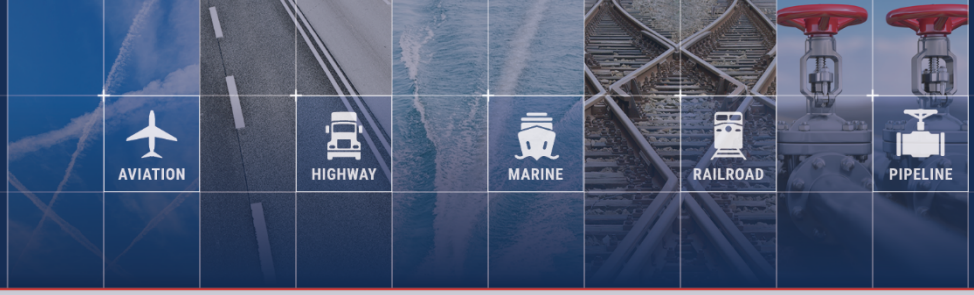


# Aviation Investigation Final Report

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Location:** | Mammoth Lakes, California | **Accident Number:** | LAX03LA118 |
| **Date & Time:** | March 23, 2003, 12:50 Local | **Registration:** | N5291K |
| **Aircraft:** | Ryan Navion | **Aircraft Damage:** | Substantial |
| **Defining Event:** | | **Injuries:** | 1 Minor, 2 None |
| **Flight Conducted Under:** | Part 91: General aviation - Personal | | |

## Analysis

The airplane veered off the runway during the landing roll and collided with terrain and high vegetation. At 1152, the airport's airport automated weather observation station (AWOS) was reporting winds at 200 degrees, 15 knots gusting to 25 knots. The pilot reported that the airport advisory conditions relayed to him over the CTAF were winds of 250 to 270 degrees, 15 knots gusting to 25 knots, and runway 27 was in use. The pilot also observed the airport windsock showing winds from the west/northwest. During the landing sequence, and after the landing gear contacted the runway, the pilot experienced a "substantial and unexpected gust of wind" from the southerly direction. The left wing raised and the airplane veered off the right side of the runway. The pilot applied rudder and aileron to compensate before deciding to attempt a go-around. The airplane continued to rise in level flight before he "experienced a sensation of downward force." The airplane came to rest in sagebrush approximately 210 feet north of the parallel taxi way.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the pilot's inadequate compensation for the wind conditions and failure to maintain directional control during the landing roll. A factor was the gusty crosswind.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - ON GROUND/WATER
Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings
1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - VARIABLE WIND
2. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - CROSSWIND
3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - GUSTS
4. (C) COMPENSATION FOR WIND CONDITIONS - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
5. (C) DIRECTIONAL CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
6. (C) GROUND LOOP/SWERVE - NOT CORRECTED - PILOT IN COMMAND
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Occurrence #2: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings
7. TERRAIN CONDITION - HIGH VEGETATION

## Factual Information

On March 23, 2003, about 1250 Pacific standard time, a Ryan Navion, N5291K, veered off the runway and collided with terrain and high vegetation during the landing roll at Mammoth Yosemite Airport, Mammoth Lakes, California. The airplane, owned and operated by the pilot under the provisions of 14 CFR Part 91, sustained substantial damage. The private pilot and one passenger were not injured; however, the remaining passenger received minor injuries. The personal cross-country flight originated at Furnace Creek, Death Valley National Park, California, at 1105, with an ultimate destination of Rio Linda, California. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and a visual flight rules (VFR) flight plan had been filed and activated.

The pilot submitted a statement in the Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident Report, (NTSB Form 6120.1/2). While en route to Rio Linda they experienced moderate turbulence, and the pilot observed inclement weather along the route of flight. With these factors in mind the pilot decided to divert to Mammoth Lakes airport to wait out the weather.

At 1152, the Mammoth Lakes airport automated weather observation station (AWOS) was reporting winds at 200 degrees, 15 knots gusting to 25 knots. The pilot reported that the airport advisory conditions relayed to him were winds of 250 to 270 degrees, 15 knots gusting to 25 knots, and runway 27 was in use. The pilot also observed the airport windsock showing winds from the west/northwest.

During the landing sequence, and after the landing gear contacted the runway, the pilot stated that he experienced a "substantial and unexpected gust of wind" from the southerly direction. The left wing raised and the airplane veered off the right side of the runway. The pilot applied rudder and aileron to compensate before deciding to attempt a go-around. The airplane continued to rise in level flight before he "experienced a sensation of downward force." The airplane came to rest in sagebrush approximately 210 feet north of the parallel taxi way.

## Pilot Information

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Certificate:** | Private | **Age:** | 45,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--no waivers/lim. | **Last FAA Medical Exam:** | August 16, 2002 |
| **Occupational Pilot:** | UNK | **Last Flight Review or Equivalent:** | May 17, 2001 |
| **Flight Time:** | 208 hours (Total, all aircraft), 162 hours (Total, this make and model), 154 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 18 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 9 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft) | | |

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Aircraft Make:** | Ryan | **Registration:** | N5291K |
| **Model/Series:** | Navion | **Aircraft Category:** | Airplane |
| **Year of Manufacture:** | | **Amateur Built:** | |
| **Airworthiness Certificate:** | Normal | **Serial Number:** | NAV-4-2191B |
| **Landing Gear Type:** | Retractable - Tricycle | **Seats:** | 4 |
| **Date/Type of Last Inspection:** | December 2, 2002 Annual | **Certified Max Gross Wt.:** | 3100 lbs |
| **Time Since Last Inspection:** | 19.2 Hrs | **Engines:** | 1 Reciprocating |
| **Airframe Total Time:** | 3250 Hrs at time of accident | **Engine Manufacturer:** | Lycoming |
| **ELT:** | Installed | **Engine Model/Series:** | GO-480 |
| **Registered Owner:** | Ken Whittall-Scherfee | **Rated Power:** | 295 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:** | MMH,7128 ft msl | **Distance from Accident Site:** | |
| **Observation Time:** | 11:52 Local | **Direction from Accident Site:** | |
| **Lowest Cloud Condition:** | Clear | **Visibility** | 10 miles |
| **Lowest Ceiling:** | None | **Visibility (RVR):** | |
| **Wind Speed/Gusts:** | 15 knots / 25 knots | **Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:** | / |
| **Wind Direction:** | 200° | **Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:** | / |
| **Altimeter Setting:** | 30.06 inches Hg | **Temperature/Dew Point:** | 12°C / -5°C |
| **Precipitation and Obscuration:** | No Obscuration; No Precipitation | | |
| **Departure Point:** | Furnace Creek, CA (L06 ) | **Type of Flight Plan Filed:** | VFR |
| **Destination:** | Rio Linda, CA (Q94 ) | **Type of Clearance:** | None |
| **Departure Time:** | 11:05 Local | **Type of Airspace:** | Class E |

## Airport Information

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Airport:** | Mammoth Yosemite KMMH | **Runway Surface Type:** | Asphalt |
| **Airport Elevation:** | 7128 ft msl | **Runway Surface Condition:** | Dry |
| **Runway Used:** | 27 | **IFR Approach:** | None |
| **Runway Length/Width:** | 7056 ft / 100 ft | **VFR Approach/Landing:** | Full stop |

## Wreckage and Impact Information

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Crew Injuries:** | 1 None | **Aircraft Damage:** | Substantial |
| **Passenger Injuries:** | 1 Minor, 1 None | **Aircraft Fire:** | None |
| **Ground Injuries:** | N/A | **Aircraft Explosion:** | None |
| **Total Injuries:** | 1 Minor, 2 None | **Latitude, Longitude:** | 37.623889,-118.840835 |

## Administrative Information

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|---|---|
| **Investigator In Charge (IIC):** | McKenny, Van |
| **Additional Participating Persons:** | Larry Cheek; Federal Aviation Administration; Reno, NV |
| **Original Publish Date:** | September 1, 2004 |
| **Last Revision Date:** | |
| **Investigation Class:** | Class |
| **Note:** | |
| **Investigation Docket:** | https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=56690 |