



AVIATION



HIGHWAY



MARINE



RAILROAD



PIPELINE

# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	ANN ARBOR, Michigan	<b>Accident Number:</b>	CHI99LA339
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	September 12, 1999, 13:27 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N1137L
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Lake LA-4	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Serious
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

## Analysis

The pilot told police he was going to practice a touch and go landing on the lake. He said that on touchdown the airplane decelerated as if 'the brakes were locked,' and the airplane cartwheeled. The pilot did not indicate any mechanical problem with the airplane. Subsequent to the accident an examination of the wreckage was conducted. The inspector said the airplane was broken into three major pieces. He said his examination of the wreckage failed to reveal any pre-impact anomalies. He said landing gear was in the retracted position. He said that when he talked to police authorities they told him, 'According to witnesses [the pilot] was attempting a landing on Bruin Lake when he lost control of the aircraft. One of the sponsons hit the water causing the aircraft to flip.'

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's improper touchdown during a water landing.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: DRAGGED WING, ROTOR, POD, FLOAT OR TAIL/SKID  
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

### Findings

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



## Factual Information

On September 12, 1999, at 1327 eastern daylight time, a Lake LA-4, N1137L, sustained substantial damage during a landing on Bruin Lake, about 18 miles northwest of Ann Arbor, Michigan. The airline transport rated pilot received serious injuries. The personal 14 CFR Part 91 flight was operating in visual meteorological conditions. No flight plan was on file. The local flight departed Pontiac, Michigan, about 1300.

The pilot told police authorities that he was going to practice a touch and go landing on the lake. He said that on touchdown the airplane decelerated as if "the brakes were locked." The pilot said he did not know what caused the accident. The pilot did not indicate any mechanical problem with the airplane.

Subsequent to the accident an examination of the wreckage was conducted. The Federal Aviation Administration inspector said the airplane was broken into three major pieces and was recovered from the lake the day following the accident. He said his examination of the wreckage failed to reveal any pre-impact anomalies. He said landing gear was in the retracted position. He said that when he talked to police authorities they told him, "According to witnesses [the pilot] was attempting a landing on Bruin Lake when he lost control of the aircraft. One of the sponsons hit the water causing the aircraft to flip."

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Airline transport; Flight instructor	<b>Age:</b>	55, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	Airplane single-engine; Instrument airplane	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 1 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	October 16, 1998
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	UNK	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	3254 hours (Total, all aircraft), 65 hours (Total, this make and model), 3129 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 28 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Lake	<b>Registration:</b>	N1137L
<b>Model/Series:</b>	LA-4 LA-4	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	299
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Amphibian	<b>Seats:</b>	4
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	August 24, 1999 Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	2400 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	3 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	1900 Hrs	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Lycoming
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	O-360-A1A
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	FRANCIS B. MCLAUGHLIN	<b>Rated Power:</b>	180 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>		<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None
<b>Operator Does Business As:</b>		<b>Operator Designator Code:</b>	

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual (VMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	ARB ,839 ft msl	<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	18 Nautical Miles
<b>Observation Time:</b>	13:53 Local	<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	150°
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Clear	<b>Visibility</b>	
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	11 knots / None	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	210°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	29 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	28°C / 9°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	PONTIAC (PTK )	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	(NONE)	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	13:00 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class G

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>		<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	Water
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>		<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	
<b>Runway Used:</b>	0	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	None
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>		<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Touch and go

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 Serious	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>		<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	1 Serious	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	

## Administrative Information

**Investigator In Charge (IIC):** Wilson, Stephen

**Additional Participating Persons:** TED ORR; BELLEVILLE , MI

**Original Publish Date:** January 18, 2001

**Last Revision Date:**

**Investigation Class:** [Class](#)

**Note:**

**Investigation Docket:** <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=47300>

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