



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	ALBUQUERQUE, New Mexico	Accident Number:	FTW96LA013
Date & Time:	October 10, 1995, 09:13 Local	Registration:	N9153X
Aircraft:	Aerostar RX 8	Aircraft Damage:	None
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Serious, 2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot reported a wind velocity of 0 to 5 knots from the north/northeast. After aborting several approaches, the pilot selected a landing area and briefed the passengers of a possible bounce. The pilot 'intentionally did not flare' the balloon. The balloon 'bounced once, but then stayed grounded.' One passenger experienced shoulder pain, and medical x-rays indicated a fracture.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's improper in-flight planning/decision. The variable wind condition was a related factor.

Findings

Occurrence #1: HARD LANDING
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - VARIABLE WIND
2. (C) IN-FLIGHT PLANNING/DECISION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

On October 10, 1995, at 0913 mountain daylight time, a passenger received serious injury during the landing of an Aerostar RX 8, N9153X, near Albuquerque, New Mexico. The private pilot and the other passenger did not receive injuries and the balloon was not damaged. The balloon was being operated as a personal flight under Title 14 CFR Part 91. The flight originated from the Balloon Fiesta launch site in Albuquerque, New Mexico, earlier that day. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and a flight plan was not filed.

During an interview, conducted by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector, the pilot reported that one of the passengers experienced shoulder pain following the balloon landing. Medical x-rays indicated a fracture.

On the Pilot/Operator Report, the pilot reported a wind velocity from zero to 5 knots from the north/northeast. On the enclosed statement the pilot reported aborting several approaches due to a the "size" of the landing area, "ground winds, and/or power lines." Passengers were briefed on the landing and were "warned" that "we could bounce." The pilot "intentionally did not flare" the balloon. The balloon "bounced once, but then stayed grounded."

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	37, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Balloon	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Unknown Unknown	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	95 hours (Total, all aircraft), 57 hours (Total, this make and model), 81 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 16 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 6 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Aerostar	Registration:	N9153X
Model/Series:	RX 8 RX 8	Aircraft Category:	Balloon
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	RX8-3183
Landing Gear Type:		Seats:	0
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	February 6, 1995 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1650 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	18 Hrs	Engines:	Unknown
Airframe Total Time:	64 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:		Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	CURT D. HENCH	Rated Power:	
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	315°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	21°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	08:00 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:	Full stop

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	None
Passenger Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious, 2 None	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Smith, Joyce
Additional Participating Persons:	JEFFREY D HUSS; ALBUQUERQUE , NM
Original Publish Date:	June 22, 1996
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=19685

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