



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	TYLER, Texas	Accident Number:	FTW92LA209
Date & Time:	August 15, 1992, 07:50 Local	Registration:	GPATY
Aircraft:	Thunder and Colt SPECIAL SHAPE	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE BALLOON COLLIDED WITH 69,000 VOLT POWER TRANSMISSION LINES WHILE ATTEMPTING TO MANEUVER TOWARD A DROP ZONE DURING AN ORGANIZED BALLOON RACE. THE BALLOON BASKET WAS ABOUT 20 TO 25 FEET OFF OF THE GROUND AT THE TIME OF THE COLLISION. THE WIRES ARCED THROUGH THE BASKET SUSPENSION LINES. ARC HOLES WERE FOUND IN BOTH FUEL TANKS AND THE FUEL WAS IGNITED. THE BASKET FELL TO THE GROUND WHEN THE ENVELOPE WAS RELEASED.

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 ADEQUATE ALTITUDE AND CLEARANCE FROM OBSTACLES.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

- Findings
1. OBJECT - WIRE, TRANSMISSION
 2. (C) ALTITUDE - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
 3. (C) CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
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Occurrence #2: FIRE/EXPLOSION

Phase of Operation: OTHER

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Private	Age:	51, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Balloon	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	None None	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 700 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Thunder and Colt	Registration:	GPATY
Model/Series:	SPECIAL SHAPE SPECIAL SH	Aircraft Category:	Balloon
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted (Special)	Serial Number:	
Landing Gear Type:		Seats:	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	January 2, 2000 Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	0 Unknown
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	OWENS SAUSAGE	Rated Power:	
Operator:	FOSTER, COY Z.	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:	TYR ,544 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	7 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	07:47 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	290°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	5 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	40°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	19°C / 18°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	N/A - None - Fog		
Departure Point:	(NONE)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	(NONE)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	07:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

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

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	On-ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	On-ground
Total Injuries:	1 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	32.360126,-95.319076(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Wandel, Warren
Additional Participating Persons:	EUEL HENRY; DALLAS , TX
Original Publish Date:	June 30, 1993
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=18554

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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](#).