Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	BELGRADE, Montana	**Accident Number:**	SEA99LA087
Date & Time:	June 17, 1999, 11:45 Local	**Registration:**	N70741
Aircraft:	Let L-13	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Defining Event:		**Injuries:**	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Instructional		

Analysis

After performing two 360 degree turns on base leg before turning final due to traffic which had not cleared the runway, the glider was cleared to land. Ground control asked him to immediately remove the glider off the north side of the runway upon rolling out. The student was flying the glider at that time. The tow pilot entered the runway in front of the glider and motioned to turn the glider off the runway. The glider flight instructor said that he started to give instructions to the student to put the left wing down to start the turn, but realized they were going too fast to safely make a turn without hitting the tow pilot. The instructor took the controls and tried to make a right turn away from the tow pilot and tow plane, but toward the runway. The wing tip of the glider struck the prop of the tow plane and caused damage to the underside of the glider's wing. The tow pilot noted that he assumed the tower would have told the glider pilot the same instructions he had received. He said he expected the glider pilot to be prepared for his hand signals directing him off of the runway. The tow pilot believed that, not having been briefed by the tower, the glider was landed longer and faster than usual to fit the flight instruction that the student required. The instructor said that while the instructions from the tower were distracting and caused the glider to be low on final, ' I think the communication to the tow pilot (and not the glider) caused the tow pilot to enter the runway and caused the evasive maneuver that contributed to the accident. Despite the confusion a safe landing was underway until that time; I should have rolled out straight ahead and made the tow pilot jump clear and then the collision would have never occurred.'

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 clearance from a parked airplane during his attempt to avoid a person on the runway.

Findings

Occurrence #1: ON GROUND/WATER COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings
1. OBJECT - OTHER PERSON
2. EVASIVE MANEUVER - ATTEMPTED - PILOT IN COMMAND(CFI)
3. (C) ALTITUDE/CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND(CFI)

Factual Information

On June 17, 1999, approximately 1145 mountain daylight time, a LET 13 (Blanik) glider, N70741, was substantially damaged during landing on runway 12 (sod) at Belgrade, Montana. The certificated flight instructor and his dual student were uninjured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident. The flight had departed Belgrade airport (towed by an airplane) about fifteen minutes before the accident.

The flight instructor stated that the glider was cleared to land on the sod runway 12 at midfield left downwind. "After turning base, just before turning to final, the tower asked the glider to execute a 360 degree turn due to a Tomahawk that had been cleared to land runway 30. After the 360 the tower asked the glider to execute another 360 degree turn due to the Tomahawk still taxiing on 30. I took control of the glider on the second turn around because the student was uncomfortable with the situation and the low altitude. I asked the student (one radio in front) to call the tower and confirm 'cleared to land' and the tower would not answer back until the Tomahawk had cleared the runway. Finally, cleared to land again I got the student set up on low final and gave the plane back to the student and began a demonstration of ground effect to stretch the landing (wanting to get the glider near the other end of the runway for the tow off of runway 30 sod). Sometime during the pattern the tower had asked the tow plane pilot to switch to ground frequency and asked him to immediately remove the glider off the north side of the runway upon rolling out (student flying the plane). The tow pilot entered the runway in front of the glider and motioned to turn the glider off the runway. I started to give instructions to the student to put the left wing down to start the turn and realized we were going too fast to safely make a turn without hitting the tow pilot. So I again took control of the glider and tried to make a right turn (away from the tow pilot and tow plane but toward the 30 runway). I got the left wing over the tow pilot and over most of the tow plane (which was parked off the north edge of the runway). But the wing tip of the glider struck the prop of the tow plane and caused damage to the underside of the glider's wing. While the instructions from the tower were distracting and caused the glider to be low on final, I think the communication to the tow pilot (and not the glider) caused the tow pilot to enter the runway and caused the evasive maneuver that contributed to the accident. Despite the confusion a safe landing was underway until that time; I should have rolled out straight ahead and made the tow pilot jump clear and then the collision would have never occurred."

The tow plane pilot stated that after releasing the glider at 3000 feet, "I returned and landed on 12 sod and was instructed to contact Ground control on 121.8 after parking.

"After parking in the same runup area I shut down and contacted ground control. The controller instructed me to have the glider pull off the runway to the spot I was parked. He said he could not use the main runway with the glider on 12/30 sod. With the tow plane in the runup area I was unsure where he wanted us to put the glider. After asking, he said anywhere

that was as far off the runway as the tow plane. From this point on I was out of the tow plane and away from the radio.

"After the glider came in to land, I stood by the wing tip of the tow plane. I assumed the tower would have told the glider pilot the same instructions he gave me. Therefore, I expected the glider pilot to be prepared for my hand signals directing him off of the runway. However not having been briefed by the tower, he landed longer and faster than usual to fit the flight instruction that his student required.

"Seeing my signal, the glider pilot attempted to comply and began a turn toward the side of the runway. Realizing he was too fast to make the turn he changed his mind, reversed his turn back to the runway. By this point he was also too fast to make this turn without hitting the tow plane. He attempted to raise the glider's wing over the tow plane. However, the prop was too high and was struck by the glider's wing."

On contact with the tow plane's propeller, the glider received damage on the left leading edge and aileron.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	**Age:**	52,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	**Seat Occupied:**	Rear
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Glider	**Restraint Used:**	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	**Second Pilot Present:**	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	Glider	**Toxicology Performed:**	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim	**Last FAA Medical Exam:**	June 30, 1998
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	**Last Flight Review or Equivalent:**	
Flight Time:	2015 hours (Total, all aircraft), 97 hours (Total, this make and model), 80 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 31 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Let	**Registration:**	N70741
Model/Series:	L-13 L-13	**Aircraft Category:**	Glider
Year of Manufacture:		**Amateur Built:**	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	**Serial Number:**	27341
Landing Gear Type:		**Seats:**	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Annual	**Certified Max Gross Wt.:**	1103 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		**Engines:**	Unknown
Airframe Total Time:		**Engine Manufacturer:**	
ELT:	Not installed	**Engine Model/Series:**	
Registered Owner:	BIG SKY SOARING	**Rated Power:**	
Operator:	SUNBIRD AVIATION, INC	**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:		**Distance from Accident Site:**	
Observation Time:		**Direction from Accident Site:**	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	**Visibility**	6 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	**Visibility (RVR):**	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	**Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:**	/
Wind Direction:	0°	**Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:**	/
Altimeter Setting:		**Temperature/Dew Point:**	21°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	(BZN)	**Type of Flight Plan Filed:**	None
Destination:		**Type of Clearance:**	
Departure Time:	11:30 Local	**Type of Airspace:**	Class C

Airport Information

Airport:	GALLATIN FIELD BZN	**Runway Surface Type:**	Grass/turf
Airport Elevation:	4462 ft msl	**Runway Surface Condition:**	Dry
Runway Used:	12	**IFR Approach:**	None
Runway Length/Width:	4000 ft / 200 ft	**VFR Approach/Landing:**	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	2 None	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		**Aircraft Fire:**	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	**Aircraft Explosion:**	None
Total Injuries:	2 None	**Latitude, Longitude:**	45.810028,-111.150787(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Stockhill, Michael
Additional Participating Persons:	JIM KIRBY;
Original Publish Date:	August 3, 2000
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=46648

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