



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Lake Elsinore, California	Accident Number:	LAX01LA091
Date & Time:	February 3, 2001, Local	Registration:	N2685H
Aircraft:	Schweizer SGS 1-26E	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Instructional		

Analysis

The student glider pilot had 25 hours total experience. This was his second flight of the day but his first ever in a single-place glider. He reported the flight was normal until the point where he returned for landing and was entering the landing traffic pattern. "[F]or some reason unknown to me, the glider went into a spin." He recovered from the spin about 200 - 300 feet below normal pattern altitude. He acknowledged that he should have adjusted his pattern to account for the loss of altitude but instead attempted to fly a normal pattern. As the aircraft approached the turning point from base leg to final approach, "I should have continued flying straight ahead, but I attempted to turn anyway. I was going too slow and was much too low to make a turn." The glider entered a spin a second time and impacted the ground. The pilot acknowledged having heard his instructor's instruction over the radio telling him to land straight ahead and not attempt the turn to final approach.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The failure of the glider pilot to maintain adequate airspeed during a turn from base leg to final approach, which lead to a stall and spin.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - BASE LEG/BASE TO FINAL

Findings

1. DISTANCE/ALTITUDE - MISJUDGED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (C) AIRSPEED(VS) - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. STALL/SPIN - ENCOUNTERED

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Factual Information

On February 3, 2001, at 1150 hours Pacific standard time, a Schweizer SGS 1-26E glider, N2685H, was substantially damaged when the aircraft stalled and impacted the ground during a turn from landing base leg to final approach at Lake Elsinore private airport, Lake Elsinore, California. The solo student pilot was not injured. The local area instructional flight departed from Lake Elsinore at 1130, and was operated under 14 CFR Part 91 by the Lake Elsinore Soaring Club. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and no flight plan was filed.

The 15-year-old pilot had flown over 60 glider flights and had about 25 hours total flying experience. According to his flight instructor, the pilot had not flown in the previous 3-week period, so he (the flight instructor) first flew with the student in a two-place glider.

In his statement to the Safety Board, the student pilot stated this was his second flight of the day but his first ever in the single-place model 1-26E glider. He reported the flight was normal until the point where he returned for landing and was entering the landing traffic pattern. "[F]or some reason unknown to me, the glider went into a spin." He recovered from the spin about 200 - 300 feet below normal pattern altitude. He acknowledged that he should have adjusted his pattern to account for the loss of altitude but instead attempted to fly a normal pattern. As the aircraft approached the turning point from base leg to final approach, "I should have continued flying straight ahead, but I attempted to turn anyway. I was going too slow and was much too low to make a turn." The glider entered a spin a second time and impacted the ground.

The pilot acknowledged having heard his instructor's instruction over the radio telling him to land straight ahead and not attempt the turn to final approach.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Student	Age:	16, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	None None	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	25 hours (Total, all aircraft), 5 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Schweizer	Registration:	N2685H
Model/Series:	SGS 1-26E	Aircraft Category:	Glider
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	675
Landing Gear Type:		Seats:	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	June 12, 2000 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	700 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	151 Hrs	Engines:	
Airframe Total Time:	652 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	Lake Elsinore Soaring Club	Rated Power:	
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	
Observation Facility, Elevation:	RIV,1538 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	17 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	11:55 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	355°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 25000 ft AGL	Visibility	80 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	320°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.17 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	25°C / -5°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Lake Elsinore, CA (CA89)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	11:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	Skylark CA89	Runway Surface Type:	Dirt;Grass/turf
Airport Elevation:	1250 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	11R	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	2800 ft / 100 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:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Parker, Richard
Additional Participating Persons:	Scott Burton; FAA FLT STNDS DIST OFFICE; RIVERSIDE, CA
Original Publish Date:	November 6, 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=51448

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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](#).