



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	Murrieta, California	<b>Accident Number:</b>	LAX01LA159
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	April 22, 2001, 11:30 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N46503
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Ryan ST3KR	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	2 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

## Analysis

The pilot reported that, as he taxied the low-wing, tailwheel equipped aircraft into the run-up area, the underside of the left wing struck a 4-foot-tall pole protecting a fire hydrant. The pilot was seated in the rear cockpit of the tandem-seating aircraft. He reported that the presence of another aircraft entering the run-up area at the same time made it necessary to alter his taxi route and, after he turned sharply, the low post was too close to be visible from the rear cockpit. The pilot also noted that the hydrant was one of two positioned within the operational area of run-up pad and there were no hazard markings painted on the asphalt around the hydrants.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The failure of the pilot to maintain an adequate visual lookout during taxi to avoid striking a post. A factor in the accident was the inadequate marking of the obstruction by airport personnel.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: ON GROUND/WATER COLLISION WITH OBJECT  
Phase of Operation: TAXI - TO TAKEOFF

- Findings  
1. OBJECT - POLE

2. VISUAL LOOKOUT - RESTRICTED
3. (C) VISUAL LOOKOUT - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (F) OTHER AIRPORT/RUNWAY MAINTENANCE - INADEQUATE - AIRPORT PERSONNEL

## Factual Information

On April 22, 2001, at 1130 hours Pacific daylight time, a Ryan ST3KR, N46503, was substantially damaged when the aircraft's wing impacted a post during taxi for takeoff at the French Valley Airport, Murrieta, California. The airline transport certificated pilot and one passenger were not injured, and intended to conduct a local area flight. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and no flight plan was filed for the personal flight, which was operated by the owner under 14 CFR Part 91.

The pilot reported that, as he taxied the tailwheel equipped aircraft into the run-up area adjacent to runway 18, the underside of the left wing struck a 4-foot-tall pole protecting a fire hydrant. The pilot was seated in the rear cockpit of the tandem-seating aircraft. He reported that the presence of another aircraft entering the run-up area at the same time made it necessary to alter his taxi route and, after he turned sharply, the low post was too close to be visible from the rear cockpit. The pilot also noted that the hydrant was one of two positioned within the operational area of run-up pad and there were no hazard markings painted on the asphalt around the hydrant.

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Airline transport; Flight engineer	<b>Age:</b>	53, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Rear
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 1 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	February 5, 2001
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	Yes	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	September 5, 2000
<b>Flight Time:</b>	9605 hours (Total, all aircraft), 43 hours (Total, this make and model), 5641 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 69 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 69 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Ryan	<b>Registration:</b>	N46503
<b>Model/Series:</b>	ST3KR	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	1290
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tailwheel	<b>Seats:</b>	2
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	February 1, 2001 Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	1885 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	41 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	2729 Hrs at time of accident	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Kinner
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	R-55
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	Thomas S. Valenzia	<b>Rated Power:</b>	160 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>		<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual (VMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	RIV,1538 ft msl	<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	20 Nautical Miles
<b>Observation Time:</b>	11:56 Local	<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	150°
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Clear	<b>Visibility</b>	40 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	4 knots /	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	310°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	30.21 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	17°C / 5°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Murrietta, CA (F70 )	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>		<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>		<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class G

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	French Valley F70	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	Asphalt
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>	1347 ft msl	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	Dry
<b>Runway Used:</b>		<b>IFR Approach:</b>	Unknown
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>		<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Unknown

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	2 None	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Parker, Richard
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	DANIEL S BAKER; FAA Ft Stnds Dist. Office; Riverside, CA
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	November 28, 2001
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class</a>
<b>Note:</b>	The NTSB traveled to the scene of this accident.
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=52175">https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=52175</a>

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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](#).