



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	WHITE BEAR LAKE, Minnesota	Accident Number:	CHI93LA084
Date & Time:	February 2, 1993, 12:15 Local	Registration:	N3854M
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-12	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE PILOT STATED WHEN HE LANDED ON THE SNOW-COVERED AIRSTRIP, IT APPEARED THE SNOW WAS 'HARD PACKED.' HE REPORTED AS THE AIRPLANE DECELERATED, IT BEGAN TO SINK INTO THE SNOW, THEN NOSED OVER. HE STATED: 'IN THE THIRTY EIGHT YEARS OF FLYING THIS IS MY FIRST ACCIDENT. SOMETIMES WE MAKE BAD DECISIONS AND THIS WAS ONE OF THOSE TIMES.' FAA PERSONNEL REPORTED 8 INCHES OF SNOW ON THE RUNWAY.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE PILOT SELECTED UNSUITABLE TERRAIN FOR LANDING. THE SNOW COVERED RUNWAY WAS A FACTOR.

Findings

Occurrence #1: NOSE OVER
Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings

1. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - SNOW COVERED
2. (C) UNSUITABLE TERRAIN OR TAKEOFF/LANDING/TAXI AREA - SELECTED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	55, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1730 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1200 hours (Total, this make and model), 1600 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 10 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N3854M
Model/Series:	PA-12 PA-12	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal; Utility	Serial Number:	12-2767
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	3
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	June 25, 1992 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1500 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	10 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	2832 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-320-A2B
Registered Owner:	DORN, EARL D.	Rated Power:	150 Horsepower
Operator:	DORN, EARL D.	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:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown / 5000 ft AGL	Visibility	6 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 5000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	9 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	275°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	1°C / -2°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	N/A - None - Haze		
Departure Point:	MINNEAPOLIS , MN (MIC)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	12:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	BENSON BBB	Runway Surface Type:	Grass/turf
Airport Elevation:	1232 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Snow
Runway Used:	32	IFR Approach:	
Runway Length/Width:	2500 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full stop

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:	45.090202,-93.009017(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Reeves, Jodi
Additional Participating Persons:	RICHARD WINLAND; MINNEAPOLIS , MN
Original Publish Date:	October 25, 1993
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=15661

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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](#).