



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	LAKE CITY, Colorado	Accident Number:	FTW94LA288
Date & Time:	May 31, 1992, 16:00 Local	Registration:	N2742T
Aircraft:	BEECH 35-C33	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE NON-INSTRUMENT RATED PILOT LANDED AT FALCON, COLORADO, REFUELED, THEN TOOK OFF INTO WHAT ONE WITNESS SAID WAS MARGINAL WEATHER CONDITIONS. THREE DAYS LATER, THE AIRPLANE WAS REPORTED MISSING AND SEARCH EFFORTS WERE TO NO AVAIL. THE WRECKAGE WAS FOUND ALMOST 2-1/2 YEARS LATER. DAMAGE TO THE AIRCRAFT INDICATED THAT IT CRASHED WHILE TRAVELING AT A HIGH RATE OF SPEED; EXCEPT FOR DEBRIS FOUND NEXT TO THE AIRCRAFT, THERE WERE NO GROUND SCARS OR EVIDENCE OF LATERAL MOVEMENT. SATELLITE PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN ON THE DAY OF THE ACCIDENT REVEALED CLOUD COVER AT BOTH DEPARTURE POINT AND ACCIDENT SITE. RADAR SUMMARY CHARTS SHOWED A BAND OF LEVEL 1, 3, AND 5 THUNDERSTORMS OVER MOST OF CENTRAL AND SOUTHEASTERN COLORADO. CONVECTIVE SIGMETS WERE IN EFFECT, AND AN AIRMET WARNED OF INSTRUMENT METEOROLOGICAL CONDITIONS, MOUNTAIN OBSCURATION, AND ICING. THERE IS NO RECORD OF THE PILOT OBTAINING A WEATHER BRIEFING.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: FLIGHT BY THE PILOT INTO ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS, AND HIS SUBSEQUENT LOSS OF AIRCRAFT CONTROL DUE TO SPATIAL DISORIENTATION. FACTORS RELATED TO THE ACCIDENT WERE: THE ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS, AND THE PILOT'S LACK OF INSTRUMENT EXPERIENCE.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER

Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

1. (C) FLIGHT INTO ADVERSE WEATHER - PERFORMED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - THUNDERSTORM
3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING
4. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - OBSCURATION
5. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - ICING CONDITIONS

Occurrence #2: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT

Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

6. (C) AIRCRAFT CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
7. (C) SPATIAL DISORIENTATION - PILOT IN COMMAND
8. (F) LACK OF TOTAL INSTRUMENT TIME - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Findings

9. TERRAIN CONDITION - MOUNTAINOUS/HILLY

Factual Information

On May 31, 1992, approximately 1600 mountain daylight time, a Beech 35-C33, N2742T, impacted mountainous terrain about 7 miles west of Lake City, Colorado. The non-instrument rated private pilot was fatally injured and the airplane was destroyed. Weather documents indicate instrument meteorological conditions prevailed at the accident site.

According to the pilot's wife, her husband departed Beckley, West Virginia, on the afternoon of May 30, and flew to the Kansas City, Missouri, area. He telephoned her and told her he would call her the following evening, and would probably be home on June 1.

Witnesses observed N2742T land at Meadow Lake Airport in Falcon, Colorado, approximately 1300 on May 31, and the pilot refueled his airplane at a self-service pump. According to the Phillips 66 Petroleum Company in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, the purchase was computer-recorded at 1306. Witnesses also watched the airplane depart approximately 1400, and turn towards the Colorado Springs, Colorado, Terminal Radar Service Area (TRSA). They said weather conditions were marginal, with snow mixed with rain northeast of the airport.

The airplane was reported missing on June 3, 1992. A two week air search was conducted by the Civil Air Patrol to no avail. A hiker found the wreckage on September 5, 1994, at the south end of Copper Gulch at the 13,700 foot level of 14,309 foot Uncompahgre Peak.

Although the three closest weather observation stations to the accident site (Telluride, 24 miles west; Montrose, 39 miles northwest; Gunnison, 40 miles northeast) were reporting visual meteorological conditions at the approximate time of the accident, other weather data indicates instrument meteorological

conditions prevailed. Weather satellite photos taken at 1401, 1431, 1501, 1531, and 1601 depicted cloud coverage at both the departure point and accident site. Radar Summary Charts prepared at 1435, 1535, and 1635, showed a band of level 1, 3, and 5 thunderstorms over most of central and southeastern Colorado, moving southeast. Convective SIGMETS (significant meteorology) 17C, 18C, 20C, 22C, and 24C were in effect, warning of these thunderstorms. AIRMET (airman meteorology) Sierra was valid until 2000 for instrument meteorological conditions (occasional ceiling below 1,000 feet and visibility below 3 miles in precipitation); mountain obscuration (clouds), and occasional moderate rime icing above the freezing level, extending to 20,000 feet MSL (above mean sea level).

Examination of accident site photographs taken by the sheriff's office disclosed both wings attached to the fuselage, and the propeller attached to the engine. One blade was straight, the other blade was bent aft approximately 8 inches from the hub. Miscellaneous small debris lay in close proximity to the main body of wreckage. There was no evidence of any ground scars

or widespread distribution of wreckage.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	57, 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:	March 27, 1992
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1240 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	BEECH	Registration:	N2742T
Model/Series:	35-C33 35-C33	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	CD-1086
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	5
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3050 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	CONTINENTAL
ELT:	Installed	Engine Model/Series:	IO-470-K
Registered Owner:	LEHMANN, H.V. & WORLEY, BILL	Rated Power:	225 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument (IMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	Visibility	
Lowest Ceiling:	Unknown	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	0°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:	Moderate - None - Rain		
Departure Point:	FALCON , CO (00V)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	14:00 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 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	38.070823,-107.299079(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Scott, Arnold
Additional Participating Persons:	DAVID F GONZALES; DENVER , CO
Original Publish Date:	April 7, 1995
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=19153

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