



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

---

<b>Location:</b>	BOSWELL, Oklahoma	<b>Accident Number:</b>	FTW97LA095
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	January 30, 1997, 17:30 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N2493A
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Piper PA-38-112	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Minor
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Instructional		

---

## Analysis

According to the student pilot and the operator of the airplane, the student was on a solo cross country flight from Rockwall, Texas, to Bonham, Texas, with an intermediate stop in Paris, Texas. During the flight from Rockwall to Paris, the student did not locate his destination airport. After trying to find the airport for approximately 20 minutes, he continued on toward Bonham, which was approximately 37 nautical miles from Paris. The student became disoriented and attempted to contact both Fort Worth and McAlester Flight Service Stations without success. Other pilots in the area heard the student's calls and attempted to help. A pilot, who thought he saw the student's airplane (but might have seen another airplane), informed the student that Bonham was north of his position. The student flew north in search of Bonham, until the airplane ran out of fuel near Boswell, Oklahoma. Subsequently, the airplane was damaged during a forced landing in a rough/uneven field.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The student pilot's improper inflight planning and decision, after becoming lost/disoriented, which resulted in fuel exhaustion, before landing in a suitable landing area. Factors relating to the accident were: the pilot of another aircraft did not accurately identify the lost airplane before providing directions, and the lack of suitable terrain for the forced landing, once the engine lost power.

## Findings

---

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - NONMECHANICAL

Phase of Operation: CRUISE

### Findings

1. (C) BECAME LOST/DISORIENTED - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) IDENTIFICATION OF AIRCRAFT VISUALLY - INACCURATE - PILOT OF OTHER AIRCRAFT
3. (C) FLUID,FUEL - EXHAUSTION
4. (C) IN-FLIGHT PLANNING/DECISION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND

-----

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING

Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

-----

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING

### Findings

5. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - NONE SUITABLE
6. TERRAIN CONDITION - ROUGH/UNEVEN

## Factual Information

On January 30, 1997, at 1730 central standard time, a Piper PA-38-112, N2493A, registered to and operated by Texas Flyers, was substantially damaged during a forced landing following a loss of engine power near Boswell, Oklahoma. The student pilot, sole occupant of the airplane, received minor injuries. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the Title 14 CFR Part 91 instructional flight. A flight plan was not filed for the solo cross country flight that originated at Rockwall, Texas at 1430.

According to the Pilot/Operator Report (NTSB Form 6120.1/2) received from the pilot and the operator of the airplane, the student pilot was on a solo cross country flight from Rockwall, Texas, to Bonham, Texas, with an intermediate stop in Paris, Texas. During the flight from Rockwall to Paris, the student pilot could not locate his destination airport. After trying to find the airport for approximately 20 minutes, he continued on towards Bonham, which was approximately 37 nautical miles from Paris. The student became disoriented and attempted to contact both Fort Worth and McAlester Flight Service Stations without success. Other pilots in the area heard the student's calls and attempted to help. One pilot, who thought he saw the student's airplane, informed him that Bonham was to the north. The student flew north in search of Bonham, until the airplane ran out of fuel near Boswell, Oklahoma. During the forced landing to a rough field, the fuselage and empennage of the airplane were substantially damaged, and the engine separated from the airframe.

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Student	<b>Age:</b>	43, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 3 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	March 25, 1996
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	UNK	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	52 hours (Total, all aircraft), 52 hours (Total, this make and model), 14 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 17 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Piper	<b>Registration:</b>	N2493A
<b>Model/Series:</b>	PA-38-112 PA-38-112	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal; Utility	<b>Serial Number:</b>	38-78A0713
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tricycle	<b>Seats:</b>	2
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	December 30, 1996 100 hour	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	1670 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	49 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	3395 Hrs	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Lycoming
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	O-235-L2C
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	TEXAS FLYERS INC.	<b>Rated Power:</b>	112 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>		<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None
<b>Operator Does Business As:</b>		<b>Operator Designator Code:</b>	

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual (VMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>		<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Observation Time:</b>		<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Clear	<b>Visibility</b>	10 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	10 knots /	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	230°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>		<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	10°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	N/A - None - Haze		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	ROCKWALL , TX (F46 )	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	BONHAM , TX (F00 )	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	14:30 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class G

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>		<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>		<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	
<b>Runway Used:</b>	0	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	None
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>		<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Forced landing

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 Minor	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>		<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	1 Minor	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	34.01992,-95.860153(est)

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Struhsaker, James
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	RICHARD J FLETCHER; OKLAHOMA CITY , OK
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	June 30, 1997
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class</a>
<b>Note:</b>	
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=20155">https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=20155</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](#).