Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Anchorage, Alaska	**Accident Number:**	ANC01LA097
Date & Time:	August 1, 2001, 19:13 Local	**Registration:**	N7775H
Aircraft:	Piper PA-12	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Defining Event:		**Injuries:**	3 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot reported he was attempting to land on a remote, rural airstrip he had landed on several times before. He said the airstrip is approximately 1000 feet long by 30 feet wide. After touchdown, the airplane veered to the right. He said he was unable to maintain directional control by using full left rudder and left brake, and attempted to abort the landing, but collided with brush. During the airplane's recovery, the pilot said he discovered that the left main wheel brake assembly was missing a hydraulic fitting which would have allowed the brake fluid pressure to drop. He said it appeared to him that the fitting vibrated loose in-flight, as his brakes worked fine during the preflight check and taxi.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The loss of left brake pressure due to a missing hydraulic brake fitting.

Findings

Occurrence #1: AIRFRAME/COMPONENT/SYSTEM FAILURE/MALFUNCTION
Phase of Operation: UNKNOWN

Findings
1. (C) HYDRAULIC SYSTEM,FITTING - MISSING
2. (C) LANDING GEAR,NORMAL BRAKE SYSTEM - INOPERATIVE

Occurrence #2: LOSS OF CONTROL - ON GROUND/WATER
Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings
3. DIRECTIONAL CONTROL - DIMINISHED - PILOT IN COMMAND

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

Findings
4. TERRAIN CONDITION - HIGH VEGETATION

Occurrence #4: NOSE OVER
Phase of Operation: LANDING - ABORTED

Factual Information

On August 1, 2001, about 1913 Alaska daylight time, a wheel-equipped Piper PA-12 airplane, N7775H, received substantial damage during a precautionary landing at a remote airstrip near Anchorage, Alaska. The private pilot/owner of the airplane and the two passengers were not injured. The personal flight operated in visual meteorological conditions without a flight plan. The local flight departed the Flying Crown airstrip, Anchorage, about 1900.

In a telephone interview with the NTSB investigator-in-charge (IIC) on August 2, the pilot said he was landing at the ridge top airstrip because he noted an increase in cylinder head temperature, and wanted to land and check the engine. He noted that he had landed several times before without incident at the approximately 1000 feet long by 30 feet wide strip. He said he landed to the south, and the airplane may have bounced upon touchdown, and then it went sideways, towards the right edge of the strip. He said he applied full left rudder and brake, but the airplane continued toward the right side of the airstrip. He attempted to abort the landing by adding power, but the right wing and tires struck alders on the right side of the airstrip, and the airplane went off the side and slowly nosed over.

The pilot contacted the NTSB IIC again on August 4, and indicated that the left brake hydraulic actuator was missing a fitting that may have come loose prior to the accident, allowing the loss of hydraulic fluid and causing the left brake to be ineffectual. In his written report to the NTSB dated August 20, the pilot checked the block "Yes" under the section, "Mechanical Failure" and wrote, in part: "bleeder valve from bottom of left brake caliper missing and assumed to have vibrated loose during flight." He noted the brakes functioned normally during preflight taxi and run-up.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	**Age:**	41,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	**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:	Class 3 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim	**Last FAA Medical Exam:**	July 11, 2001
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	**Last Flight Review or Equivalent:**	April 19, 2001
Flight Time:	925 hours (Total, all aircraft), 550 hours (Total, this make and model), 846 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 30 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 25 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	**Registration:**	N7775H
Model/Series:	PA-12	**Aircraft Category:**	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		**Amateur Built:**	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	**Serial Number:**	12-673
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	**Seats:**	3
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	July 2, 2001 Annual	**Certified Max Gross Wt.:**	1750 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	15 Hrs	**Engines:**	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	2020 Hrs at time of accident	**Engine Manufacturer:**	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, activated, aided in locating accident	**Engine Model/Series:**	O-360-E3D
Registered Owner:	Kelley B. Leseman	**Rated Power:**	150 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:		**Distance from Accident Site:**	
Observation Time:		**Direction from Accident Site:**	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	**Visibility**	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:		**Visibility (RVR):**	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	**Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:**	/
Wind Direction:		**Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:**	/
Altimeter Setting:		**Temperature/Dew Point:**	21°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Anchorage, AK	**Type of Flight Plan Filed:**	None
Destination:		**Type of Clearance:**	None
Departure Time:		**Type of Airspace:**	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	Old Baldy	**Runway Surface Type:**	Gravel
Airport Elevation:	2375 ft msl	**Runway Surface Condition:**	Dry
Runway Used:	18	**IFR Approach:**	None
Runway Length/Width:	1000 ft / 30 ft	**VFR Approach/Landing:**	Valley/terrain following

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	2 None	**Aircraft Fire:**	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	**Aircraft Explosion:**	None
Total Injuries:	3 None	**Latitude, Longitude:**	61.051109,-149.718612

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	La belle, James
Additional Participating Persons:	Charles Hamilton; FAA; Anchorage, AK
Original Publish Date:	July 2, 2002
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=53211