



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Parowan, Utah	Accident Number:	WPR24LA216
Date & Time:	June 24, 2024, 11:55 Local	Registration:	N517PB
Aircraft:	ALEXANDER SCHLEICHER GMBH & CO ASH 31 MI	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of lift	Injuries:	1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot of a powered glider reported that, after the engine had been shut down and the propeller stowed, he encountered more downdrafts than expected. The glider did not have sufficient altitude to reach the airport or to re-deploy the engine. During the forced landing on rough terrain, a wing impacted vegetation and ground looped, resulting in substantial damage to the fuselage and empennage.

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

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

The glider’s encounter with atmospheric conditions where the lift was not sufficient to maintain flight.

Findings

Environmental issues	Thermal lifting - Effect on operation
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Factual Information

History of Flight

Enroute	Loss of lift (Defining event)
Landing	Off-field or emergency landing

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	74, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Single
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Glider	Restraint Used:	Unknown
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 3 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	June 12, 2024
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	March 27, 2024
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 2000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 500 hours (Total, this make and model), 2000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 40 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 20 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	ALEXANDER SCHLEICHER GMBH & CO	Registration:	N517PB
Model/Series:	ASH 31 MI	Aircraft Category:	Glider
Year of Manufacture:	2018	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental (Special)	Serial Number:	31175
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tailwheel	Seats:	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	November 9, 2023 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1543 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	567 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Austro Engine
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	AE50R
Registered Owner:	Ketcham James S and Barbara S Trustee	Rated Power:	55 Horsepower
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KCDC,5590 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	16 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	11:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	238°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 10000 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:		Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	9 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	Convective / Convective
Wind Direction:	290°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	Light / Light
Altimeter Setting:	30.15 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	32°C / 7°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Parowan, UT (1L9)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Parowan, UT (1L9)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	11:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	Parowan Airport 1L9	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	5930 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	04	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	5000 ft / 75 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Forced landing

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	37.84895,-112.81118

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Whitaker, Kathryn
Additional Participating Persons:	Dylan Tiffany; Federal Aviation Administration; Salt Lake City, UT
Original Publish Date:	August 8, 2024
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class 4
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=194591

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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](#).