane single-engine land rating. He also held a third class airman medical certificate, dated April 20, 2016, containing the following restrictions: "Must wear corrective lenses for near and distant vision. Not valid for any class after April 20, 2017." When the pilot applied for this medical certification, he estimated his total flight time to be 1,150 hours.

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) records do not show the pilot held a gyroplane rating.

### AIRCRAFT INFORMATION

The gyroplane was manufactured by the Bensen Aircraft Corporation, Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina. Kits were sold by Wag Aero, Lyons, Wisconsin, and the accident aircraft was assembled by C.W. Haggemacher, Lake City, Arkansas. It was powered by a Subaru engine.

### METEOROLOGICAL INFORMATION

The following METAR (Meteorological Terminal Aviation Routine Weather Report) was recorded at 1453 at the Bill and Hillary Clinton National Airport/Adams Field (LIT), Little Rock, Arkansas, located 15 miles northeast of KSUZ:

Wind, 090° at 9 knots; visibility, 10 miles; sky condition, 4,000 feet scattered, 25,000 feet scattered; temperature, 31° Celsius (C.); dew point, 14°C.; altimeter setting, 30.02 inches of mercury.

#### AERODROME INFORMATION

Runway 02-20 at SUZ, elevation 390 feet msl (above mean sea level), is 5,001 feet x 100 feet, asphalt. The runway was dry and in good condition.

#### WRECKAGE AND IMPACT INFORMATION

The wreckage of the gyroplane was located in a field ¼ mile southwest of SUZ. It lay on its left side. There were no ground scars, only the impact crater, consistent with no forward velocity. The main rotor blade remained attached to the mast. One of the three pusher propeller blades had snapped off. The landing gear was bent aft.

#### MEDICAL AND PATHOLOGICAL INFORMATION

An autopsy was performed by the Arkansas State Crime Laboratory on September 6, 2016. According to its report, death was attributed to "multiple traumatic injuries."

Toxicological screening was performed by FAA's Civil Aerospace Medical Institute (CAMI) in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. According to CAMI's report, no carbon monoxide was detected in cavity blood, and no ethanol was detected in vitreous. Cyanide tests were not performed. Amlodipine was detected in liver tissue and cavity blood. According to FAA's Forensic Toxicology web page, amlodipine is a calcium channel blocker heart medication used in the treatment of hypertension. Losartan was also detected in liver tissue and cavity blood, and is used in the treatment of hypertension. Sildenafil (Viagra®) was detected in liver tissue and cavity blood, and is used for the treatment of erectile dysfunction (ED). Desmethylsildenafil was detected in liver tissue and cavity blood, and is the predominant and active metabolite of Sildenafil with similar properties.

### History of Flight

Approach-VFR pattern base	Loss of control in flight (Defining event)
Uncontrolled descent	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private	<b>Age:</b>	76, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine Land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Single
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	Lap Only
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	Yes
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 3 With Waivers/Limitations	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	04/20/2016
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	No	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	1150 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1 hours (Total, this make and model), 5 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Haggenmacher	<b>Registration:</b>	NONE
<b>Model/Series:</b>	Bensen	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Gyroplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	Yes
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>		<b>Serial Number:</b>	001
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tricycle	<b>Seats:</b>	1
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>		<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	544 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>		<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>		<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Subaru
<b>ELT:</b>	Not installed	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	On file	<b>Rated Power:</b>	hp
<b>Operator:</b>	On file	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KLIT, 266 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	15 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1453 CDT	Direction from Accident Site:	55°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 4000 ft agl	Visibility	10 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:		Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	9 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/ None
Wind Direction:	90°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.02 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	31° C / 14° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Bryant, AR (KSUZ)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Bryant, AR (KSUZ)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	CDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

## Airport Information

Airport:	Saline County Regional (KSUZ)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	390 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	02	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	5001 ft / 100 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Traffic Pattern

## Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	34.590278, -92.479444 (est)

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Arnold W Scott	Report Date:	02/13/2017
Additional Participating Persons:	Lynn E Braswell; FAA Flight Standards District Office; Little Rock, AR		
Publish Date:	02/13/2017		
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.		
Investigation Docket:	<a href="http://dms.ntsb.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=93941">http://dms.ntsb.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=93941</a>		

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The Independent Safety Board Act, as codified at 49 U.S.C. Section 1154(b), precludes the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an incident or accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report. A factual report that may be admissible under 49 U.S.C. § 1154(b) is available [here](#).