



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	TUPELO, Mississippi	Accident Number:	ATL99LA043
Date & Time:	January 13, 1999, 10:30 Local	Registration:	N721NT
Aircraft:	Trohoski VARI-EZE	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot stated, on final approach at 10 to 15 feet AGL and performing the landing flare, a gust of wind caught the airplane causing it to pitch up 30 to 40 degrees. The pilot overcorrected the airplane and collided with the runway. Inspection of the airplane by a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector noted, no mechanical discrepancies and both engine and flight control continuity was established. The airplane sustained substantial damage and the pilot received minor injuries. During a review of the aircraft records by the FAA, the last annual inspection recorded was June 6, 1987. The aircraft was operated with no airworthiness certificate, no registration certificate, no conditional inspection, nor did the pilot have a current flight review. The pilot had not flown since 1994.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's improper flare and compensation for wind conditions upon landing. Factors in the accident were the pilot's inadequate recurrent training and lack of experience with the airplane.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: LANDING

Findings

1. (C) FLARE - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND

2. (F) INADEQUATE RECURRENT TRAINING - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) COMPENSATION FOR WIND CONDITIONS - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (F) LACK OF FAMILIARITY WITH AIRCRAFT - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

On January 13, 1999, at 1030 central standard time, an experimental amateur built Trohoski Vari-eze, N721NT, nosed over at Tupelo Municipal Airport in Tupelo, Mississippi. The airplane was operated by the certificated, non-current owner/private pilot under the provisions of Title 14 CFR 91, and visual flight rules. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and no flight plan was filed for the local pleasure flight. The pilot received minor injuries, and the airplane sustained substantial damage. The airplane departed Tupelo Municipal Airport, Tupelo, Mississippi, at 1026.

The pilot stated, on final approach at 10 to 15 feet AGL and performing the landing flare, a gust of wind caught the airplane causing it to pitch up 30 to 40 degrees. The pilot believes he overcorrected and drove the airplane into the runway.

According to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector who visited the site, no mechanical discrepancies were noted with the aircraft and both engine and flight control continuity was established. The nose gear and main landing gear were sheared off. Damage was noted to the wooden spar in the main wing and the leading canard wing was broken off. During a review of the aircraft records by the FAA, the last annual inspection recorded was June 6, 1987. The aircraft was operated with no airworthiness certificate, no registration certificate, no conditional inspection, nor did the pilot have a current flight review. The pilot had not flown since 1994.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	59, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	January 13, 1999
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1200 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Trohoski	Registration:	N721NT
Model/Series:	VARI-EZE VARI-EZE	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental (Special)	Serial Number:	731
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	June 6, 1987 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1050 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	O-200-A
Registered Owner:	DAN M. GIBSON	Rated Power:	100 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:	TUP ,349 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:	10:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 4000 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 11000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	13 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	180°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	17°C / 11°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	TUPELO , MS (TUP)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	(TUP)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	10:26 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class D

Airport Information

Airport:	TUPELO MUNICIPAL TUP	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	346 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	18	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	6500 ft / 100 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Traffic pattern

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Wilson, Butch

Additional Participating Persons: MELVIN ATHEY;
SCOTT M GRABON;

Original Publish Date: April 25, 2001

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=45651>

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.

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](#).