Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Atlantic City, New Jersey	**Accident Number:**	NYC02LA072
Date & Time:	February 23, 2002, 16:00 Local	**Registration:**	N9055P
Aircraft:	Piper PA-24-260	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Defining Event:		**Injuries:**	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot completed the departure, en route, and descent portions of the VFR flight without incident. After entering the traffic pattern, he turned final, and announced his intentions. The pilot then saw an airplane holding short for the same runway he was using, so he made another announcement. When the pilot was approximately 100 to 150 feet agl, the airplane holding short pulled onto the runway. The pilot executed a go-around, retracted the flaps and landing gear, and then executed a left 360-degree turn, placing the airplane back on final. The pilot recalled the airplane touching down, and believes the landing gear retracted during the ground roll. The airplane slid approximately 100 feet before coming to a stop. After the accident, the pilot realized the landing gear switch was in the up position. Examination of the airplane revealed no damage to the landing gear doors, or side scuffing on either tire. In addition, no preimpact failures were identified with the squat switch, the safe gear indication system, or the landing gear horn.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to lower the landing gear prior to landing.

Findings

Occurrence #1: WHEELS UP LANDING
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings
1. (C) WHEELS UP LANDING - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

On February 23, 2002, about 1600 eastern standard time, a Piper PA-24-260, N9055P, was substantially damaged while landing at the Atlantic City Municipal/Bader Field (AIY), Atlantic City, New Jersey. The certificated private pilot and passenger were not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the personal flight that departed Winchester, Virginia, destined for Bader Field. A visual flight rules flight plan was filed, and the flight was conducted under 14 CFR Part 91.

According to the pilot, once in the local area he contacted Atlantic City Approach, and then changed over to Bader Field's common traffic advisory frequency (CTAF). He saw two helicopters circling over a submerged airplane that had just ran off the end of the runway at Bader Field and into the water. After entering the traffic pattern, the pilot turned final for runway 11, and announced his intentions. He then saw an airplane holding short for the same runway he was planning on using, so he made another announcement. When the pilot was approximately 100 to 150 feet agl, the airplane holding short pulled onto the runway.

The pilot executed a go-around. He retracted the flaps and landing gear, and then did a left 360-degree turn, placing the airplane back on final. The airplane touched down and started to roll out. When it was approximately 200 feet from the end of the runway, the landing gear retracted, and the airplane slid approximately 100 feet before coming to a stop. After the accident, the pilot realized the landing gear switch was in the up position. He believed he raised the gear inadvertently during roll out, but did not remember doing it. He was sure he landed with the gear down, but added, "If the gear retracted while on the ground, the gear doors should have been damaged or scratched," which they were not.

According to a mechanic that examined the airplane, there was no damage to the landing gear doors, or side scuffing on either tire. In addition, no damage was observed on either flap. The airplane was raised in order to lower the landing gear. The gear was extended, and locked in the down position. A crack was identified in the landing gear actuator. It did not affect the down locks, and the mechanic thought it was caused when the airplane was recovered. The keel of the airplane was partially worn down, and the engine exhaust was worn consistent with sliding on a hard surface.

The airplane was ferried to a facility near Montgomery, New York, where the mechanic examined the squat switch, the safe gear indication system, and the landing gear horn. He identified no anomalies with any of the systems. The mechanic added that he tested the squat switch by breaking into the wire bundle where it entered the fuselage. He did this to insure none of the wires had broken where the wire bundle flexed to accommodate landing gear retraction and extension.

According to a Federal Aviation Administration inspector, a antenna on the bottom of the airplane pushed into the fuselage and damaged a former, requiring a major repair.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	**Age:**	55,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-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:**	September 20, 2001
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	**Last Flight Review or Equivalent:**	
Flight Time:	334 hours (Total, all aircraft), 223 hours (Total, this make and model), 226 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 46 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 8 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	**Registration:**	N9055P
Model/Series:	PA-24-260	**Aircraft Category:**	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		**Amateur Built:**	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	**Serial Number:**	24-4521
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	**Seats:**	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	January 24, 2001 Annual	**Certified Max Gross Wt.:**	3100 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	100 Hrs	**Engines:**	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	5850 Hrs at time of accident	**Engine Manufacturer:**	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, not activated	**Engine Model/Series:**	TIO-540
Registered Owner:	Mike Piazza	**Rated Power:**	310 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:	ACY,75 ft msl	**Distance from Accident Site:**	8 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	15:54 Local	**Direction from Accident Site:**	329°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 4900 ft AGL	**Visibility**	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	**Visibility (RVR):**	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	8 knots /	**Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:**	/
Wind Direction:	130°	**Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:**	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.06 inches Hg	**Temperature/Dew Point:**	6°C / -1°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Winchester, VA (OKV)	**Type of Flight Plan Filed:**	VFR
Destination:	Atlantic City, NJ (AIY)	**Type of Clearance:**	None
Departure Time:	15:00 Local	**Type of Airspace:**	Class E

Airport Information

Airport:	Atlantic City Muni/Bader Field AIY	**Runway Surface Type:**	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	8 ft msl	**Runway Surface Condition:**	Dry
Runway Used:	11	**IFR Approach:**	None
Runway Length/Width:	2948 ft / 100 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:**	39.359104,-74.419174(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Muzio, David
Additional Participating Persons:	Orton Ogborn; FAA/FSDO; Philadelphia, PA
Original Publish Date:	August 28, 2002
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=54366

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