



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	INDIANAPOLIS, Indiana	Accident Number:	CHI96LA021
Date & Time:	October 26, 1995, 17:10 Local	Registration:	N8LP
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-34	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE AIRCRAFT HAD JUST BEEN REFUELED PRIOR TO DEPARTURE. THE PILOT SAID HE DID NOT CHECK THE FUEL CAPS FOR SECURITY. AFTER TAKEOFF, FUEL BEGAN VENTING FROM THE LEFT TANK. THE PILOT RETURNED FOR LANDING, BUT DID NOT COMPLETE HIS NORMAL PRELANDING CHECKLIST AND LANDED GEAR UP. AIRPORT PERSONAL FOUND THE LEFT FUEL CAP ON THE RUNWAY. POSTFLIGHT CHECKS SHOWED THAT THE LANDING GEAR SYSTEM WAS OPERATING CORRECTLY.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the pilot's failure to lower the landing gear. Factors which contributed to the accident were: inadequate preflight necessitating a precautionary landing and the pilot's failure to use the pre-landing checklist.

Findings

Occurrence #1: WHEELS UP LANDING
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

1. (F) AIRCRAFT PREFLIGHT - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) PRECAUTIONARY LANDING - PERFORMED - PILOT IN COMMAND

3. (F) CHECKLIST - NOT USED - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (C) GEAR EXTENSION - NOT PERFORMED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

On October 26, 1995, at 1710 eastern standard time (est) a Piper PA34, N8LP, piloted by a commercial pilot was substantially damaged during a gear up landing on runway 18 (Dry asphalt, 5500'x100') at Terry Airport, Indianapolis, Indiana. The personal 14 CFR part 91 flight was not operating on a flight plan. Visual meteorological conditions existed at the time of the accident. The pilot reported no injuries. The flight departed Indianapolis, Indiana at 1705 est.

During a telephone conversation with the pilot he stated that the aircraft had just been refueled prior to departure. The pilot said that during preflight he did not physically check the fuel caps for security. After takeoff the pilot noticed fuel venting from the left tank, and decided to return to the airport. A right hand traffic pattern was flown in an attempt to minimize fuel loss. The pilot stated that he did not complete his normal prelanding checklist, and could not remember if the gear warning horn sounded.

Airport personal found the left fuel cap on the runway. Following the accident, the landing gear system functioned correctly.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	56, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	September 13, 1995
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1778 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1412 hours (Total, this make and model), 1645 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 61 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 43 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N8LP
Model/Series:	PA-34 PA-34	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	34-8350042
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	4000 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	IO-360-C1E6
Registered Owner:	WILDIRK LLC	Rated Power:	200 Horsepower
Operator:	WILLARD NICKISH	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	IND ,797 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	25 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	17:51 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	190°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	Visibility	15 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 5500 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	10 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	190°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	18°C / 17°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	ST. LOUIS , MO (SUS)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	00:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class E

Airport Information

Airport:	INDIANAPOLIS TERRY I52	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	922 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	18	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	5500 ft / 100 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Traffic pattern

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	39.669651,-86.069061(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Boldenow, David
Additional Participating Persons:	MIKE ANDERSON; INDIANAPOLIS , IN
Original Publish Date:	March 6, 1996
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=10143

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The NTSB does not assign fault or blame for an accident or incident; rather, as specified by NTSB regulation, “accident/incident investigations are fact-finding proceedings with no formal issues and no adverse parties ... and are not conducted for the purpose of determining the rights or liabilities of any person” (Title 49 *Code of Federal Regulations* section 831.4). Assignment of fault or legal liability is not relevant to the NTSB’s statutory mission to improve transportation safety by investigating accidents and incidents and issuing safety recommendations. In addition, statutory language prohibits the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report (Title 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b)). A factual report that may be admissible under 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b) is available [here](#).