



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	RIO VISTA, California	Accident Number:	LAX98LA266
Date & Time:	August 16, 1998, 12:45 Local	Registration:	N1540A
Aircraft:	Piper PA-20	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot reported the wind condition as variable and gusty. On the landing rollout he was unable to maintain directional control of the aircraft. The aircraft came to rest inverted after standing vertically on its nose.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: Failure of the pilot to adequately compensate for the existing wind condition and maintain directional control on rollout.

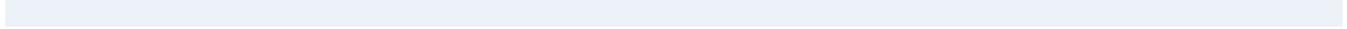
Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - ON GROUND/WATER
Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings

1. WEATHER CONDITION - GUSTS
2. (C) DIRECTIONAL CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) COMPENSATION FOR WIND CONDITIONS - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. GROUND LOOP/SWERVE - NOT CORRECTED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: NOSE OVER
Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL



Factual Information

On August 16, 1998, at 1245 hours Pacific daylight time, a Piper PA-20, N1540A, veered off runway 25 after landing and came to rest inverted at the Rio Vista, California, airport. The aircraft, operated under 14 CFR Part 91, sustained substantial damage. The airline transport rated pilot/owner, the sole occupant, was not injured. Visual meteorological conditions existed for the personal flight that originated from the Reno, Nevada, airport at 1120 on the morning of the accident, and no flight plan was filed.

The pilot reported the wind condition as variable and "gusty." After touchdown, a gust of wind pushed the aircraft sideways, and he was unable to control the aircraft. When it hit the dirt beside the runway, the aircraft "tipped up on its nose, then very slowly fell over on its back."

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport; Flight engineer; Flight instructor	Age:	55, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane single-engine; Instrument airplane	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	August 10, 1998
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	12292 hours (Total, all aircraft), 270 hours (Total, this make and model), 8823 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 267 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 97 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N1540A
Model/Series:	PA-20 PA-20	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	20-748
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	April 24, 1998 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1950 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	86 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3546 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-290-D2
Registered Owner:	TIM B. WHITNEY	Rated Power:	135 Horsepower
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:	SUU ,62 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	25 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	11:55 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	55°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	25 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	12 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	250°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	24°C / 12°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	RENO , NV (RNO)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	(O88)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	11:25 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	RIO VISTA 088	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	20 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	25	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	4200 ft / 75 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full stop

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:	38.180473,-121.730049(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Cornejo, Tealeye
Additional Participating Persons:	RICHARD CONTE; SACRAMENTO , CA
Original Publish Date:	June 22, 2000
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=43730

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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](#).