Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	IUKA, Mississippi	**Accident Number:**	MIA01LA031
Date & Time:	November 20, 2000, 11:15 Local	**Registration:**	N65717
Aircraft:	Lake LA-4-200	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Defining Event:		**Injuries:**	2 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

According to the pilot he departed with 'full fuel tanks (40 gallons),' and landed after a flight of 50 minutes. After spending time on the ground and not refueling, he departed for his home airport. He stated, '...cruising at 4,500 feet, engine began surging (fuel pressure fluctuating). Turned on aux fuel pump surging stopped for about 1 minute, then reoccurred, turned toward...[nearest] airport for emergency landing...insufficient gliding distance to make runway...struck power lines about 50 yards from runway and went inverted.' A witness heard the engine cutting in and out, before impacting with wires. Inspection of the airplane's fuel system, after the accident revealed, a small amount of fuel in the fuel lines, water, excessive contamination, corrosion, rust, and trash in the fuel. The fuel tank bladder was contaminated with rust, corrosion, trash, and water. The engine was rotated and had no binding; compression was noted on all cylinders. There was no external damage noted to the engine.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: a loss of engine power due to fuel contamination resulting in fuel starvation, a forced landing and the subsequent in-flight collision with a wire.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(PARTIAL) - NONMECHANICAL
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings
1. AIRCRAFT PREFLIGHT - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (C) FLUID,FUEL - CONTAMINATION
3. (C) FLUID,FUEL - STARVATION

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

Findings
4. (C) OBJECT - WIRE,STATIC

Factual Information

On November 20, 2000, about 1115 central standard time, a Lake LA-4-200, N65717, owned by a private individual impacted with power lines near the Iuka Airport, Iuka, Mississippi. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time, and no flight plan was filed for the 14 CFR Part 91 personal flight. The airplane was substantially damaged. The airline transport-rated pilot and airline transport-rated second pilot reported serious injuries. The flight departed from the Muscle Shoals Airport (MSL), Alabama, at 1030.

According to the pilot's statement, he had flown to MSL from Olive Branch, Mississippi, a flight of 50 minutes arriving at MSL at 0950. He stated, "...departed [MSL]...with full fuel tanks (40 gallons)...5 miles west Iuka...cruising at 4,500 feet, engine began surging (fuel pressure fluctuating). Turned on aux fuel pump surging stopped for about 1 minute, then reoccurred, turned toward Iuka...Airport for emergency landing...insufficient gliding distance to make runway...struck power lines about 50 yards from runway and went inverted." The pilot had stated to the FAA that he did not receive any fuel at MSL.

A witness heard the engine cutting in and out, before impacting with wires. According to the FAA inspector's statement, inspection of the airplane's fuel system, after the accident revealed, "...fuel line removed at flow divider...no fuel noted...fuel control supply line removed at engine fuel pump, small amount of fuel noted...Fuel supply line removed at engine fuel pump inlet, small amount fuel noted also contaminated with water...fuel filter removed, filter has excessive contamination, corrosion, rust, and trash. Filter was also saturated with water...fuel tank bladder checked, contaminated with rust, corrosion, trash, and water...the engine was rotated and had no binding, compression was noted on all cylinders...there was no external damage noted to the engine."

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport; Flight engineer; Flight instructor	**Age:**	34,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land; Multi-engine sea	**Seat Occupied:**	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Glider; Gyroplane; Helicopter	**Restraint Used:**	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane; Helicopter	**Second Pilot Present:**	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane multi-engine; Airplane single-engine; Glider; Helicopter; Instrument airplane; Instrument helicopter	**Toxicology Performed:**	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim	**Last FAA Medical Exam:**	June 6, 2000
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	**Last Flight Review or Equivalent:**	
Flight Time:	23350 hours (Total, all aircraft), 150 hours (Total, this make and model), 14800 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 250 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 65 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Lake	**Registration:**	N65717
Model/Series:	LA-4-200 LA-4-200	**Aircraft Category:**	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		**Amateur Built:**	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	**Serial Number:**	619
Landing Gear Type:	Amphibian	**Seats:**	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	August 10, 2000 Annual	**Certified Max Gross Wt.:**	2600 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	20 Hrs	**Engines:**	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	1070 Hrs	**Engine Manufacturer:**	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, not activated	**Engine Model/Series:**	IO-360-A1B
Registered Owner:	RONALD OTTO [REG EXPIRED]	**Rated Power:**	200 Horsepower
Operator:	STEVEN RODDY	**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:	TUP ,346 ft msl	**Distance from Accident Site:**	60 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	10:53 Local	**Direction from Accident Site:**	180°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	**Visibility**	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	**Visibility (RVR):**	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	12 knots /	**Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:**	/
Wind Direction:	300°	**Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:**	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	**Temperature/Dew Point:**	8°C / 7°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	MUSCLE SHOALS , AL (MSL)	**Type of Flight Plan Filed:**	None
Destination:	OLIVE BRANCH , MS (OLV)	**Type of Clearance:**	None
Departure Time:	10:30 Local	**Type of Airspace:**	

Airport Information

Airport:	IUKA AIRPORT 15M	**Runway Surface Type:**	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	630 ft msl	**Runway Surface Condition:**	Dry
Runway Used:	36	**IFR Approach:**	None
Runway Length/Width:	3200 ft / 60 ft	**VFR Approach/Landing:**	Forced landing

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	2 Serious	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		**Aircraft Fire:**	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	**Aircraft Explosion:**	None
Total Injuries:	2 Serious	**Latitude, Longitude:**	34.800056,-88.190078(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Yurman, Alan
Additional Participating Persons:	AL DAVIS; JACKSON , MS
Original Publish Date:	July 10, 2001
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	The NTSB traveled to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=50661