



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	COLUMBIA, Connecticut	Accident Number:	NYC91FA174
Date & Time:	July 7, 1991, 23:05 Local	Registration:	N43ER
Aircraft:	GULFSTREAM AMERICAN AA5B	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	3 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE PILOT OF N43ER DID NOT RECEIVE A WEATHER BRIEFING PRIOR TO DEPARTURE. WITNESSES STATED THAT THERE WAS DENSE FOG THROUGHOUT THE AREA AT THE TIME OF THE ACCIDENT. N43ER WAS HEARD FLYING OVER SEVERAL HOMES AT A LOW ALTITUDE JUST BEFORE THE ACCIDENT. WITNESSES SAID THE ENGINE SOUNDED NORMAL WITH NO MALFUNCTIONS. THE PILOT WAS NOT INSTRUMENT RATED. HE HAD A TOTAL FLIGHT TIME OF 169 HOURS, WITH 8.5 HOURS AT NIGHT.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE DECISION OF THE PILOT TO CONTINUE FLIGHT INTO INSTRUMENT METEOROLOGICAL CONDITIONS, WHICH RESULTED IN AN IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TREES. FACTORS RELATED TO THE ACCIDENT WERE THE PILOT'S LACK OF INSTRUMENT FLIGHT EXPERIENCE, HIS OVERCONFIDENCE IN HIS ABILITY, AND HIS INADEQUATE PREFLIGHT PLANNING.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

Findings

1. WEATHER CONDITION - FOG
2. (F) PREFLIGHT PLANNING/PREPARATION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) OVERCONFIDENCE IN PERSONAL ABILITY - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (C) VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - CONTINUED - PILOT IN COMMAND
5. LACK OF TOTAL INSTRUMENT TIME - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: APPROACH - CIRCLING (IFR)

Findings

6. (C) OBJECT - TREE(S)

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	36, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	July 21, 1989
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	169 hours (Total, all aircraft), 124 hours (Total, this make and model), 139 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 16.2 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 9.1 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	GULFSTREAM AMERICAN	Registration:	N43ER
Model/Series:	AA5B AA5B	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:		Serial Number:	0907
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	January 2, 2000 Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2400 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-360-A4K
Registered Owner:	ROBERT O. MILLER	Rated Power:	180 Horsepower
Operator:	ROBERT O. MILLER	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument (IMC)	Condition of Light:	Night/dark
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	200 ft AGL	Visibility	1 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Unknown	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	0°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:	N/A - None - Fog		
Departure Point:	OLD BRIDGE , NJ (3N6)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	WINDHAM , CT (5BQ)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	21:45 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	WINDHAM 5BD	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	2 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Leonard, Charles
Additional Participating Persons:	BERT LABBE; WINDSOR LOCKS , CT
Original Publish Date:	May 27, 1993
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=36799

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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](#).