Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	MCCALL, Idaho	**Accident Number:**	SEA99LA009
Date & Time:	October 23, 1998, 17:00 Local	**Registration:**	N144JS
Aircraft:	Pitts S-1	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Defining Event:		**Injuries:**	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

Upon return to the airport after a local flight, the pilot-in-command ascertained that the single north/south runway was closed. He then initiated an approach to the 50-foot wide asphalt parallel taxiway which had been NOTAM'ed by airport management as the alternate landing runway during runway closure. The pilot touched down short of the 1,200 foot displaced threshold of the landing taxiway and rolled over a hump during which the aircraft bounced. The pilot then lost directional control and the aircraft rolled off the taxiway into a drainage ditch alongside the taxiway, coming to rest in a nose-over attitude. The displacement to the taxiway threshold (upwind of the hump) was reported by the FBO to consist of plywood which had not been painted in a conspicuous color and was placed in the grass alongside the taxiway at the intended displacement location.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot-in-command's failure to maintain directional control. Contributing factors were the uneven taxiway, inadequate airport maintenance (temporary threshold marking) by the airport management, and a ditch alongside the taxiway.

Findings

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

Findings
1. (F) AIRPORT FACILITIES,RUNWAY/LANDING AREA CONDITION - ROUGH/UNEVEN
2. (C) DIRECTIONAL CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) OTHER AIRPORT/RUNWAY MAINTENANCE - INADEQUATE - AIRPORT PERSONNEL

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

Findings
4. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - DITCH

Factual Information

On October 23, 1998, approximately 1700 mountain daylight time, a Pitts S-1, N144JS, registered to and being flown by a private pilot, was substantially damaged during a loss of control on landing at the McCall airport, McCall, Idaho. The pilot was uninjured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and no flight plan had been filed. The flight, which was personal, was to have been operated under 14CFR91, and originated from McCall approximately 1610.

The pilot, interviewed by an inspector from the Federal Aviation Administration's Boise Flight Standards District office, reported that he taxied out and departed on runway 34 after determining it was clear, flew a short while and then returned to land. He further reported to the inspector that "on downwind to 34 he saw the large white X on the runway. He did a fly-by to evaluate the runway/taxiway and vacillated on weather [sic] to land on the runway or taxiway. There was no wind and weather was not a factor. He elected to land on the taxiway headed toward the north. As he approached and began the flair [sic] he lost sight over the nose of the aircraft and transitioned to looking out the left side (this is normal operation of a Pitts). All he could see was the grass of the infield, not having the edge of the taxiway to follow he feels this is why he lost directional control. He stated he bounced on landing, further complicating the situation. The right wheel went off the taxiway and the aircraft veered right and went into the drainage ditch ending up on its nose." (Refer to ATTACHMENT FAA-I).

The pilot provided a schematic showing where he touched down on the taxiway. This schematic showed the touchdown point approximately 500 feet north of the south end of the parallel taxiway (refer to DIAGRAM I). The pilot also reported on NTSB Form 6120.1/2 that the aircraft suffered no mechanical malfunction or failure at the time of the accident.

According to the current US Government Flight Information Publication, the McCall airport is equipped with a single north/south asphalt runway (16/34) which measures 6,126 feet in length and 75 feet in width. A single, parallel asphalt taxiway of about the same length and 50 feet in width exists slightly east of the runway.

The airport manager reported that he had "NOTAM-ed the runway closed Oct. 20th (refer to ATTACHMENT N-I) and advised pilots to operate on the parallel taxiway (which had been marked as a runway in its own right prior to this summer) as long as they did not require more than 4,962 feet of runway. There is a hump in the pavement at an exit taxiway intersection 1,200 feet from the south end (refer to DIAGRAM I), so I had placed temporary displaced threshold markings in the grass next to the parallel taxiway and advised pilots to land north of that point" (refer to ATTACHMENT AM-I and ATTACHMENT AM-II).

In a telephone conversation with the Fixed Based Operator (FBO), he reported that frequent

miscommunications existed during the construction phase between the FBO (UNICOM operator) and airport management. This resulted in the FBO occasionally providing contradictory information as to the availability of runway 16/34 versus the parallel taxiway for operations. Additionally, he reported that the displacement at the south end of the parallel taxiway was poorly marked. This marking consisted of plywood which had not been painted in a conspicuous color and was placed in the grass alongside the taxiway at the intended displacement location.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	**Age:**	67,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	**Seat Occupied:**	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	**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:**	December 3, 1997
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	**Last Flight Review or Equivalent:**	
Flight Time:	2261 hours (Total, all aircraft), 680 hours (Total, this make and model), 62 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 20 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Pitts	**Registration:**	N144JS
Model/Series:	S-1 S-1	**Aircraft Category:**	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		**Amateur Built:**	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental (Special)	**Serial Number:**	1144
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	**Seats:**	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	July 1, 1998 Unknown	**Certified Max Gross Wt.:**	1100 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	23 Hrs	**Engines:**	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	325 Hrs	**Engine Manufacturer:**	Lycoming
ELT:		**Engine Model/Series:**	HIO-360
Registered Owner:	PIGOTT, LEO, W.	**Rated Power:**	205 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:	MYL ,5020 ft msl	**Distance from Accident Site:**	
Observation Time:	16:26 Local	**Direction from Accident Site:**	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	**Visibility**	1.5 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	**Visibility (RVR):**	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	**Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:**	/
Wind Direction:	300°	**Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:**	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	**Temperature/Dew Point:**	13°C / 4°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	N/A - None - Haze		
Departure Point:	(MYL)	**Type of Flight Plan Filed:**	None
Destination:		**Type of Clearance:**	None
Departure Time:	16:10 Local	**Type of Airspace:**	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	MCCALL MYL	**Runway Surface Type:**	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	5020 ft msl	**Runway Surface Condition:**	Dry
Runway Used:	34	**IFR Approach:**	None
Runway Length/Width:	4962 ft / 50 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):	Mccreary, Steven
Additional Participating Persons:	CLIFFORD SMART; BOISE , ID
Original Publish Date:	January 11, 2000
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=45253