



# Aviation Investigation Preliminary Report

|                                |                                      |                         |            |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| <b>Location:</b>               | Tupelo, MS                           | <b>Accident Number:</b> | WPR23FA208 |
| <b>Date &amp; Time:</b>        | June 3, 2023, 08:11 Local            | <b>Registration:</b>    | N4077W     |
| <b>Aircraft:</b>               | Piper PA-31-325                      | <b>Injuries:</b>        | 2 Fatal    |
| <b>Flight Conducted Under:</b> | Part 91: General aviation - Personal |                         |            |

On June 3, 2023, about 0811 central daylight time, a Piper PA-31-325, N4077W, was destroyed when it was involved in an accident near the Tupelo Regional Airport (TUP), Tupelo, Mississippi. The pilot and pilot rated passenger were fatally injured. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flight.

A review of Automatic Dependent Surveillance – Broadcast (ADS-B) flight data indicated that the pilot departed runway 36 and initiated a right climbing turn to about 330 ft above ground level (AGL) and a maximum ground speed of 102 kts. Subsequently, the airplane continued the right turn and began a descent. The last data point showed the airplane's altitude about 280ft agl, and a ground speed of about 72 kts. The airplane subsequently impacted terrain in a nose-low attitude, and a postcrash fire ensued.



**Photograph 1: Overview of the accident flight track.**

Airport surveillance video revealed that during the last few seconds of flight, the airplane's right wing dropped, and the airplane spiraled to the ground.



**Photograph 2: View of the wreckage.**

The airplane was recovered to a secure facility for future examination.

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

|                                  |           |                                       |          |
|----------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------------------|----------|
| <b>Aircraft Make:</b>            | Piper     | <b>Registration:</b>                  | N4077W   |
| <b>Model/Series:</b>             | PA-31-325 | <b>Aircraft Category:</b>             | Airplane |
| <b>Amateur Built:</b>            |           |                                       |          |
| <b>Operator:</b>                 | On file   | <b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b> | None     |
| <b>Operator Designator Code:</b> |           |                                       |          |

### Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

|   |                  |                                     |                     |
|---|------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>     | VMC              | <b>Condition of Light:</b>          | Day                 |
| <b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b> | KTUP,341 ft msl  | <b>Observation Time:</b>            | 07:53 Local         |
| <b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>     | 1 Nautical Miles | <b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>       | 23°C /19°C          |
| <b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>          | Clear            | <b>Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:</b> | 4 knots / None, 20° |
| <b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>                  | None             | <b>Visibility:</b>                  | 10 miles            |
| <b>Altimeter Setting:</b>               | 29.87 inches Hg  | <b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>   | IFR                 |
| <b>Departure Point:</b>                 | Tupelo, MS       | <b>Destination:</b>                 |                     |

### Wreckage and Impact Information

|                            |         |                             |                      |
|----------------------------|---------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Crew Injuries:</b>      | 1 Fatal | <b>Aircraft Damage:</b>     | Destroyed            |
| <b>Passenger Injuries:</b> | 1 Fatal | <b>Aircraft Fire:</b>       | On-ground            |
| <b>Ground Injuries:</b>    |         | <b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>  | On-ground            |
| <b>Total Injuries:</b>     | 2 Fatal | <b>Latitude, Longitude:</b> | 34.271752,-88.767722 |

### Administrative Information

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>     | Johnson, Scott  |
| <b>Additional Participating Persons:</b> | Micheal E. Jones; Federal Aviation Administration; Jackson, MS<br>J. Mike Childers; Lycoming; Williamsport, PA<br>Jon Hirsch; Piper; Vero Beach, FL |
| <b>Investigation Class:</b>              | <a href="#">Class 3</a>   |
| <b>Note:</b>                             |   |