



AVIATION



HIGHWAY



MARINE



RAILROAD



PIPELINE

Aviation Investigation Preliminary Report

Location:	Muncie, IN	Accident Number:	CEN24LA144
Date & Time:	April 1, 2024, 10:27 Local	Registration:	N8438B
Aircraft:	Piper PA28	Injuries:	3 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

On April 1, 2024, about 1027 eastern daylight time, a Piper PA-28-236 airplane, N8438B, was destroyed when it was involved in an accident near Muncie, Indiana. The pilot sustained serious injuries and two pedestrians on the ground sustained serious injuries. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flight.

The pilot had filed an instrument flight rules flight plan. A preliminary review of OpsVue track data showed that the airplane departed from runway 35 at the Monroe County Airport (BMG), Bloomington, Indiana, about 0937. The airplane traveled to the northeast and then maneuvered to get established for the RNAV (area navigation) runway 14 approach at the Muncie Delaware County Airport (MIE), Muncie, Indiana.

The airplane appeared to track on final to MIE descending to an altitude of about 2,900 ft mean sea level (msl), at which time it appeared to be lined up with the final approach course. Shortly thereafter, the airplane appeared to drift right of the runway 14 final approach course, and it tracked parallel to the final approach course. Approximately midfield abeam the airport, the pilot arrested the descent at about 1,100 ft msl, and began a climbing right turn.

The turn continued in two full 360° right-hand circles with the airplane initially beginning to climb. However, it then descended, climbed, and then descended a final time. The highest altitude in the first turn was about 1,425 ft msl, the highest altitude in the second turn was about 1,350 ft msl, and the highest altitude in the final incomplete turn was about 1,550 ft msl. The track data was lost at 1026, about 1,300 ft msl, when the airplane was on an approximate 292° ground track.

During the descent and subsequent impact with terrain in a wooded area, two pedestrians on a public walking trail sustained serious injuries from the airplane. The airplane impacted terrain about 3,400 ft southwest of the midpoint of runway 14. Both wings and the empennage were

found separated from the fuselage. The wreckage was recovered from the accident site and retained for further examination.

A preliminary review of meteorological data showed that instrument meteorological conditions prevailed during the approach with wind from 040° at 13 kts, visibility 6 miles in mist, and ceiling overcast at 500 ft above ground level.

The airplane was equipped with a Lycoming Engines O-540-J3A5D reciprocating engine and a McCauley Propeller Systems B3D36C431/80VSA-1 constant speed propeller. According to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) airworthiness records, the airplane was equipped with a Garmin GFC 500 autopilot system and a Garmin G5 electronic flight instrument system.

According to FAA airman records, the pilot held a private pilot certificate (airplane single engine land) with an instrument rating.

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N8438B
Model/Series:	PA28 236	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Amateur Built:			
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Designator Code:	None		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	IMC	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KMIE, 936 ft msl	Observation Time:	10:37 Local
Distance from Accident Site:	1 Nautical Miles	Temperature/Dew Point:	9°C / 8°C
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	10 knots, 50°
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 400 ft AGL	Visibility:	5 miles
Altimeter Setting:	29.88 inches Hg	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Departure Point:	Bloomington, IN (BMG)	Destination:	Muncie, IN

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	On-ground
Ground Injuries:	2 Serious	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	40.235157,-85.405945 (est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Hodges, Michael
Additional Participating Persons:	Charles Hoover; FAA Indianapolis FSDO; Indianapolis, IN Jon Hirsch; Piper Aircraft; Vero Beach, FL Russel Gait; Lycoming Engines; Williamsport, PA Daniel Meyers; National Air Traffic Controllers Association; Washington, DC
Investigation Class:	Class 3
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.