



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	PIPERSVILLE, Pennsylvania	Accident Number:	NYC98LA097
Date & Time:	April 21, 1998, 14:20 Local	Registration:	N298BA
Aircraft:	Let L-23 SUPER BLANIK	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot had been soaring for approximately 2 hours when he lost sight of his intended landing site. As he lost altitude, he continued to slow the glider while looking for a field to land in. Just prior to touch down, he stalled the glider, which struck a tree, then hit the side of a barn before coming to rest up right.

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 an approach to an off-airport landing area, which resulted in a lack of airspeed and/or altitude to reach the intended landing area (undershoot), a stall or mush into tree(s), and collision with a barn.

Findings

Occurrence #1: UNDERSHOOT
Phase of Operation: APPROACH

Findings

1. PLANNED APPROACH - INITIATED - PILOT IN COMMAND
 2. (C) DISTANCE/ALTITUDE - MISJUDGED - PILOT IN COMMAND
 3. (C) AIRSPEED - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
 4. STALL/MUSH
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Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: APPROACH

Findings

5. (F) OBJECT - TREE(S)
6. (F) OBJECT - BUILDING(NONRESIDENTIAL)

Factual Information

On April 21, 1998, at 1420 eastern daylight time, a Let-23-23 (glider), N298BA, was substantially damaged during an off airport landing to a field near Pipersville, Pennsylvania. The certificated private pilot sustained serious injuries and the passenger received no injuries. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the personal flight that originated from Vansant Airport (9N1), Pipersville, Pennsylvania, approximately 1220. No flight plan was filed for the flight conducted under 14 CFR Part 91.

The pilot stated that he had been soaring for approximately 2 hours when he lost sight of Vansant Airport. He also stated, as he lost altitude, he continued to slow (the glider) while looking for a field to land in. Just prior to touch down, he stalled the glider, which struck a tree, and hit the side of a barn before coming to rest up right.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	71, 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:	None Unknown	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1200 hours (Total, all aircraft), 50 hours (Total, this make and model), 1000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 25 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 10 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Let	Registration:	N298BA
Model/Series:	L-23 SUPER BLANIK L-23 SUPER	Aircraft Category:	Glider
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	968215
Landing Gear Type:	Hull	Seats:	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	Unknown
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	DON J. SUMMA	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:	PHL	Distance from Accident Site:	30 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	13:51 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	355°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 7000 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 25000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	7 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	190°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	18°C / 7°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	ERWINNA , PA (9N1)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	12:00 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:	Precautionary landing

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	40.430625,-75.10028(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Muzio, David
Additional Participating Persons:	VIC GAZZOLO; ALLENTOWN , PA
Original Publish Date:	October 30, 1998
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=39555

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