



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	MIDDLETOWN, Delaware	Accident Number:	BF085LA058
Date & Time:	July 13, 1985, 19:15 Local	Registration:	N8577P
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-24-260	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

FOLLOWING TAKEOFF, AT ABOUT 350 FEET AGL, THE ENGINE QUIT ABRUPTLY. THE PLT ATTEMPTED TO LAND IN A FIELD WHICH WAS LOCATED ABOUT 15 DEGREES EAST OF THE ACFT'S HEADING. WHILE ATTEMPTING TO AVOID PWR LINES NEAR THE FIELD, THE RIGHT WING COLLIDED WITH THE WIRES. AFTER CONTACT WITH THE WIRES, WITNESS CONCUR THAT THE PLT WAS ABLE TO RAISE THE NOSE OF THE ACFT, BEFORE THE RIGHT WING STRUCK THE GROUND, FOLLOWED BY THE BOTTOM NOSE SECTION COWLING, NEAR THE NOSE WHEEL. AT THIS POINT, THE AIRCRAFT HAD PIVOTED ALMOST 180 DEGREES, AND BOUNCED BACKWARD THROUGH THE AIR APPROXIMATELY 60 FEET BEFORE COMING TO REST.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - NONMECHANICAL
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. (F) FLUID,FUEL - STARVATION
2. (C) FUEL TANK SELECTOR POSITION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - EMERGENCY

Findings

3. (F) OBJECT - SOFT

Occurrence #4: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	51, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	January 3, 1984
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1477 hours (Total, all aircraft), 106 hours (Total, this make and model), 1413 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 8 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N8577P
Model/Series:	PA-24-260 PA-24-260	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	24-4034
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	February 26, 1985 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2900 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	8 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	4297 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	IO-540-E4A5
Registered Owner:	BAPTIST BIBLE CHURCH, INC.	Rated Power:	260 Horsepower
Operator:		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:	ILG ,80 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	12 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	18:51 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	30°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	8 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	8 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	170°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	31°C / 18°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	N/A - None - Haze		
Departure Point:	MIDDLETOWN , DE (N92)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	07:10 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:		Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	0 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	0 ft / 0 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Forced landing

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	39.450263,-75.7098(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Dickinson, Al

Additional Participating Persons:

Original Publish Date:

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=11184>

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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](#).