



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	N LITTLE ROCK, Arkansas	<b>Accident Number:</b>	FTW97LA141
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	March 26, 1997, 17:30 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N4802H
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Piper PA-17	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	1 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

## Analysis

After takeoff, at about 1500 feet MSL, the engine 'developed roughness and knocking noises.' The engine quit developing power while the airplane was over a residential area. During a forced landing to an 'unfinished' road, the airplane's right wing impacted a small pine tree, which spun the airplane around. The left wing struck another tree before the airplane came to a stop. Both wings were damaged, and the lower rear longeron in the fuselage was bent. Examination of the engine by an FAA inspector revealed that the engine crankshaft had fractured 'between the throws for the #1 and #2 rods.' The camshaft was also 'broken in half by the #1 throw.' Time since the last engine overhaul was 108.7 hours.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: loss of engine power due to failure of the crankshaft. A factor relating to the accident was: the lack of suitable terrain for the forced landing.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - MECH FAILURE/MALF  
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

### Findings

1. (C) ENGINE ASSEMBLY,CRANKSHAFT - FAILURE,TOTAL

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING  
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING  
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Occurrence #3: ON GROUND/WATER COLLISION WITH OBJECT  
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING

Findings

2. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - NONE SUITABLE
3. OBJECT - TREE(S)

## Factual Information

On March 26, 1997 at 1730 central standard time, a Piper PA-17, N4802H, registered to and operated by LR Air, Inc., was substantially damaged during a forced landing following a loss of engine power during flight near North Little Rock, Arkansas. The private pilot, sole occupant of the airplane, was not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the Title 14 CFR Part 91 local flight which originated from the North Little Rock Municipal Airport at 1700. A flight plan was not filed.

The pilot reported that, after takeoff from North Little Rock Airport, at about 1500 feet MSL, the engine "developed roughness and knocking noises." The engine quit developing power while the airplane was over a residential area. During the forced landing to an "unfinished" road, the airplane's right wing impacted a small pine tree, which spun the airplane around. The left wing struck another tree before the airplane came to a stop. Both wings were damaged, and the lower rear longeron in the fuselage was bent.

Examination of the engine by the FAA inspector revealed that the engine crankshaft had fractured "between the throws for the #1 and #2 rods." The camshaft was also "broken in half by the #1 throw." The time since the last engine overhaul was 108.7 hours.

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private	<b>Age:</b>	65, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land	<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-w/ waivers/lim	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	November 22, 1995
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	UNK	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	171 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Piper	<b>Registration:</b>	N4802H
<b>Model/Series:</b>	PA-17 PA-17	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	17-118
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tailwheel	<b>Seats:</b>	2
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	September 1, 1996 Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	1135 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>		<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>		<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Continental
<b>ELT:</b>	Not installed	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	A65-8
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	L R AIR, INC.	<b>Rated Power:</b>	65 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>	20 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	/	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	0°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>		<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	24°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	NO. LITTLE ROCK, AR (1M1 )	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>		<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	17:00 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>	
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>		<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Forced landing

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 None	<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 None	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	34.82983,-92.290138(est)

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Borson, Timothy
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	DALLAS BAKER; LITTLE ROCK , AR
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	January 30, 1998
<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=20183">https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=20183</a>

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