



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	OVERLAND PARK, Kansas	Accident Number:	MKC84LA182
Date & Time:	June 23, 1984, 19:30 Local	Registration:	N4070W
Aircraft:	BALLOON WORKS FIREFLY 7	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	3 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation		

Analysis

PRIOR TO A SIGHT-SEEING FLT, THE PLT ORBAINED A WX BRIEFING & RELEASED TEST BALLOONS TO CHECK THE WIND SPD & DRCTN. THE PREVAILING WIND WAS IN A SOUTHERLY DIRECTION AT ABOUT 8 KTS. THE PLT OF N4070W INITIATED HIS DEPARTURE FROM A SCHOOL YARD AFTER ANOTHER BALLOON TOOK OFF WITH NO DIFFICULTY. ACCORDING TO THE PLT, THE BALLOON LIFTED OFF & WAS PROCEEDING IN A SOUTHERLY DIRECTION WHEN IT ENCOUNTERED AN UNEXPECTED, UNFORCAST WIND GUST FROM THE WEST. HE STATED THAT THE WIND BLEW THE BALLOON TO THE ENE TOWARD AN ELECTRICAL POLE ABOUT 180 FT AWAY. HE WAS UNABLE TO CLEAR OVER THE POLE & VENTED THE BALLOON PRIOR TO IMPACT. THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE ELECTRICAL ARCING, THE SKIRT OF THE BALLOON IGNITED & THE OCCUPANTS RECEIVED MINOR BURNS FROM A SHOWER OF SPARKS. ONE BALLOON ATTACH CABLE WAS BURNED THRU.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - HIGH OBSTRUCTION(S)
2. (C) PLANNING/DECISION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - UNFAVORABLE WIND
4. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - GUSTS

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF

Findings

5. ABORTED TAKEOFF - INITIATED - PILOT IN COMMAND
6. (F) OBJECT - UTILITY POLE
7. (F) OBJECT - WIRE, TRANSMISSION

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Unknown None	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	200 hours (Total, all aircraft), 200 hours (Total, this make and model), 190 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	BALLOON WORKS	Registration:	N4070W
Model/Series:	FIREFLY 7 FIREFLY 7	Aircraft Category:	Balloon
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	10057
Landing Gear Type:		Seats:	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	January 11, 1984 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	900 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	4 Hrs	Engines:	Unknown
Airframe Total Time:	178 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	JOHN R. COLEMAN	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:	OJC ,1096 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	10 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	19:45 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	220°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 8000 ft AGL	Visibility	15 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	0°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	00:00 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:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	2 Minor	Aircraft Fire:	On-ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	38.960063,-94.740814(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Thorpe, Clint

Additional Participating Persons:

Original Publish Date:

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=33717>

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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](#).