



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	HAMPTONVILLE, North Carolina	Accident Number:	MIA98LA128
Date & Time:	April 9, 1998, 16:08 Local	Registration:	N297B
Aircraft:	Schleicher ASW-19B	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

A witness observed the glider at about 200 feet, and the airspeed was described as slow. The glider was observed to make several 360-degree turns before the nose of the glider was observed to pitch straight down, and the glider disappeared from view below the tree line.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to maintain airspeed (VSO) while maneuvering at a low altitude.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

Findings

1. (C) AIRSPEED(VSO) - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. STALL - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Factual Information

On April 9, 1998, about 1608 eastern daylight time, a Schleicher ASW-19B, N297B, registered to Kenlett Inc., operating as a 14 CFR Part 91 personal flight, crashed while maneuvering in the vicinity of Hamptonville, North Carolina. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and no flight plan was filed. The glider sustained substantial damage. The private pilot was fatally injured. The flight originated from Swan Creek Airport, Jonesville, North Carolina, about 1 hour 52 minutes before the accident.

A witness stated he was standing in his front yard when he heard a whistling noise. He looked up and observed a glider at a low altitude, estimated at about 200 feet. The airspeed was described as extremely slow, and the glider was in a right descending turn. The glider made about three to four right 360-degree turns before the nose of the glider was observed to pitch straight down, and the glider disappeared from view below the tree line. He immediately went inside the house and called 911, informing the operator that a glider had crashed.

The wreckage of N297B was located about 5 to 6 miles southeast of Swan Creek Airport, Jonesville, North Carolina, in the vicinity of Interstate 77, between highway 421 and highway 21.

Examination of the crashsite revealed the glider collided with the ground in about a 30 degree nose down attitude in a northerly direction. The landing gear and bottom of the fuselage were severely damaged, and the tail section was separated forward of the vertical stabilizer. The glider traveled about 80 feet before coming to rest in a gully.

Examination of the airframe and flight control system revealed no evidence of a precrash mechanical failure or malfunction. Continuity of the flight controls was confirmed for pitch, roll, and yaw.

Postmortem examination of the pilot was conducted by Dr. Patrick L. Lantz, Director of Autopsy Services, Wake Forrest University, Baptist Medical Center, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, on April 11, 1998. The cause of death was multiple injuries. Postmortem toxicology of specimens from the pilot was performed by the Forensic Toxicology Research Section, Federal Aviation Administration, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. These studies were negative for ethanol, acidic, and neutral drugs. Lidocaine, 0.1 (ug/ml, ug/g), was detected in the blood. Morphine, 0.054 (ug/ml, ug/g), was detected in the blood, and 0.088 (ug/ml, ug/g) was detected in liver fluid.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	72, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Glider	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	April 6, 1996
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1650 hours (Total, all aircraft), 15 hours (Total, this make and model), 1443 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Schleicher	Registration:	N297B
Model/Series:	ASW-19B ASW-19B	Aircraft Category:	Glider
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	19376
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tailwheel	Seats:	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	September 27, 1997 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1000 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	14 Hrs	Engines:	Unknown
Airframe Total Time:	964 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	KENLETT INC.	Rated Power:	
Operator:	KENLETT INC.	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:	INT ,1100 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:	16:45 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	Visibility	20 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 10000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	15 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	260°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	23°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	JONESVILLE , NC (78A)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	14:16 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 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	36.109603,-80.809715(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Smith, Carrol
Additional Participating Persons:	GUIDO F HASSIG; WINSTON-SALEM , NC
Original Publish Date:	December 8, 1998
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=38494

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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](#).