



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	SITKA, Alaska	Accident Number:	ANC99LA089
Date & Time:	July 3, 1999, 16:35 Local	Registration:	N3579V
Aircraft:	Cessna 140	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The certificated private pilot was practicing touch and go landings in a tail wheel equipped airplane. During the landing roll, a 90 degree crosswind from the left lifted the left wing. The pilot applied left aileron, and right rudder, but the tail of the airplane began to veer to the right, turning the nose of the airplane to the left. The airplane ground looped to the left, and the right wing struck the runway surface. The airplane received damage to the right wing spar, and the right gear attach point. The pilot had accrued 86 hours total time, with 33.2 hours as pilot-in-command, and 31.2 hours in the accident airplane make and model.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's inadequate compensation for crosswind conditions. Factors in the accident were a crosswind, and the pilot's lack of total experience in the type of airplane.

Findings

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

Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - CROSSWIND
2. (C) COMPENSATION FOR WIND CONDITIONS - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) LACK OF TOTAL EXPERIENCE IN TYPE OF AIRCRAFT - PILOT IN COMMAND



Factual Information

On July 3, 1999, about 1635 Alaska daylight time, a wheel equipped Cessna 140 airplane, N3579V, sustained substantial damage while landing at the Sitka Airport, Sitka, Alaska. The airplane was being operated as a visual flight rules (VFR) local area personal flight when the accident occurred. The airplane was operated by the pilot. The certificated private pilot, the sole occupant, was not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed. The flight originated from the Sitka Airport about 1620.

During a telephone conversation with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigator-in-charge (IIC), on July 3, 1999, the pilot reported he was practicing touch and go landings on runway 29. During the landing roll, the pilot said a 90 degree crosswind from the left lifted the left wing. He applied left aileron, and right rudder, but the tail of the airplane began to veer to the right, turning the nose of the airplane to the left. The airplane ground looped to the left, and the right wing struck the runway surface.

At 1648, an Aviation Routine Weather Report (METAR) from Sitka was reporting, in part: Wind, 205 degrees (magnetic) at 5 knots; visibility, 10 statute miles; clouds and sky condition, clear; temperature, 57 degrees F; dew point, 52 degrees F; altimeter, 29.81 inHg.

On July 9, 1999, the pilot notified the IIC that an inspection of the airplane revealed damage to the right wing spar, and the right gear attach point.

In the Pilot/Operator report (NTSB form 6120.1/2) submitted by the pilot, the pilot listed his aeronautical experience. He indicated he accrued 86 hours total time, with 33.2 hours as pilot-in-command, and 31.2 hours in the accident airplane make and model.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	56, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
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:	January 23, 1998
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	86 hours (Total, all aircraft), 31 hours (Total, this make and model), 33 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 33 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N3579V
Model/Series:	140 140	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	14748
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1450 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	C-90-12-F
Registered Owner:	LITTLE T. SMOTHERMAN	Rated Power:	90 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:	PAS ,21 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:	16:48 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	205°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	14°C / 11°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	(PASI)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	16:20 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	SITKA PASI	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	21 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	29	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	6500 ft / 150 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Touch and go

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:	56.729064,-135.000366(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Erickson, Scott
Additional Participating Persons:	JAMES MC COY (FAA); JUNEAU , AK
Original Publish Date:	August 3, 2000
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=46772

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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](#).