



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Preliminary Report

Location:	Fletcher, NC	Accident Number:	ERA20LA062
Date & Time:	12/28/2019, 1735 EST	Registration:	N27GB
Aircraft:	Piper PA32RT	Injuries:	5 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

On December 28, 2019, about 1735 eastern standard time, a Piper PA-32RT-300, N27GB, was destroyed during an emergency landing in Fletcher, North Carolina, after it experienced a partial loss of engine power during the initial climb from Asheville Regional Airport (AVL), Asheville, North Carolina. The private pilot and four passengers were not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and an instrument flight rules (IFR) flight plan was filed for the flight conducted under the provisions of Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91, that was destined for Cobb County International Airport-McCollum Field (RYY), Atlanta, Georgia.

According to the pilot, he departed from RYY earlier in the day with four family members and flew to AVL. The airplane had 86 gallons of fuel on board when it departed RYY. Prior to takeoff from AVL the pilot performed an engine runup and everything was normal. During taxi he was following a CRJ, and the air traffic control tower controller advised him of wake turbulence.

During the takeoff he rotated the airplane "a little early" at 75 knots to avoid the wake turbulence from the CRJ. He climbed at V_x (best angle of climb); then the airplane started to feel "sluggish." He checked that the mixture, propeller, and throttle controls were all full forward and "nosed" the airplane forward.

The pilot believed that the airplane experience an additional loss of engine power and thought he had enough altitude to turn back to the airport. He subsequently thought that the engine was "rolling back," noted that the oil pressure gauge was in the "yellow," and attempted to land in a parking lot. He kept the landing gear in the up position, extended the wing flaps and aimed between light poles. The right wing hit "something," and the airplane stopped. When he exited, his wife and the children were already out of the airplane.

Examination of photographs taken of the accident site and airplane revealed that the airplane struck a chain link fence, and an electrical distribution box before coming to rest. The majority of the airplane's cabin and aft fuselage had been consumed by a postcrash fire.

According to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) airmen and pilot records, the pilot held a private pilot certificate with ratings for airplane multi-engine land, airplane single engine land, and instrument airplane. His most recent FAA third-class medical certificate was issued on February 1, 2015. He reported that he had accrued about 327 total hours of flight experience, 224 of which was in the accident airplane make and model.

According to FAA airworthiness and airplane maintenance records, the airplane was manufactured in 1978. The airplane's most recent annual inspection was completed on May 6, 2019. At the time of the inspection, the airplane had accrued about 4,082 total hours of operation, and the engine had accrued about 365 hours since major overhaul.

The recorded weather at AVL, at 1754, included wind 150 at 5 knots, visibility 9 miles, overcast ceiling at 10,000 ft, temperature 16° C, dew point 9° C, and an altimeter setting of 30.20 inches of mercury.

The wreckage was retained for further examination

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N27GB
Model/Series:	PA32RT 300	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Amateur Built:	No		
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	
Observation Facility, Elevation:	AVL, 2162 ft msl	Observation Time:	1754 EST
Distance from Accident Site:	1 Nautical Miles	Temperature/Dew Point:	16° C / 9° C
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	5 knots / , 150°
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 10000 ft agl	Visibility:	9 Miles
Altimeter Setting:	30.2 inches Hg	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Departure Point:	Asheville, NC (AVL)	Destination:	Atlanta, GA (RYY)

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	4 None	Aircraft Fire:	On-Ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	5 None	Latitude, Longitude:	35.425000, -82.531944 (est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Todd G Gunther
Additional Participating Persons:	Paul Meyer; FAA FSDO; Charlotte, NC Damian Galbraith; Piper Aircraft; Vero Beach, FL
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.