



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	NEW CASTLE, Virginia	Accident Number:	NYC94LA081
Date & Time:	May 15, 1994, 14:30 Local	Registration:	N23BR
Aircraft:	Let SUPER BLANIK L-33	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE PILOT HAD LESS THAN 1 HOUR OF PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE IN THIS MAKE AND MODEL GLIDER. DURING THE INITIAL CLIMB, BETWEEN 100 AND 200 FEET ABOVE THE GROUND (AGL), TURBULENCE WAS ENCOUNTERED BY THE TOW PLANE AND THE GLIDER. DURING THE DOWNWIND CLIMB, AT APPROXIMATELY 400 FEET AGL, AND 300 FEET FROM THE EDGE OF THE RUNWAY, THE GLIDER PILOT RELEASED THE TOW. BEFORE REACHING THE END OF THE RUNWAY THE PILOT INITIATED A TURN ONTO THE BASE LEG AND CONTINUED THE TURN TO FINAL. THE PILOT ESTIMATED HIS SINK RATE ON FINAL AT 2600 FEET PER MINUTE. THE GLIDER LANDED SHORT OF THE RUNWAY, HIT TRACTOR RUTS, AND SKEWED ABOUT 80 DEGREES TO THE LEFT AND STOPPED SHORT OF THE RUNWAY. WITNESSES REPORTED THAT THEY OBSERVED THE GLIDER SPOILERS DEPLOYED, FROM BASE LEG TO LANDING.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE PILOT'S IMPROPER USE OF THE FLIGHT CONTROLS RESULTING IN FAILURE TO MAINTAIN A PROPER DESCENT RATE DURING THE APPROACH FOR LANDING. A FACTOR IN THIS ACCIDENT WAS THE PILOT'S LACK OF TOTAL EXPERIENCE IN THIS TYPE OF GLIDER.

Findings

Occurrence #1: UNDERSHOOT

Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - FINAL APPROACH

Findings

1. (C) FLIGHT CONTROLS - IMPROPER USE OF - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (C) PROPER DESCENT RATE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) LACK OF TOTAL EXPERIENCE IN TYPE OF AIRCRAFT - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - FINAL APPROACH

Findings

4. TERRAIN CONDITION - ROUGH/UNEVEN

Factual Information

On May 15, 1994, about 1430 eastern daylight time, a LET Blanik Glider, L-33, N23BR, piloted by Banner B. Brown, was substantially damaged while landing at the New Castle Airport, New Castle, Virginia. The pilot was not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed. A flight plan had not been filed for the flight operating under 14 CFR 91.

In the NTSB Form 6120.1/2, the pilot stated that the winds at the time of takeoff were from 190 degrees at 15 gusting to 20 knots. During the initial climb, at 100 feet above the ground (AGL), mild turbulence was encountered. At 200 feet AGL the turbulence increased. The pilot further stated:

"...About 250 feet AGL turned crosswind and continued turn downwind. Tow plane lost altitude rapidly and stabilized about 50 feet above trees...Towplane slowly gained altitude. Released about 100 yards from edge of field at 400 feet AGL...[I] turned right with slight pull up which coincided with downwind (north) pattern. Turned base just before end of runway...continued to turn final...Estimated sink on final at 30 knots [2600 feet per minute]. Hit at landing attitude...Hit deep tractor ruts and skewed about 80 degrees to the left and stopped about 100 feet from cut grass of runway..."

According to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Inspector's report, the pilot stated the glider had excessive altitude loss after turning onto the base leg. Witnesses stated to the FAA Inspector that the glider spoilers were deployed from the point the aircraft turned onto base leg to landing.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	60, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Front
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 3 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	September 8, 1993
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	260 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1 hours (Total, this make and model), 190 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 20 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 9 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Let	Registration:	N23BR
Model/Series:	SUPER BLANIK L-33 SUPER BLAN	Aircraft Category:	Glider
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Utility; Provisional (Special)	Serial Number:	940208
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	March 1, 1994 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	750 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	20 Hrs	Engines:	Unknown
Airframe Total Time:	20 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	BLUE RIDGE SOARING SOCIETY INC	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:	ROA ,1176 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	11 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	14:52 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	155°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 5000 ft AGL	Visibility	35 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 12000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	16 knots / 21 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	230°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	27°C / 17°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	14:25 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	NEW CASTLE VA85	Runway Surface Type:	Grass/turf
Airport Elevation:	1320 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry;Rough
Runway Used:	18	IFR Approach:	
Runway Length/Width:	2400 ft / 300 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full stop;Traffic pattern

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Pearce, Robert
Additional Participating Persons:	GEORGE C BUSH; RICHMOND , VA
Original Publish Date:	November 18, 1994
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=38752

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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](#).