



# Aviation Investigation Factual Report

<b>Location:</b>	HEMPSTEAD, Texas	<b>Accident Number:</b>	FTW98LA264
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	June 14, 1998, 17:15 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N73534
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Let                      BLANIK L-13	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Minor
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Instructional		

## Factual Information

On June 14, 1998, at 1715 central daylight time, a Let Blanik L-13 glider, N73534, registered to and operated by the Greater Houston Soaring Association of Richmond, Texas, was substantially damaged while landing at the Hempstead Gliderport near Hempstead, Texas. The private pilot, the sole occupant, sustained minor injuries. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and a flight plan was not filed for the 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 91 local solo instructional flight. The flight originated from the Hempstead Gliderport at 1641.

The pilot reported in the Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident Report, NTSB Form 6120.1/2, and in a written statement that a "normal aero-tow was taken, and he disengaged at 3,000 feet agl." After 23 minutes, he elected to return to the gliderport. He entered left traffic for runway 17L at approximately 900 feet agl. He went through the "USTALL" checklist, lowering and locking the undercarriage, slowing to 55 knots and trimming the aircraft.

The pilot further reported that he deployed the "airbrakes [spoilers] approximately halfway and looked to the left wing to verify their deployment." About midfield on downwind, he realized that he was too high due to "substantial amount of thermal lift on the fields underneath the downwind leg," and deployed more spoilers. When the glider was adjacent to the intended touch down point, he "took out some of the spoilers to decrease sink [rate]." After initiating a left turn to base leg, he realized that the "altitude was still much too great and attempted to deploy full spoilers."

Observers on the ground noted that "no spoilers were deployed; rather, the flaps appeared to have been extended instead." In the Blanik L-13, the handle for the spoilers is located directly underneath the handle used to deploy the flaps. The pilot stated that "in concentrating on other factors during landing, it appears that I pulled the wrong lever."

The pilot also reported that the glider was not losing enough altitude, so he "lowered the nose of the plane to approach the ground. The airspeed increased substantially." On final approach, he lowered the nose to try and touch down on the runway. The aircraft "porpoised" due to the "excessive" speed of approximately 15-20 knots. Approximately 50 feet from the departure end of the runway and less than 15 feet agl, he "lifted the plane off the ground to avoid hitting the property fence and crossing Highway 290. He flew the plane over the highway and forced it to the ground in a dirt parking lot. The glider came to a stop after hitting a metal building. Although the pilot did not realize it, the glider also hit a neutral power line during the landing to the parking lot.

The pilot reported that the glider's left and right wings were sheared and that the nose cone was dented.

The pilot held a private pilot certificate with an airplane single engine land rating. On the day of the accident, the pilot received 1.1 hours dual instruction during three flights prior to solo endorsement. He had previously received 4.9 hours of dual instruction in gliders.

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private	<b>Age:</b>	17,Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Front
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 3 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	June 30, 1997
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	UNK	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	81 hours (Total, all aircraft), 7 hours (Total, this make and model), 31 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Let	<b>Registration:</b>	N73534
<b>Model/Series:</b>	BLANIK L-13 BLANIK L-1	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Glider
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	175214
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Retractable - Tailwheel	<b>Seats:</b>	2
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	Unknown	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	1102 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>		<b>Engines:</b>	Unknown
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>		<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	
<b>ELT:</b>		<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	GREATER HOUSTON SOARING ASSOC.	<b>Rated Power:</b>	
<b>Operator:</b>		<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None
<b>Operator Does Business As:</b>		<b>Operator Designator Code:</b>	

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual (VMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>		<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Observation Time:</b>		<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Scattered / 4000 ft AGL	<b>Visibility</b>	12 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	5 knots / 10 knots	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	270°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>		<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	37°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	(35R )	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>		<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	16:41 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class G

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	HEMPSTEAD GLIDERPORT 35R	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	Grass/turf
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>	260 ft msl	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	Dry
<b>Runway Used:</b>	17	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>	3055 ft / 50 ft	<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Full stop;Traffic pattern

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 Minor	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>		<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	1 Minor	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	30.089204,-96.079696(est)

## Administrative Information

**Investigator In Charge (IIC):** Wigington, Douglas

**Additional Participating Persons:** TOM LATSON; HOUSTON , TX

**Report Date:** March 19, 1999

**Last Revision Date:**

**Investigation Class:** [Class](#)

**Note:**

**Investigation Docket:** <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=20646>

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