



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	WILLIMANTIC, Connecticut	Accident Number:	ERA21LA276
Date & Time:	June 17, 2021, 11:35 Local	Registration:	N2517H
Aircraft:	Schweizer SGS 1-26E	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Off-field or emergency landing	Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Instructional		

Analysis

The student pilot was towed aloft and released at 3,000 ft above ground level (agl) two miles south of the airport. After practicing air-work south of the airport with no thermal activity, the flight encountered 2 episodes of significant sink (-1,000 ft/min). With a wind from the northwest at 8 knots, he proceeded for a straight-in approach to runway 36 (nearest runway). When the glider was on a 1-mile final for the runway, a 3rd episode of severe sink was encountered. Realizing he would be unable to reach the runway, the pilot executed a low-energy touchdown on the shoulder of a road about 800 ft from the runway threshold.

Postaccident examination of the glider and the submitted NTSB Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident/Incident report confirmed substantial damage to the left wing. The pilot recommended performing airwork upwind of the airport.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

The failure of the student to achieve the proper touchdown point resulting in landing undershoot.

Findings

Personnel issues	Decision making/judgment - Pilot
Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot
Aircraft	Descent/approach/glide path - Not attained/maintained
Environmental issues	(general) - Effect on operation

Factual Information

History of Flight

Approach-VFR pattern final	Off-field or emergency landing (Defining event)
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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Student	Age:	66, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Single
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	4-point
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	None None	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	57 hours (Total, all aircraft), 8 hours (Total, this make and model), 26 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 14 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Schweizer	Registration:	N2517H
Model/Series:	SGS 1-26E NO SERIES	Aircraft Category:	Glider
Year of Manufacture:	1976	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	647
Landing Gear Type:	Hull	Seats:	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	August 1, 2020 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	0
Airframe Total Time:	2300 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	CONNECTICUT SOARING ASSOCIATION	Rated Power:	
Operator:	CONNECTICUT SOARING ASSOCIATION	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KIJD,247 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	11:52 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	342°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	6 knots / 16 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:	310°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	29.96 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	22°C / 3°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	WILLIMANTIC, CT	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	WILLIMANTIC, CT	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	Windham Airport IJD	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	246 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:		IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Forced landing

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	41.736922,-72.181846(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Monville, Timothy
Additional Participating Persons:	Barry M. Donahue; FAA/FSDO; Enfield, CT
Original Publish Date:	May 17, 2022
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class 4
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=103378

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

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](#).