



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	WELLINGTON, Ohio	Accident Number:	NYC00LA135
Date & Time:	May 13, 2000, 14:55 Local	Registration:	N3872G
Aircraft:	Burkhart Grob G103	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot was in a glider being towed by an airplane. After takeoff, about 50 feet above the ground, the rear canopy of the glider 'banged' open. The pilot decided to abort the climb in an attempt to prevent canopy damage. He released from tow, and tried to land on the remaining runway. The pilot added that during the attempt, he lost control of the glider, and impacted terrain.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to maintain aircraft control. A factor was the pilot's improper in-flight decision to abort the initial climb due to an open canopy.

Findings

Occurrence #1: MISCELLANEOUS/OTHER
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. WINDOW, CANOPY - OPEN
2. (F) IN-FLIGHT PLANNING/DECISION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) AIRCRAFT CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT

Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING AFTER TAKEOFF

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - EMERGENCY

Factual Information

On May 13, 2000, about 1455 Eastern Daylight Time, a Grob G103 (glider), N3872G, was substantially damaged during an aborted climb-out from Botsford Airport (67D), Wellington, Ohio. The certificated private pilot was not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and no flight plan was filed for the local personal flight conducted under 14 CFR Part 91.

The glider was departing Runway 18, a 2,700 foot long and 300 foot wide grass runway. The pilot stated that the glider was being towed by an airplane. About 50 feet above the ground, the rear canopy "banged" opened, and the pilot decided to abort the climb in an attempt to prevent canopy damage. He released from tow, and tried to land on the remaining runway. During the attempt, he lost control of the glider, it "came down flat," and impacted terrain. The glider came to rest off the right side of the runway, abeam the departure end.

Examination of the wreckage by a Federal Aviation Administration inspector did not reveal any pre-impact mechanical malfunctions, nor did the pilot report any.

At 1453, the reported winds at an airport approximately 10 miles from the accident site, were from 270 degrees at 16 knots, gusting to 24 knots.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	74, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Glider	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	None Unknown	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	2149 hours (Total, all aircraft), 100 hours (Total, this make and model), 2000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 10 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Burkhart Grob	Registration:	N3872G
Model/Series:	G103 G103	Aircraft Category:	Glider
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	3777
Landing Gear Type:	Ski/wheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	April 18, 2000 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1280 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	3 Hrs	Engines:	Unknown
Airframe Total Time:	2239 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	FUN COUNTRY SOARING INC.	Rated Power:	
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:	LPR, 793 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	10 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	14:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	10°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 7000 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	16 knots / 24 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	270°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	22°C / 5°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	(67D)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	14:55 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	BOTSFORD AIRFIELD 67D	Runway Surface Type:	Grass/turf
Airport Elevation:	786 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	18	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	2700 ft / 300 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Precautionary landing

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:	41.160121,-82.220069(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Gretz, Robert
Additional Participating Persons:	TIM LETT; CLEVELAND , OH
Original Publish Date:	November 29, 2000
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	The NTSB traveled to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=49192

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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](#).