



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	LAS CRUCES, New Mexico	<b>Accident Number:</b>	DEN88LA200
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	September 4, 1988, 08:30 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N90EH
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Thunder and Colt AX8-90	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	3 Minor, 2 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

## Analysis

THE COMMERCIAL BALLOON PLT WAS PARTICIPATING IN A BALLOON RALLY. DURING LANDING, THE PLT NOTICED THE BALLOON WAS DRIFTING TOWARD POWER LINES. HE ELECTED TO OPEN THE DEFLATION VALVE AT 30 FT AGL, TO ATTEMPT TO LAND SHORT OF THE LINES. THE BALLOON TOUCHED DOWN 50 FT FROM THE LINES AND CONTINUED TO BE DRAGGED TOWARD THEM. THE BASKET CAME TO REST 30 FT FROM THE LINES, AND AS THE PASSENGERS DEPARTED THE BASKET, THE ENVELOPE CAME IN CONTACT WITH THE POWER LINES. THE PYROMETER CABLE CARRIED CURRENT DOWN TO THE BASKET INJURING ONE PASSENGER AND THE GROUND CREWMAN.

## Probable Cause and Findings

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

### Findings

Occurrence #1: ON GROUND/WATER COLLISION WITH OBJECT  
Phase of Operation: LANDING

#### Findings

1. (F) OBJECT - WIRE, TRANSMISSION
2. (C) IN-FLIGHT PLANNING/DECISION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND

3. (C) UNSUITABLE TERRAIN OR TAKEOFF/LANDING/TAXI AREA - SELECTED - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (C) CLEARANCE - MISJUDGED - PILOT IN COMMAND

## Factual Information

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	53, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Unknown
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Balloon	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	None None	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	No	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	548 hours (Total, all aircraft), 5 hours (Total, this make and model), 540 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Thunder and Colt	<b>Registration:</b>	N90EH
<b>Model/Series:</b>	AX8-90 AX8-90	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Balloon
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	690
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Hull	<b>Seats:</b>	
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	August 26, 1988 Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	356 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	2 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	0 Unknown
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	187 Hrs	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	
<b>ELT:</b>	Not installed	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	JAMES G. CURRAN	<b>Rated Power:</b>	
<b>Operator:</b>		<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None
<b>Operator Does Business As:</b>		<b>Operator Designator Code:</b>	

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual (VMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>		<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Observation Time:</b>		<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Clear	<b>Visibility</b>	30 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	4 knots / 7 knots	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	0°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>		<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	18°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	(NONE)	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	(NONE)	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	07:30 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class G

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>		<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	Dirt
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>	0 ft msl	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	Dry
<b>Runway Used:</b>	0	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	None
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>	0 ft / 0 ft	<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Full stop

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 Minor	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	1 Minor, 2 None	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	1 Minor	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	3 Minor, 2 None	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	32.289833,-106.749191(est)

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Collins, Robert
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	MICHAEL BEATTIE; ALBUQUERQUE , NM
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	September 11, 1989
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class</a>
<b>Note:</b>	
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=17539">https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=17539</a>

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