



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Minden, Nevada	Accident Number:	LAX03LA165
Date & Time:	May 26, 2003, 13:30 Local	Registration:	N503HC
Aircraft:	PZL-Bielsko SZD-50-3	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Instructional		

Analysis

As the glider, in tow, turned right downwind at 500 feet above ground level (agl), the student deployed the spoilers. The certified flight instructor (CFI) released the glider from the tow plane, and locked and closed the spoiler handle. According to the CFI, she wanted to land on a runway at the airport, but the student was "frozen" on the flight controls. By the time he released the controls, it was not possible to reach the runway, so the CFI executed a forced landing on an airport access road. Prior to touchdown, the left wing struck a 4-foot-tall sagebrush, the glider turned, and impacted on the shoulder of the road.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The flight instructor's failure to adequately supervise the student, which resulted in the improper deployment of the spoilers by the student. A factor was the high vegetation on the landing surface.

Findings

Occurrence #1: ABRUPT MANEUVER

Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - DOWNWIND

Findings

1. (C) SUPERVISION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND(CFI)
2. (C) SPOILER EXTENSION - IMPROPER - DUAL STUDENT

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - FINAL APPROACH

Findings

3. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - HIGH VEGETATION

Factual Information

On May 26, 2003, about 1330 Pacific daylight time, a PZL Bielsko SZD-50-3 nonpowered glider, N503HC, collided with obstacles and terrain during the landing approach to an open road at the Minden-Tahoe Airport (MEV), Minden, Nevada. The glider was registered to a private individual and operated by High Country Soaring, Minden, under the provisions of 14 CFR Part 91. The certified flight instructor (CFI), and the commercial airplane pilot receiving instruction were not injured; the glider sustained substantial damage. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and a flight plan had not been filed. The local instructional flight departed Minden about 1325.

According to the CFI, the glider, in tow, departed runway 30 with the intention of practicing takeoffs and landings. As they turned right downwind at 500 feet above ground level (agl), the student deployed the spoilers. The CFI released the glider from the tow plane and locked and closed the spoiler handle. She declared they would land on runway 21, but the student turned them away from the airport. The student was "frozen" on the controls and would not allow her to turn back to the airport. The student eventually released the controls, but the glider was too far away from the airport to make the runway. The CFI then executed a forced landing on an open road. On final approach, the left wing struck a 4-foot-tall sagebush, the glider turned, and impacted off the side of the road.

According to the student pilot, the glider was high and to the left of the tow plane, so he deployed the spoilers in an attempt to correct the situation. The CFI released the glider from tow while the glider was equal distance from runways 16 and 12. The CFI determined that they would not make either of the runways, and flew the approach to an access road on airport property. Prior to touchdown, the left wing struck a sagebush, resulting in the glider impacting on the shoulder of the road.

Flight instructor Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight instructor	Age:	44,Female
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Rear
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Glider	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane single-engine; Glider	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	March 13, 2003
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	December 14, 2002
Flight Time:	2695 hours (Total, all aircraft), 30 hours (Total, this make and model), 1590 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 62 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 25 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Student pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	49,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Front
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 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	March 28, 2003
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	October 25, 2002
Flight Time:	440 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1 hours (Total, this make and model), 396 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 6 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PZL-Bielsko	Registration:	N503HC
Model/Series:	SZD-50-3	Aircraft Category:	Glider
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Utility	Serial Number:	B-2098
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1257 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	0
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	Jay Mazure	Rated Power:	
Operator:	High Country Soaring	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	RNO,4717 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	30 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	12:56 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	340°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 10000 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	8 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	250°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29.88 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	31°C / -1°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Minden, NV (MEV)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Minden, NV (MEV)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	13:25 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	Minden-Tahoe Airport MEV	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	4717 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Unknown
Runway Used:		IFR Approach:	Unknown
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Traffic pattern

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	2 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 None	Latitude, Longitude:	39.000278,-119.750831

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Petterson, George
Additional Participating Persons:	Gary Hamlin; 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=57058

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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](#).