



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	St. Simons Island, Georgia	Accident Number:	ATL02LA173
Date & Time:	September 21, 2002, 10:15 Local	Registration:	N607JW
Aircraft:	Piper PA-32RT-300	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

According to the pilot, he was taking a check-ride for his certified flight instructor's rating in single engine airplanes. He and the check pilot had completed several flight maneuvers and were conducting a simulated 180-degree power-off landing. The simulated maneuver was established for runway 04; the engine was operating at reduced power. The pilot recalled that approximately three quarters through the turn, the airspeed got slow and the sink rate increased. At approximately the same time, witnesses on the ground noticed that the airplane had overshoot the final approach course for the runway. The pilot applied power to arrest the sink rate and to reestablish the final approach course. When the check pilot elected to take control of the airplane, he realized that there was not enough altitude to complete the recovery. Witnesses on the ground also observed the airplane as it collided with tops of tree short of the runway. One witness reported that the nose of the airplane pitched up and the pilot recalled that the left wing fell and the airplane collided with the ground in a nose low attitude. The airplane came to rest about 60 feet short of the runway surface and burst into flames. Neither pilot reported a mechanical problem with the airplane during the simulated emergency.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to maintain airspeed during a simulated emergency landing, and his delayed

remedial action that resulted in a stall, and an uncontrolled collision with trees. A factor was the check pilot's inadequate supervision of the check ride.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT

Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - FINAL APPROACH

Findings

1. (C) AIRSPEED - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (C) STALL - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) REMEDIAL ACTION - DELAYED - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (F) SUPERVISION - INADEQUATE - CHECK PILOT
5. EMERGENCY PROCEDURE - SIMULATED

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Findings

6. OBJECT - TREE(S)

Factual Information

On September 21, 2002, at 1015 eastern daylight time, a Piper PA-32RT-300, registered to Pine Valley Aviation and flown by the commercial pilot, collided with the ground and burst into flames short of runway 4 while on approach to land at Malcolm B. McKinnon Airport in Brunswick, Georgia. The training flight operated under the provisions of Title 14 CFR Part 91 with no flight plan filed. Visual weather conditions prevailed at the time of the accident. The commercial pilot was not injured and the air transport pilot, check pilot, received serious injuries. The airplane sustained substantial damage. The flight departed Brunswick, Georgia, at 1000, on September 21, 2002.

According to the pilot, he was taking a check-ride for his certified flight instructor's rating in single engine airplanes. He and the check pilot had completed several flight maneuvers and were conducting a simulated 180-degree power-off landing. The simulated maneuver was established for runway 04; the engine was operating at reduced power. The pilot recalled that approximately three quarters through the turn, the airspeed got slow and the sink rate increased. At approximately the same time, witnesses on the ground noticed that the airplane had overshoot the final approach course for the runway. The pilot applied power to arrest the sink rate and to reestablish the final approach course. When the check pilot elected to take control of the airplane, he realized that there was not enough altitude to complete the recovery.

Witnesses on the ground also observed the airplane as it collided with tops of trees short of the runway. One witness reported that the nose of the airplane pitched up and the pilot recalled that the left wing fell and the airplane collided with the ground in a nose low attitude. The airplane came to rest about 60 feet short of the runway surface and burst into flames.

Examination of the airplane revealed that both wings were torn from the airframe. The right wing rested adjacent to the main wreckage and several other pieces of the airframe were scattered in the immediate vicinity of the main wreckage. Neither pilot reported a mechanical problem with the airplane during the simulated emergency.

Check pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport; Commercial; Flight instructor	Age:	52, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane; Helicopter	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane multi-engine; Airplane single-engine; Helicopter; Instrument airplane; Instrument helicopter	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	January 16, 2003
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	June 30, 2002
Flight Time:	11000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 2 hours (Total, this make and model), 1000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 50 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft)		

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	18, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 None	Last FAA Medical Exam:	September 9, 2001
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	June 30, 2002
Flight Time:	368 hours (Total, all aircraft), 71 hours (Total, this make and model), 278 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 26 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N607JW
Model/Series:	PA-32RT-300	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	32R-7885091
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	August 31, 2002 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3600 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	30 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3400 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	IO-0540
Registered Owner:	Pine Valley Aviation Inc	Rated Power:	300 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:	SSI	Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:	09:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:		Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	10 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	90°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29.26 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	28°C / 21°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Brunswick, GA	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	Unknown
Departure Time:	10:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Unknown

Airport Information

Airport:	Saint Simons Island SSI	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	20 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	04	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	5421 ft / 150 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full stop; Simulated forced landing

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	31.155147,-81.387051

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Powell, Phillip
Additional Participating Persons:	Roy Dunn; Atlanta FSDO; College Park, GA
Original Publish Date:	July 23, 2003
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=55771

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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](#).