



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	LAKE WALES, Florida	Accident Number:	ATL01LA038
Date & Time:	March 10, 2001, 10:30 Local	Registration:	N8472N
Aircraft:	Beech 55	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

While on final approach to land on runway 6, 100 feet above the ground and 1/4 mile from touchdown, both engines lost power. The pilot attempted a forced landing in a pasture. During the forced landing, the main landing gear was torn from the airframe, and the airplane sustained major structural damage. Examination revealed the airplane's engines failed due to fuel starvation. The pilot did not report any component failure before his forced landing in the field. He had flown only approximately three hours before experiencing a loss of power on both engines. He used the fuel from the auxiliary fuel tanks en route to the destination airport and switched the fuel selectors to the main tanks on final approach. Both the descent and before landing checklists require that the pilot switch the fuel selectors to the main fuel tanks.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to follow the descent and before landing checklist that resulted in fuel starvation to both engines and the subsequent loss of engine power.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - NONMECHANICAL
Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - FINAL APPROACH

Findings

1. ALL ENGINES
2. (C) FLUID,FUEL - STARVATION
3. (C) CHECKLIST - NOT USED - PILOT IN COMMAND

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

Occurrence #3: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING

Findings

4. TERRAIN CONDITION - OPEN FIELD

Factual Information

On March 10, 2001, at 1030 eastern standard time, a Beech 55, N8472N, collided with the ground during an attempted forced landing in a pasture near Lake Wales, Florida. The personal flight was operated by the pilot under the provisions of Title 14 CFR Part 91 with an instrument plan filed. Visual weather conditions prevailed at the time of the accident. The private pilot was not injured, and the airplane was substantially damaged. The flight departed Elkin, North Carolina, at 0710 hours.

Reportedly, upon arriving within range of the destination airport, the pilot cancelled his instrument flight clearance and entered the traffic pattern for a visual approach. While on final approach to land on runway 06, 100 feet above the ground and 1/4 mile from touchdown, both engines lost power. The pilot selected and attempted a forced landing in a nearby pasture. During the landing roll, the main landing gear was torn from the airframe, and the airplane sustained major structural damage.

Examination of the airplane did not reveal that any mechanical problems were found. The pilot had not reported a mechanical problem with the airplane before the total loss of power before his forced landing in the field. According to the Pilot's Operating Handbook, (POH) the BE-55 with the fuel system capacity of 136 gallons has an estimated endurance of five to seven hours. The pilot had flown only approximately three hours before experiencing a loss of power on both engines. The pilot also reported that he used the fuel from the auxiliary fuel tanks enroute to the destination airport. The pilot stated that he switched the fuel selectors to the main tanks on final approach. Both the descent and before landing checklists require that the pilot switch the fuel selectors to the main fuel tanks. The examination of the fuel system at the accident site disclosed that both main fuel tanks were full. The pilot stated that this accident could have been prevented by using "better fuel management."

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	55, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-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:	August 30, 2000
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	700 hours (Total, all aircraft), 250 hours (Total, this make and model), 700 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 30 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 20 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Beech	Registration:	N8472N
Model/Series:	55	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	TE-577
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	February 1, 2001 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	5340 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	5 Hrs	Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	5500 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	520
Registered Owner:	THOMAS M. AUSTIN	Rated Power:	285 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:	BOW	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	11:56 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	0°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 1700 ft AGL	Visibility	8 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 5000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	20 knots / 7 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	20°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	20°C / 15°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	ELKIN, NC (ZEF)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	LAKE WALES, FL (X07)	Type of Clearance:	IFR
Departure Time:	07:10 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class D

Airport Information

Airport:	Lake Wales X07	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	126 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	06	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	3999 ft / 100 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Forced landing

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:	29.16974,-81.140014(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Powell, Phillip
Additional Participating Persons:	Jack Murphy; Orlando FSDO; Orlando, FL
Original Publish Date:	September 30, 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=51954

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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](#).