



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	Cottonwood, Arizona	<b>Accident Number:</b>	WPR21LA160
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	April 15, 2021, 10:00 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N3551Z
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Piper PA-22-160	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>	Loss of control on ground	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

## Analysis

The pilot of a tailwheel equipped airplane reported that, during the landing roll, while adjusting the flap handle, he briefly stepped on the right rudder and the airplane veered to the right. While attempting to correct with left rudder input, the airplane continued to veer to the right, exited the runway, ground looped to the right and collapsed the left main landing gear. The airplane sustained substantial damage to the left wing. The pilot reported that there were no preaccident mechanical failures or malfunctions with the airplane that would have precluded normal operation.

## Probable Cause and Findings

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

The pilot's failure to maintain directional control during landing, which resulted in a ground loop.

## Findings

<b>Aircraft</b>	Directional control - Not attained/maintained
<b>Personnel issues</b>	Aircraft control - Pilot

## Factual Information

### History of Flight

Landing	Loss of control on ground (Defining event)
Landing	Runway excursion
Landing	Landing gear collapse

### Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	55, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Unknown
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 3 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	July 13, 2017
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	May 30, 2019
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 1050 hours (Total, all aircraft), 400 hours (Total, this make and model)		

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N3551Z
Model/Series:	PA-22-160	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	22-7462
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	March 15, 2020 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3400 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed	Engine Model/Series:	O-320 SERIES
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	160 Horsepower
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual (VMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	KPRC,5052 ft msl	<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	20 Nautical Miles
<b>Observation Time:</b>	09:53 Local	<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	256°
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Clear	<b>Visibility</b>	10 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	8 knots /	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	None / None
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	230°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	N/A / N/A
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	29.95 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	15°C / -12°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Calnevar, NV (1L4)	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	Cottonwood, AZ	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	09:00 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class G

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	COTTONWOOD P52	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	Asphalt
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>	3560 ft msl	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	Dry
<b>Runway Used:</b>	14/32	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	None
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>	4252 ft / 75 ft	<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Full stop

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>		<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>		<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	34.730729,-112.03502(est)

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Gutierrez, Eric
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	Kevin Hanna; FAA; Scottsdale, AZ
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	September 20, 2021
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class 4</a>
<b>Note:</b>	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=102924">https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=102924</a>

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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](#).