



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

|                                |                                      |                         |             |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Location:</b>               | THOMASVILLE, Georgia                 | <b>Accident Number:</b> | ATL98LA110  |
| <b>Date &amp; Time:</b>        | August 10, 1998, 16:40 Local         | <b>Registration:</b>    | N96175      |
| <b>Aircraft:</b>               | Taylorcraft BC12-D                   | <b>Aircraft Damage:</b> | Substantial |
| <b>Defining Event:</b>         |                                      | <b>Injuries:</b>        | 1 None      |
| <b>Flight Conducted Under:</b> | Part 91: General aviation - Personal |                         |             |

## Analysis

According to the pilot, he was 2.5 hours into a 4 hour flight when he felt an urgent need to relieve himself. The pilot stated he decided to land on a road in a cultivated field. The pilot stated after landing, he noticed a post on the left side of the road and maneuvered to miss the post. During this maneuver, the airplane became airborne, and when it touched down a second time, the landing gear collapsed. According to the FAA inspector, the pilot stated he had to relieve himself, so he decided to land on an access road because he didn't see the airport. The pilot then stated that he didn't have enough clearance on the road, and decided to land in the field. The FAA inspector also stated the field was approximately 1 to 2 miles south of Thomasville Municipal Airport. According to the FAA, the airplane touched down on the edge of the field, crossed the access road, and came to rest in another field. When crossing the road, the right main landing gear was sheared off. As the airplane continued to roll, the lower third of the rudder and two fuselage longerons were bent.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's poor in-flight decision to attempt a forced landing in a field 2 miles from an airport, leading to an on-ground collision with rough terrain. A factor was the pilot's physiological need.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: FORCED LANDING  
Phase of Operation: LANDING

Findings

1. (C) IN-FLIGHT PLANNING/DECISION - POOR - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) PHYSIOLOGICAL CONDITION - PILOT IN COMMAND

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Occurrence #2: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings

3. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - ROUGH/UNEVEN

## Factual Information

On August 10, 1998, about 1640 eastern daylight time, a Taylorcraft BC12-D, N96175, made a forced landing in a field near Thomasville, Georgia. The personal flight was operated by the pilot under the provisions of Title 14 CFR Part 91 and visual flight rules. Visual meteorological conditions existed at the time of the accident, and no flight plan was filed. The commercial pilot was not injured, and the airplane was substantially damaged. The flight departed Ormond Beach, Florida at 1410.

According to the pilot, he was 2.5 hours into a 4-hour flight when he felt an urgent need to relieve himself. The pilot was flying at 1000 feet when he decided to land on a west-east road in a cultivated field. The pilot stated after landing, he noticed a post on the left side of the road and maneuvered to miss the post. During this maneuver, the airplane became airborne, and when it touched down a second time, the landing gear collapsed. The airplane came to rest 20 feet north of the road.

According to the FAA inspector, the airplane was unloaded prior to his arrival by the pilot and another individual who stated the airplane had two sleeping bags, two rolled foam mattresses, a tent, a backpack filled with pots and pans, a suitcase, canned food, two gallons of drinking water, a hunting rifle, fishing tackle, and two duffel bags filled with electronic equipment. A police officer reported the pilot stated he had to relieve himself, so he decided to land on an access road because he didn't see the airport. The pilot then stated he decided he didn't have enough clearance on the road, so he decided to land in the field. The FAA inspector also stated the field was approximately 1 to 2 miles south of Thomasville Municipal Airport. According to the FAA, the airplane touched down on the edge of the field, crossed the access road, and came to rest in another field. When crossing the road, the right main landing gear was sheared off. As the airplane continued to roll, the lower third of the rudder and two fuselage longerons were bent.

## Pilot Information

|                                  |   |  |               |
|----------------------------------|---|--|---------------|
| <b>Certificate:</b>              | Commercial  | <b>Age:</b>                              | 57, Male      |
| <b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>       | Single-engine land  | <b>Seat Occupied:</b>                    | Left          |
| <b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b> | None  | <b>Restraint Used:</b>                   |               |
| <b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>     | Airplane  | <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/<br>waivers/lim   | <b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>            | July 20, 1998 |
| <b>Occupational Pilot:</b>       | Yes   | <b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b> |               |
| <b>Flight Time:</b>              | 2400 hours (Total, all aircraft), 2100 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 10 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft) |  |               |

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

|                                      |                          |                                       |                 |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Aircraft Make:</b>                | Taylorcraft              | <b>Registration:</b>                  | N96175          |
| <b>Model/Series:</b>                 | BC12-D BC12-D            | <b>Aircraft Category:</b>             | Airplane        |
| <b>Year of Manufacture:</b>          |                          | <b>Amateur Built:</b>                 |                 |
| <b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>    | Normal                   | <b>Serial Number:</b>                 | 8475            |
| <b>Landing Gear Type:</b>            | Tailwheel                | <b>Seats:</b>                         | 2               |
| <b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b> | August 4, 1998 Annual    | <b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>       | 1200 lbs        |
| <b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>   | 4 Hrs                    | <b>Engines:</b>                       | 1 Reciprocating |
| <b>Airframe Total Time:</b>          | 1686 Hrs                 | <b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>           | Continental     |
| <b>ELT:</b>                          | Installed, not activated | <b>Engine Model/Series:</b>           | A65-12          |
| <b>Registered Owner:</b>             | JAN SPANGLER             | <b>Rated Power:</b>                   | 65 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> | TLH ,81 ft msl                   | <b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>         | 30 Nautical Miles |
| <b>Observation Time:</b>                | 15:52 Local                      | <b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>        | 210°              |
| <b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>          | Scattered / 9000 ft AGL          | <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>                  | 0°                               | <b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b> | /                 |
| <b>Altimeter Setting:</b>               | 29 inches Hg                     | <b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>               | 33°C / 22°C       |
| <b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>   | No Obscuration; No Precipitation |   |                   |
| <b>Departure Point:</b>                 | ORMOND BEACH , FL (OMN )         | <b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>           | None              |
| <b>Destination:</b>                     | HATTIESBURG , MS (PIB )          | <b>Type of Clearance:</b>                   | None              |
| <b>Departure Time:</b>                  | 14:10 Local                      | <b>Type of Airspace:</b>                    | Class G           |

## Airport Information

|                             |                               |                                  |                |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Airport:</b>             | THOMASVILLE MUNICIPAL A/P TVI | <b>Runway Surface Type:</b>      | Asphalt        |
| <b>Airport Elevation:</b>   | 264 ft msl                    | <b>Runway Surface Condition:</b> | Dry            |
| <b>Runway Used:</b>         | 14                            | <b>IFR Approach:</b>             | None           |
| <b>Runway Length/Width:</b> | 5000 ft / 150 ft              | <b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>     | Forced landing |

## Wreckage and Impact Information

|                            |        |                             |                           |
|----------------------------|--------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Crew Injuries:</b>      | 1 None | <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 None | <b>Latitude, Longitude:</b> | 30.830013,-83.970214(est) |

## Administrative Information

**Investigator In Charge (IIC):** Wilson, Butch

**Additional Participating Persons:** BOB WEST;  
REGAN H CAMPBELL;

**Original Publish Date:** May 19, 1999

**Last Revision Date:**

**Investigation Class:** [Class](#)

**Note:**

**Investigation Docket:** <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=43647>

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

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