



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	OIL CITY, Louisiana	Accident Number:	FTW97LA018
Date & Time:	October 13, 1996, 17:50 Local	Registration:	N3818E
Aircraft:	Aeronca 11BC	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The Aeronca 11BC, N3818F, and the unregistered Flight Star ultralight (with no radio capabilities) were flying into the same uncontrolled airstrip. The noncertificated ultralight pilot entered a left traffic pattern on the downwind for runway 8 at approximately 500 feet, and discovered that the late afternoon sun was shining almost directly into his eyes. The ultralight pilot further reported that as he turned base-to-final he impacted the airplane. The Aeronca pilot, who had been flying the traffic pattern at 1,000 feet, reported that at approximately 300 feet on final approach the ultralight aircraft struck the left side of his airplane.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the failure of the pilots of both aircraft to maintain an adequate visual lookout. Factors were: different traffic pattern altitudes flown by the two pilots, and the sunglare encountered by the pilot of the ultralight.

Findings

Occurrence #1: MIDAIR COLLISION
Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - FINAL APPROACH

- Findings
1. COMMUNICATIONS - NOT POSSIBLE - PILOT IN COMMAND
 2. (F) TRAFFIC PATTERN PROCEDURE - OTHER

3. (C) VISUAL LOOKOUT - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (C) VISUAL LOOKOUT - INADEQUATE - PILOT OF OTHER AIRCRAFT

Factual Information

On October 13, 1996, approximately 1750 central daylight time, an Aeronca 11BC, N3818E, and a Flight Star ultralight, were substantially damaged during a midair collision near Oil City, Louisiana. Neither the private pilot in the airplane nor the non-certified pilot in the ultralight were injured. The airplane was registered to and operated by a private owner under Title 14 CFR Part 91. The ultralight vehicle was being piloted by its owner. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the local flights. The airplane's flight originated from Thackers Airport, an uncontrolled airstrip, near Oil City, Louisiana, at 1735; and, the ultralight vehicle's flight originated from the same airfield approximately 3 minutes later. The pilot of the airplane had not filed a flight plan.

Both pilots were interviewed by the IIC which revealed the following: the airplane took off on runway 08 and stayed in the traffic pattern to practice touch-and-go landings. The ultralight, which had no radio capabilities, took off approximately 3 minutes after the airplane and departed the airstrip traffic pattern area for approximately 15 minutes.

The ultralight pilot reported that he decided to return to the airstrip to land. He stated that he entered the traffic pattern on a left down wind for runway 08, at approximately 500 feet, and discovered that the late afternoon sun was shining almost directly into his eyes. As the ultralight pilot turned base, he reported that it was "very difficult to clear for possible aircraft on extended final because of the sun's location." He further reported that as he turned base-to-final, his ultralight aircraft impacted the airplane. He "lost pitch control", and the ultralight came to rest nose down in a stand of pine trees.

The airplane pilot reported that he was completing his third touch-and-go landing (using a traffic pattern altitude of 1,000 feet) and was on final approach to runway 08 at approximately 300 feet when he was impacted on the left side by the ultralight aircraft. The airplane pilot reported that the "two aircraft did not separate immediately and that he had to apply full power to separate from the ultralight." He reported that he then "managed to regain enough control of his airplane to perform a landing on the airstrip."

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	63, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	February 15, 1996
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	731 hours (Total, all aircraft), 50 hours (Total, this make and model), 10 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Aeronca	Registration:	N3818E
Model/Series:	11BC 11BC	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	11AC-S-34
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	October 17, 1995 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1250 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	2020 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	A-65
Registered Owner:	RAYMOND D. TAPPE	Rated Power:	65 Horsepower
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:	SHV ,179 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	22 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	17:56 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	165°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	190°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	24°C / 14°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	(5F8)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	17:35 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	THACKERS AIRSTRIP 5F8	Runway Surface Type:	Grass/turf
Airport Elevation:	202 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	8	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	2900 ft / 50 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Traffic pattern

Wreckage and Impact Information

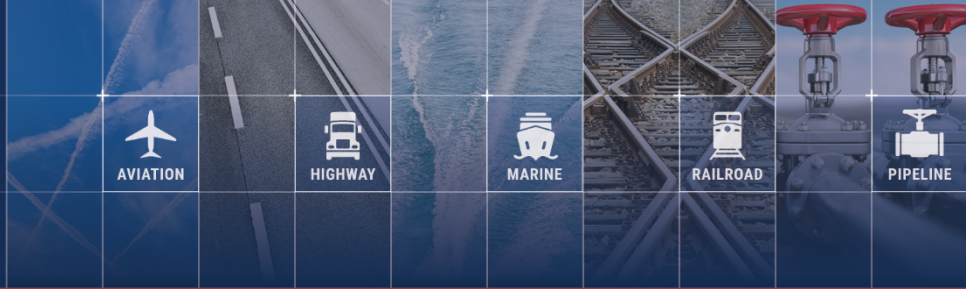
Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	32.740863,-93.970672(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	STRUHSAKER, JAMES
Additional Participating Persons:	MICHAEL B CHAPMAN; BATON ROUGE , LA
Original Publish Date:	October 14, 1997
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=20093

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](#).



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	OIL CITY, Louisiana	Accident Number:	FTW97LA018
Date & Time:	October 13, 1996, 17:50 Local	Registration:	UNREG
Aircraft:	FLIGHT STAR ULTRALIGHT	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 103: Ultralight		

Analysis

The Aeronca 11BC, N3818F, and the unregistered Flight Star ultralight (with no radio capabilities) were flying into the same uncontrolled airstrip. The noncertificated ultralight pilot entered a left traffic pattern on the downwind for runway 8 at approximately 500 feet, and discovered that the late afternoon sun was shining almost directly into his eyes. The ultralight pilot further reported that as he turned base-to-final he impacted the airplane. The Aeronca pilot, who had been flying the traffic pattern at 1,000 feet, reported that at approximately 300 feet on final approach the ultralight aircraft struck the left side of his airplane.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the failure of the pilots of both aircraft to maintain an adequate visual lookout. Factors were: different traffic pattern altitudes flown by the two pilots, and the sunglare encountered by the pilot of the ultralight.

Findings

Occurrence #1: MIDAIR COLLISION
Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - BASE LEG/BASE TO FINAL

- Findings
1. COMMUNICATIONS - NOT POSSIBLE - PILOT IN COMMAND

2. (F) TRAFFIC PATTERN PROCEDURE - OTHER
 3. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - SUNGLARE
 4. (C) VISUAL LOOKOUT - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
 5. (C) VISUAL LOOKOUT - INADEQUATE - PILOT OF OTHER AIRCRAFT
-

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Factual Information

SEE NARRATIVE FOR FTW-97-L-A018A

Pilot Information

Certificate:	None	Age:	Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Center
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Unknown None	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	15 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	FLIGHT STAR	Registration:	UNREG
Model/Series:	ULTRALIGHT ULTRALIGHT	Aircraft Category:	Ultralight
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:		Serial Number:	
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	500 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Kawasaki
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	440-A
Registered Owner:	N/A	Rated Power:	35 Horsepower
Operator:	DAVID HOLLIFIELD	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:	SHV ,179 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	22 Nautical Miles
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Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
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Wind Direction:	190°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	24°C / 14°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	(5F8)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Unknown
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	17:38 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	THACKERS AIRSTRIP 5F8	Runway Surface Type:	Grass/turf
Airport Elevation:	202 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	8	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	2900 ft / 50 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Traffic pattern

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	32.740863,-93.970672(est)

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Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=20093

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