



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	ANCHORAGE, Alaska	Accident Number:	ANC00LA057
Date & Time:	May 9, 2000, 17:07 Local	Registration:	N2785K
Aircraft:	Cessna 180K	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The solo commercial pilot was landing on runway 24, in a tailwheel and tundra tire equipped airplane on a paved runway. The pilot stated that after landing the airplane's right main wheel 'grabbed,' and the airplane ground looped to the right. During the ground loop, the left wing struck the runway, and the airplane nosed down. The airplane sustained substantial damage to the left wing leading edge, and left wing main spar. The pilot noted that there were no preaccident mechanical anomalies with the airplane.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's inadvertent ground loop/swerve during landing.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - ON GROUND/WATER
Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings

1. (C) GROUND LOOP/SWERVE - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

On May 9, 2000, about 1707 Alaska daylight time, a tailwheel and tundra tire equipped Cessna 180K airplane, N2785K, sustained substantial damage while landing at Merrill Field, Anchorage, Alaska. The airplane was being operated as a visual flight rules (VFR) personal flight under Title 14, CFR Part 91, when the accident occurred. The solo commercial pilot was not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and no flight plan was filed. The flight originated about 1220, from the Sand Point Airport, Sand Point, Alaska.

During a telephone conversation with the National Transportation Safety Board investigator-in-charge on May 11, the pilot reported that while landing on runway 24, during the landing roll, the right main wheel "grabbed", and the airplane ground looped to the right. During the ground loop, the left wing struck the runway, and the airplane nosed down. The airplane sustained substantial damage to the left wing leading edge, and left wing main spar.

The Merrill Field weather observation at the time of the accident consisted of: Sky conditions and ceiling, 7,000 scattered, 20,000 overcast; visibility, 10 statute miles; wind, 270 degrees (magnetic) at 10 knots; altimeter, 29.99 inHg.

The pilot noted that there were no preaccident mechanical anomalies with the airplane.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	53, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	February 10, 2000
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	2500 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1500 hours (Total, this make and model), 2200 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 7 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 7 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N2785K
Model/Series:	180K 180K	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	18053067
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	May 1, 1999 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2800 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	1700 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	O-470U
Registered Owner:	GRONHOLDT DEVELOPMENT CO.	Rated Power:	230 Horsepower
Operator:	PAUL R. GRONHOLDT	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:	MRI ,137 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:	17:11 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 7000 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 20000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	10 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	270°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	11°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	SAND POINT , AK (SPD)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	12:20 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class C

Airport Information

Airport:	MERRILL FIELD MRI	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	137 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	24	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	4000 ft / 100 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full stop

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:	61.219963,-149.850051(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Johnson, Clinton
Additional Participating Persons:	PATRICK M CROWLEY (FAA); ANCHORAGE , AK
Original Publish Date:	May 30, 2001
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=50959

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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](#).