Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Lake Shasta, California	**Accident Number:**	LAX01LA176
Date & Time:	May 12, 2001, 19:40 Local	**Registration:**	N21911
Aircraft:	Leonard Walters Avid Magnum	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Defining Event:		**Injuries:**	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

At the conclusion of a 30-minute-long flight, the pilot encountered light to moderate turbulence on approach to the lake in his experimental seaplane. About 50 feet above the water, he experienced a strong downdraft and applied engine power to decrease his 1,000-foot-per-minute descent rate. Suddenly, the airplane pitched downward and impacted the water. Thirty-knot wind gusts were subsequently noted in the area.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: A loss of control on final approach due to encountering a strong wind gust and downdraft.

Findings

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

Findings
1. (C) WEATHER CONDITION - GUSTS
2. (C) WEATHER CONDITION - DOWNDRAFT
3. DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - FINAL APPROACH

Findings
4. TERRAIN CONDITION - WATER
5. DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

On May 12, 2001, about 1940 hours Pacific daylight time, a homebuilt Walters Avid Magnum, N21911, touched down hard on Lake Shasta, California. The seaplane was substantially damaged. Neither the commercial certificated pilot, who owned and operated the experimental airplane, nor the passenger was injured during the personal flight. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and no flight plan was filed. The flight was performed under 14 CFR Part 91, and originated from a lake near Oroville, California, about 1850.

In the pilot's completed accident report, he indicated that light to moderate turbulence was experienced during his landing approach to the lake. He stated that he encountered a "terrible downdraft." With very little forward ground speed, his airplane descended at 1,000 feet per minute. Despite application of engine power, he was unable to climb out of the downdraft. Suddenly, about 50 feet above the water, the airplane pitched downward and impacted the water at a 45-degree angle. The pilot additionally reported that an acquaintance of his indicated that, at the time of the accident, there were 30-knot wind gusts in the vicinity.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	**Age:**	62,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	**Seat Occupied:**	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	**Restraint Used:**	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	**Second Pilot Present:**	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	**Toxicology Performed:**	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 With waivers/limitations	**Last FAA Medical Exam:**	May 19, 2001
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	**Last Flight Review or Equivalent:**	April 18, 2001
Flight Time:	6120 hours (Total, all aircraft), 500 hours (Total, this make and model), 5712 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 107 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 50 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Leonard Walters	**Registration:**	N21911
Model/Series:	Avid Magnum	**Aircraft Category:**	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		**Amateur Built:**	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental (Special)	**Serial Number:**	37M
Landing Gear Type:	Float	**Seats:**	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	April 2, 2001 Annual	**Certified Max Gross Wt.:**	1750 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	12 Hrs	**Engines:**	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	418 Hrs at time of accident	**Engine Manufacturer:**	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	**Engine Model/Series:**	O-320-E2A
Registered Owner:	William Duval, Trustees	**Rated Power:**	150 Horsepower
Operator:	William Duval	**Operating Certificate(s) Held:**	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	**Condition of Light:**	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	RDD,502 ft msl	**Distance from Accident Site:**	14 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	19:56 Local	**Direction from Accident Site:**	186°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	**Visibility**	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	**Visibility (RVR):**	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	14 knots /	**Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:**	/
Wind Direction:	190°	**Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:**	/
Altimeter Setting:	29.8 inches Hg	**Temperature/Dew Point:**	26°C / 2°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Oroville, CA (NONE)	**Type of Flight Plan Filed:**	None
Destination:	Lake Shasta, CA (Q83)	**Type of Clearance:**	None
Departure Time:	18:50 Local	**Type of Airspace:**	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	Bridge Bay Resort Q83	**Runway Surface Type:**	Water
Airport Elevation:	1065 ft msl	**Runway Surface Condition:**	Wet
Runway Used:		**IFR Approach:**	None
Runway Length/Width:	10000 ft	**VFR Approach/Landing:**	Full stop;Traffic pattern

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 None	**Aircraft Fire:**	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	**Aircraft Explosion:**	None
Total Injuries:	2 None	**Latitude, Longitude:**	40.757778,-122.323333

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Pollack, Wayne
Additional Participating Persons:	Elie Nasr; WP-FSDO; Sacramento, CA
Original Publish Date:	May 28, 2002
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	The NTSB traveled to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=52299