



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	FACTORYVILLE, Pennsylvania	Accident Number:	NYC89LA196
Date & Time:	August 20, 1989, 16:35 Local	Registration:	N239
Aircraft:	RYAN ST-3KR	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE AIRLINE TRANSPORT RATED PILOT HAD WAITED OVER 1 HOUR FOR FUEL AND DECIDED HE HAD ENOUGH FUEL TO GET FROM TOWANDA, PA TO SEAMANS AIRPORT, PA, SO HE DID NOT REFUEL. SUBSEQUENTLY, THE ENGINE LOST POWER AND THE AIRCRAFT WAS LANDED IN A FIELD 1-1/2 TO 2 MILES FROM THE DESTINATION AIRPORT. DURING LANDING, THE AIRCRAFT HIT A DITCH & FLIPPED OVERON ITS BACK. AN ON-SITE INVESTIGATION REVEALED NO FUEL WAS REMAINING.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: INADEQUATE PREFLIGHT BY THE PILOT AND HIS MISJUDGEMENT OF THE FUEL SUPPLY, WHICH RESULTED IN FUEL EXHAUSTION. THE DITCH WAS A RELATED FACTOR.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - NONMECHANICAL

Phase of Operation: APPROACH

Findings

1. (C) AIRCRAFT PREFLIGHT - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (C) FLUID,FUEL - EXHAUSTION
3. (C) FUEL SUPPLY - MISJUDGED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - NORMAL

Findings

4. (C) FUEL SUPPLY - MISJUDGED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #3: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: LANDING

Findings

5. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - DITCH

Occurrence #4: NOSE OVER
Phase of Operation: LANDING

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport; Commercial; Flight instructor	Age:	40, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):		Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	May 23, 1989
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	11400 hours (Total, all aircraft), 190 hours (Total, this make and model), 3550 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 285 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 90 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	RYAN	Registration:	N239
Model/Series:	ST-3KR ST-3KR	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Aerobatic	Serial Number:	1325
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	May 1, 1989 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1885 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	20 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	2844 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	KINNER
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	R-56
Registered Owner:	RONALD H. GERTSEN	Rated Power:	160 Horsepower
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:	Scattered / 4500 ft AGL	Visibility	6 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Unknown	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	16 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	230°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	-18°C / -18°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	TOWANDA , PA (N27)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	FACTORYVILLE , PA (9N3)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	16:10 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	SEAMANS FIELD 9N3	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:	Forced landing

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	41.560497,-75.780494(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Densley, Reuben

Additional Participating Persons:

Original Publish Date: September 30, 1991

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=36463>

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

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](#).