



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	BOOTHBAY HARBOR, Maine	<b>Accident Number:</b>	NYC95LA216
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	September 3, 1995, 18:20 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N98503
<b>Aircraft:</b>	PIPER J-3	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Minor
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

## Analysis

While on final approach over water, the pilot was momentarily blinded by the glare of the sun, and its reflection from the water. The airplane descended and struck a berm about 4 feet high, about 200 feet from the approach end of the runway. The landing gear collapsed, and the airplane touched down on the runway, nosed over, and came to rest inverted.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the pilot's misjudgment of distance and altitude, while on final approach to land. Factors relating to the accident were: sun glare, and the pilot's lack of visual cues (visual perception).

## Findings

Occurrence #1: UNDERSHOOT  
Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - FINAL APPROACH

### Findings

1. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - SUNGLARE
2. (C) DISTANCE/ALTITUDE - MISJUDGED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) VISUAL/AURAL PERCEPTION - PILOT IN COMMAND

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Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - BASE LEG/BASE TO FINAL

Findings

4. TERRAIN CONDITION - DIRT BANK/RISING EMBANKMENT

## Factual Information

On September 3, 1995, at 1820 eastern daylight time, a Piper J-3, N98503, struck a berm while on final approach to a private airport in Boothbay Harbor, Maine. The airplane received substantial damage, and the private pilot received minor injuries. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and no flight plan had been filed for the personal flight which originated at Wiscasset, Maine, at 1805, and was conducted under 14 CFR Part 91.

In the NTSB Accident Report, the pilot stated:

...Approached the field over the water toward the west for my usual uphill landing. Airspeed 40 MPH set for landing. Less than 200 feet from the beginning of field, I was totally blinded by the sun...Landing gear hit bank (at beginning of airstrip) and plane nosed into the field, flipping plane onto its back....

The FAA Inspector reported that the airplane struck a bank about 4 feet high, and the landing gear collapsed.

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private	<b>Age:</b>	75, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Rear
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 3 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	February 26, 1994
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	No	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	1773 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1130 hours (Total, this make and model), 1745 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	PIPER	<b>Registration:</b>	N98503
<b>Model/Series:</b>	J-3 J-3	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	18707
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tailwheel	<b>Seats:</b>	2
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	January 28, 1995 Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	1220 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	20 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	2336 Hrs	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	CONTINENTAL
<b>ELT:</b>		<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	C-90-8F
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	JOHN F. ANDREWS	<b>Rated Power:</b>	90 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>		<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None
<b>Operator Does Business As:</b>		<b>Operator Designator Code:</b>	

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual (VMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>		<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Observation Time:</b>		<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Clear	<b>Visibility</b>	10 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	5 knots /	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	240°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>		<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	21°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	WISCASSETT , ME (9B9 )	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	(NONE)	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	18:05 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class G

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	DOVER ROADS AIRSTRIP NONE	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	Grass/turf
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>	20 ft msl	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	Dry
<b>Runway Used:</b>	27	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	None
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>	700 ft / 150 ft	<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Full stop;Straight-in

## Wreckage and Impact Information

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

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Hancock, Robert
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	DENNIS DELO; PORTLAND , ME
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	March 21, 1996
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class</a>
<b>Note:</b>	
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=39047">https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=39047</a>

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