



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	CHESWOLD, Delaware	Accident Number:	NYC00LA167
Date & Time:	June 18, 2000, 10:50 Local	Registration:	N407DS
Aircraft:	Piper PA-38	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Instructional		

Analysis

The airplane was on the final approach segment of a visual pattern, with the student pilot at the controls. The student reduced power, the airspeed bled off, and airplane began to sink. The instructor told the student to watch his airspeed, but no corrective action was taken. When the airplane was about 200 feet above the ground, the instructor initiated a go-around. The instructor felt the student push forward on the controls, while the instructor was trying to pull aft and add power. The airplane's left main landing gear became entangled in tall grass and brush. The airplane then yawed left, and impacted the ground. It skidded sideways, and came to rest 20 to 30 feet prior to the runway threshold.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The instructor's delayed remedial action. Factors included the instructor's failure to take positive control of the airplane, and the student's failure to maintain adequate airspeed during the approach.

Findings

Occurrence #1: UNDERSHOOT
Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - FINAL APPROACH

Findings

1. (C) REMEDIAL ACTION - DELAYED - PILOT IN COMMAND(CFI)

2. (F) INSTRUCTIONS, WRITTEN/VERBAL - NOT ISSUED - PILOT IN COMMAND(CFI)
3. (F) AIRSPEED - NOT MAINTAINED - DUAL STUDENT

Factual Information

On June 18, 2000, at 1050 Eastern Daylight Time, a Piper PA-38, N407DS, was substantially damaged when it landed short of the runway at Delaware Airpark (33N), Cheswold, Delaware. The certificated flight instructor and the certificated student pilot were uninjured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident. No flight plan had been filed for the local instructional flight, which was conducted under 14 CFR Part 91.

According to the flight instructor, the airplane was on a stabilized final approach to Runway 27, at 65 knots indicated airspeed, with the student at the controls. The student reduced power, the airspeed went below 60 knots, and airplane began to "sink." The instructor told the student to watch his airspeed, "but no corrective action was taken." At that point, with the airplane about 200 feet above the ground, the instructor initiated a go-around. However, on short final, "the student observed the airspeed slow and pushed over the control wheel drastically...the student was pushing forward while I was pulling aft and adding power."

The instructor further stated that the student overcame the instructor's inputs, and that the left main landing gear became entangled in tall grass and brush. The airplane yawed to the left and was pulled downwards. It impacted the ground, skidded sideways, and came to rest 20 to 30 feet prior to the runway threshold.

According to the student pilot, the airplane was high on final approach, so he reduced power. When he thought he had the runway made, the student reduced additional power, "which caused the airspeed to decrease too much. The instructor took the controls, but it was too late [and] we were too low...."

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	31, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):		Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane multi-engine; Airplane single-engine	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	March 18, 2000
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	756 hours (Total, all aircraft), 25 hours (Total, this make and model), 679 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 115 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 72 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N407DS
Model/Series:	PA-38 PA-38	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal; Utility	Serial Number:	38-79A0989
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	March 23, 2000 100 hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1670 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	42 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	7840 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-235
Registered Owner:	DELAWARE STATE UNIVERSITY	Rated Power:	112 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:	DOV ,30 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	6 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	10:55 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	110°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	Visibility	5 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 1500 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	9 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	220°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	27°C / 24°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	CHESWOLD , DE (33N)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	10:50 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	DELAWARE AIRPARK 33N	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	56 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	27	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	3715 ft / 50 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Touch and go;Traffic pattern

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:	39.220611,-75.579719(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Cox, Paul
Additional Participating Persons:	ERIC BUBNY; PHILADELPHIA , PA
Original Publish Date:	December 4, 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=49461

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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](#).