



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	Buffalo, Minnesota	<b>Accident Number:</b>	CEN24LA041
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	November 17, 2023, 13:10 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N30494
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Piper J3C	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>	Loss of control on ground	<b>Injuries:</b>	2 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

## Analysis

The pilot reported that, while practicing touch-and-go landings, the tailwheel-equipped airplane touched down and immediately veered right. The pilot attempted to correct with opposite rudder and brake; however, the airplane exited the right side of the runway. During the excursion the airplane collided with an airport sign, and the right wing struck the ground, which resulted in substantial damage to the right wing and its lift strut.

The pilot reported that there were no preaccident mechanical failures or malfunctions with the airplane that would have precluded normal operation.

At the time of the accident, the pilot was landing the airplane on runway 18 with wind from 210° at 12 knots.

## 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 directional control during the landing roll with a quartering headwind.

## Findings

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<b>Personnel issues</b>	Aircraft control - Pilot
<b>Aircraft</b>	Directional control - Not attained/maintained
<b>Environmental issues</b>	Crosswind - Effect on operation

## Factual Information

### History of Flight

Landing-landing roll	Other weather encounter
Landing	Loss of control on ground (Defining event)
Landing-landing roll	Attempted remediation/recovery
Landing-landing roll	Runway excursion
Landing-landing roll	Collision during takeoff/land
Landing-landing roll	Landing gear collapse

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial; Flight instructor	<b>Age:</b>	727, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Front
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	Lap only
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	Yes
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	Airplane single-engine	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 2 With waivers/limitations	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	November 2, 2023
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	No	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	August 4, 2023
<b>Flight Time:</b>	603 hours (Total, all aircraft), 125 hours (Total, this make and model), 287.2 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 8 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 3.3 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

### Co-pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	36, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Rear
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	Lap only
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	Yes
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 3 Without waivers/limitations	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	January 13, 2020
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	No	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	July 27, 2023
<b>Flight Time:</b>	298 hours (Total, all aircraft), 9.1 hours (Total, this make and model), 213.9 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 1 hour (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Piper	<b>Registration:</b>	N30494
<b>Model/Series:</b>	J3C	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>	1940	<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	4874
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tailwheel	<b>Seats:</b>	2
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	August 15, 2023 Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	1170 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>		<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	738.3 Hrs as of last inspection	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Continental
<b>ELT:</b>	C91 installed, not activated	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	C85-8
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	On file	<b>Rated Power:</b>	85 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>	On file	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual (VMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	KCFE,966 ft msl	<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	0 Nautical Miles
<b>Observation Time:</b>	13:15 Local	<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	300°
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Few / 9000 ft AGL	<b>Visibility</b>	10 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	12 knots /	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	210°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	29.99 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	6°C / -6°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Buffalo, MN (CFE)	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	Buffalo, MN (CFE)	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	11:10 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class E

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	BUFFALO MUNI CFE	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	Asphalt
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>	967 ft msl	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	Dry
<b>Runway Used:</b>	18	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	None
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>	3200 ft / 75 ft	<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Straight-in

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	2 None	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	2 None	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	45.159655,-93.84329

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Brown, Zane
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	Daniel Sindt; FAA FSDO; Minneapolis, MN
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	May 29, 2024
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class 4</a>
<b>Note:</b>	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=193405">https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=193405</a>

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

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](#).