



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

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<b>Location:</b>	Lookout Pass, MT	<b>Accident Number:</b>	WPR18LA145
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	05/22/2018, 1400 MDT	<b>Registration:</b>	N66GL
<b>Aircraft:</b>	SPORTAVIA PUTZER RF5B SPERBER	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Minor
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

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## Analysis

The airline transport pilot reported that, during a cross-country flight and while climbing toward a mountain pass, the experimental, amateur-built motorglider's engine began to overheat. The pilot delayed the climb to allow the engine to cool down and continued toward the pass, which resulted in reduced terrain clearance. As the motorglider approached the pass, it encountered a downdraft, and the engine was unable to produce enough power to stop the descent. Due to the reduced altitude, the pilot realized that he would be unable to safely turn the glider around, so he executed a precautionary landing on a freeway. During the landing, the glider struck a freeway barrier.

The pilot reported that, other than the engine overheating, there was no evidence of any preimpact mechanical anomalies with the glider that would have precluded normal operation.

## Flight Events

- Enroute-climb to cruise - Miscellaneous/other
- Enroute-climb to cruise - Other weather encounter
- Enroute-climb to cruise - Loss of lift
- Enroute-climb to cruise - Off-field or emergency landing
- Enroute-climb to cruise - 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 improper decision to continue flight toward rising terrain after the engine overheated, which necessitated a precautionary landing when the motorglider could not maintain altitude in downdrafts.

## Findings

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

Personnel issues-Action/decision-Info processing/decision-Decision making/judgment-Pilot - C

Environmental issues-Conditions/weather/phenomena-Wind-Downdraft-Effect on operation

Environmental issues-Physical environment-Object/animal/substance-(general)-Contributed to outcome

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Airline Transport	<b>Age:</b>	69
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Glider	<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	Airplane Multi-engine; Airplane Single-engine
<b>Flight Time:</b>	28350 hours (Total, all aircraft), 39 hours (Total, this make and model), 26000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 39 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	SPORTAVIA PUTZER	<b>Registration:</b>	N66GL
<b>Model/Series:</b>	RF5B SPERBER B	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Operator:</b>	On file	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	LIMBACH
<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	1700E 3E
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual Conditions	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	MLP, 5168 ft msl	<b>Weather Information Source:</b>	Pilot
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:</b>	7 knots / , 130°
<b>Temperature:</b>	12° C	<b>Visibility</b>	6 Miles
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Missoula, MT (MSO)	<b>Destination:</b>	Kellogg, ID (S83)

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 Minor	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	On-Ground
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	47.456111, -115.697222 (est)		

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Fabian Salazar	<b>Adopted Date:</b>	02/05/2019
<b>Note:</b>	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.		
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=97307">http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=97307</a>		

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