



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	TEHACHAPI, California	Accident Number:	LAX94LA293
Date & Time:	July 19, 1994, 15:00 Local	Registration:	N38366
Aircraft:	Burkhart Grob G103	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Minor, 1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE PILOT PLANNED TO GIVE THE PASSENGER A DEMONSTRATION FLIGHT IN THE GLIDER. THE OPERATOR REPORTED THAT THE REAR PORTION OF THE GLIDER'S CANOPY OPENED UP DURING TAKEOFF. THE PILOT RELEASED THE TOW LINE AND THEN LANDED AHEAD ON THE REMAINING RUNWAY. AFTER TOUCHDOWN, THE GLIDER GROUND LOOPED AND THE EMPENNAGE SEPARATED FROM THE FUSELAGE. THE GLIDER'S CANOPY LATCHING MECHANISM WAS SUBSEQUENTLY EXAMINED BY AN AIRCRAFT MECHANIC. THE LATCHING MECHANISM WAS FOUND IN WORKING ORDER.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the pilot's failure to secure the canopy before takeoff, and his failure to maintain directional control during landing rollout.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - ON GROUND/WATER
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - ABORTED

Findings

1. (C) WINDOW,CANOPY - NOT SECURED
2. (C) PROCEDURES/DIRECTIVES - NOT FOLLOWED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. WINDOW,CANOPY - UNLATCHED
4. (C) DIRECTIONAL CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - ABORTED

Findings

5. GROUND LOOP/SWERVE - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

On July 19, 1994, at 1500 Pacific daylight time, a Grob G103, N38366, was substantially damaged during landing on runway 27R at the Mountain Valley Airport, Tehachapi, California. The commercial pilot was not injured during the demonstration flight, and the passenger received minor injuries. The flight was originating at the time of the accident.

The flight school's operator reported to the National Transportation Safety Board that the glider was being towed behind a Piper PA-25-235, N7092Z, when the rear portion of the glider's canopy opened up during takeoff. The glider pilot released the tow line and then landed ahead on the remaining runway. After touchdown, the glider ground looped and the empennage separated from the fuselage.

The flight school's operator further reported that during the pretakeoff ground check, the rear seated pilot was responsible for closing and locking his portion of the two-piece canopy.

The glider's canopy latching mechanism was subsequently examined by an aircraft mechanic. The latching mechanism was found in working order.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	67, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Rear
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Glider	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	June 21, 1994
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	636 hours (Total, all aircraft), 18 hours (Total, this make and model), 615 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 56 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 25 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Burkhart Grob	Registration:	N38366
Model/Series:	G103 G103	Aircraft Category:	Glider
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	3760
Landing Gear Type:	Hull	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	June 12, 1994 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1279 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	62 Hrs	Engines:	Unknown
Airframe Total Time:	3065 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	JOHN P. CHAPMAN	Rated Power:	
Operator:	SKYLARK NORTH	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	30 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	10 knots / 15 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	270°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	27°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	MOUNTAIN VALLEY, CA (L94)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	(L94)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	14:55 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	MOUNTAIN VALLEY L94	Runway Surface Type:	Gravel
Airport Elevation:	4220 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	27R	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	5190 ft / 60 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor, 1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	35.119194,-118.510292(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Pollack, Wayne
Additional Participating Persons:	JAMES FORD; VAN NUYS , CA
Original Publish Date:	March 27, 1995
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=28804

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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](#).