



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	ABBEVILLE, Louisiana	Accident Number:	FTW00LA223
Date & Time:	June 29, 2000, 18:30 Local	Registration:	N3177H
Aircraft:	Engineering & Research ERCOUPE 415-CD	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot was attempting to land on runway 15 prior to thunderstorms moving over the airport. The pilot reported that the wind was from the south-southwest at 10-15 knots, and gusting 20-25 knots. The pilot added that he had to use 'higher than normal approach speeds to maintain directional control.' The pilot added that he landed 'fast and hit hard.' The airplane bounced and departed the runway into the grass. The nose gear collapsed, damaging the firewall.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's misjudged flare and improper recovery from a bounced landing. A factor was the crosswind condition.

Findings

Occurrence #1: HARD LANDING
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - CROSSWIND
2. (C) FLARE - MISJUDGED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) RECOVERY FROM BOUNCED LANDING - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: NOSE GEAR COLLAPSED
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Factual Information

On June 30, 2000, at 1840 central daylight time, an Engineering & Research Ercoupe 415-CD airplane, N3177H, was substantially damaged when it impacted terrain during landing at the Abbeville Chris Crusta Memorial Airport near Abbeville, Louisiana. The private pilot, who was the owner and sole occupant of the airplane, was not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and a flight plan was not filed for the 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91 personal flight. The local flight originated from the Abbeville Airport at 1830.

According to the Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident Report (NTSB Form 6120.1/2), the pilot reported that the wind was from the south-southwest at 10-15 knots, and gusting to 20-25 knots. The pilot added that the "aircraft had no rudder pedals to allow for sufficient crab for conditions," and he had to use "higher than normal approach speeds to maintain directional control." The pilot reported to the FAA inspector that he was attempting to land on runway 15 prior to thunderstorms moving over the airport. The pilot added that he landed "fast and hit hard," and the airplane bounced and departed the runway into the grass. The nose landing gear collapsed, damaging the firewall.

The FAA reported the accident to the NTSB on August 3, 2000.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	65, 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:	February 24, 2000
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	June 10, 2000
Flight Time:	2500 hours (Total, all aircraft), 325 hours (Total, this make and model), 2500 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 20 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 20 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Engineering & Research	Registration:	N3177H
Model/Series:	ERCOUPE 415-CD ERCOUPE 41	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	3802
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	May 6, 2000 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1400 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	7 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	1733 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-320-G-85-12
Registered Owner:	FREDERICK MARTINEZ	Rated Power:	85 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

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:		Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 2000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	15 knots / 25 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	185°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29.98 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	32°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	Heavy - None - Rain		
Departure Point:	ABBEVILLE, LA (0R3)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	18:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	Abbeville Chris Crusta OR3	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	15 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Wet
Runway Used:	15	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	5000 ft / 75 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full stop;Traffic pattern

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:	29.970741,-92.119392(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Lupino, Nicole
Additional Participating Persons:	MARY DONAHUE; FAA FSDO; BATON ROUGE, LA
Original Publish Date:	November 25, 2003
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	The NTSB traveled to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=49885

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

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](#).