



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Ocean City, New Jersey	Accident Number:	NYC03LA109
Date & Time:	May 19, 2003, 12:20 Local	Registration:	N6989E
Aircraft:	Cessna 175A	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

During the initial climb, about 800 feet msl, the engine experienced a partial loss of power. The pilot made a 180-degree turn back toward the airport, but was unable to maintain altitude. He ditched the airplane in shallow water about 2 miles south of the airport. The pilot stated that it was possible that the airplane's single fuel vent was obstructed, which resulted in the power loss. Examination of the wreckage revealed that both fuel tanks contained fuel, and the fuel vent was not blocked. Examination of the engine did not reveal any pre-impact mechanical malfunctions. Thumb compression and valve train continuity were obtained, and the engine initially started. However, it did not continue to run.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: A partial loss of engine power for undetermined reasons.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(PARTIAL) - NONMECHANICAL
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. (C) REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - EMERGENCY

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING

Findings

2. TERRAIN CONDITION - WATER

Factual Information

On May 19, 2003, about 1220 eastern daylight time, a Cessna 175A, N6989E, was substantially damaged while ditching in the Atlantic Ocean, following a loss of engine power after takeoff from Ocean City Municipal Airport (26N), Ocean City, New Jersey. The certificated commercial pilot was not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the planned flight to Cape May County Airport (WWD), Wildwood, New Jersey. No flight plan was filed for the personal flight conducted under 14 CFR Part 91.

The pilot reported that during the initial climb, about 800 feet msl, the engine experienced a partial loss of power. The pilot made a 180-degree turn back toward the airport, but was unable to maintain altitude. He ditched the airplane in shallow water near the coast, about 2 miles south of the airport. The pilot further stated that it was possible that the airplane's single fuel vent was obstructed, which resulted in the power loss.

Examination of the wreckage by a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector revealed damage to the left wing and fuselage. He also observed fuel in both fuel tanks. The inspector stated that he examined fuel vent and did not find any blockage.

The FAA inspector, with assistance of an aircraft recovery company, drained water from the carburetor. He also drained and replaced the engine oil; removed, cleaned, and reinstalled all spark plugs; and rotated the crankshaft. The inspector attained thumb compression on all cylinders and confirmed crankshaft, camshaft, and valve train continuity. However, the engine would not start.

Subsequently, the carburetor was inspected and no discrepancies were noted. Both magnetos were inspected, and the left magneto was subsequently cleaned. On the second attempted, the engine "fired," but did not run. The inspector could not determine why the engine experienced a partial loss of power.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	57, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Glider	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	July 30, 2002
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	May 3, 2003
Flight Time:	7675 hours (Total, all aircraft), 145 hours (Total, this make and model), 22 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 15 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N6989E
Model/Series:	175A	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	56489
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	July 31, 2002 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2350 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	30 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	1200 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O300G
Registered Owner:	Joseph M. Bennis	Rated Power:	175 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:	12 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	11:54 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	10°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	10 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	60°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.35 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	18°C / 7°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Ocean City, NJ (26N)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Cape May, NJ (WWD)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	12:20 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	Ocean City Municipal Airport 26N	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	5 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Unknown
Runway Used:		IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Forced landing

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	39.26361,-74.607498

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Muzio, David
Additional Participating Persons:	Dave Grasso ; FAA FSDO-17; Philadelphia, PA
Original Publish Date:	April 28, 2004
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=57018

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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](#).