



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	SHAFTER, California	Accident Number:	LAX92LA299
Date & Time:	July 16, 1992, 09:30 Local	Registration:	N327PL
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-32R-301T	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Minor, 1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation		

Analysis

AFTER APPROXIMATELY FORTY MINUTES INTO THE FLIGHT AND WHILE THE AIRCRAFT WAS 8,000 FEET ABOVE THE TERRAIN, THE ENGINE FAILED AFTER THE PILOT CHANGED THE FUEL SELECTOR FROM THE RIGHT FUEL TANK TO THE LEFT FUEL TANK. THE PILOT AND CFI PASSENGER FAILED TO USE THE EMERGENCY CHECKLIST AND WERE UNABLE TO RESTART THE ENGINE. THE AIRCRAFT LANDED IN AN APPLE ORCHARD. THE WRECKAGE EXAMINATION DISCLOSED NO EVIDENCE OF ANY FUEL IN THE LEFT FUEL TANK. THE ENGINE OPERATED NORMALLY DURING THE WRECKAGE EXAMINATION.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE PIC'S POOR PREFLIGHT PLANNING AND THE PIC'S AND FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR/PASSENGER'S FAILURE TO USE THE EMERGENCY CHECKLIST. THE LOSS OF ENGINE POWER DUE TO FUEL STARVATION WAS A FACTOR IN THE ACCIDENT.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

1. (F) FLUID,FUEL - STARVATION
2. (C) PREFLIGHT PLANNING/PREPARATION - POOR - PILOT IN COMMAND

3. (C) EMERGENCY PROCEDURE - NOT FOLLOWED - PILOT IN COMMAND

4. (C) EMERGENCY PROCEDURE - NOT FOLLOWED - PILOT PASSENGER

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - EMERGENCY

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - EMERGENCY

Findings

5. OBJECT - TREE(S)

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	40, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Expired	Last FAA Medical Exam:	March 7, 1990
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	500 hours (Total, all aircraft), 150 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N327PL
Model/Series:	PA-32R-301T PA-32R-301	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	32R-8229011
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	7
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	March 1, 1992 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3600 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	20 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	1889 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, activated, aided in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	TIO-540-S1AD
Registered Owner:	BARRY ZELNER PROF. LAW FIRM	Rated Power:	300 Horsepower
Operator:	BARRY ZELNER PROF. LAW FIRM	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	
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	0°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	VAN NUYS , CA (VNY)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	VISALIA , CA (VIS)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	07:30 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:	Forced landing

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor, 1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor, 1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	35.539955,-118.910461(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Llorente, A.
Additional Participating Persons:	ASI THOMAS J. BENNETT; FRESNO , CA
Original Publish Date:	August 31, 1993
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=27688

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