



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	NAPA, California	Accident Number:	LAX90LA206
Date & Time:	May 2, 1990, 07:40 Local	Registration:	N9112R
Aircraft:	Thunder and Colt AX9-140	Aircraft Damage:	None
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Serious, 4 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation		

Analysis

THE PILOT REPORTED THAT WHEN THE FLIGHT BEGAN, THE LOCAL SURFACE WIND WAS NOT OVER 3 MPH. HOWEVER, AS THE FLIGHT PROGRESSED, HE NOTED THAT THE WIND SPEED WAS INCREASING AND HE ELECTED TO TERMINATE THE FLIGHT. THE PILOT SAID THAT WHEN HE TOUCHED DOWN THE SURFACE WIND HAD INCREASED TO BETWEEN 8 AND 12 MPH. THE BALOON LANDED HARD, BOUNCED 30 TO 40 FEET UP IN THE AIR, AND THEN LANDED HARD AGAIN.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE PILOT'S IMPROPER FLARE TECHNIQUE WHICH RESULTED IN A HARD LANDING. A FACTOR IN THE ACCIDENT WAS THE SUDDEN APPEARANCE OF A HIGH WIND CONDITION.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER

Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - HIGH WIND
2. PRECAUTIONARY LANDING - ATTEMPTED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: HARD LANDING

Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

3. (C) FLARE - MISJUDGED - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (C) DESCENT - NOT CORRECTED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	32, 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):		Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	None None	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	661 hours (Total, all aircraft), 660 hours (Total, this make and model), 656 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 27 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 16 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Thunder and Colt	Registration:	N9112R
Model/Series:	AX9-140 AX9-140	Aircraft Category:	Balloon
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:		Serial Number:	996
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	0
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2506 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	0 Hrs	Engines:	Unknown
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	BALLOON AVIATION OF NAPA	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	20 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	0°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	21°C / 18°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	(NONE)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	07:25 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:		Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	0 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	0 ft / 0 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Precautionary landing

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	None
Passenger Injuries:	1 Serious, 3 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious, 4 None	Latitude, Longitude:	38.250816,-122.309494(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Rich, Jeff

Additional Participating Persons: DAVID SMITH; SACRAMENTO , CA

Original Publish Date: October 2, 1992

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=26830>

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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](#).