



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Bremerton, Washington	Accident Number:	SEA04CA054
Date & Time:	March 21, 2004, 10:00 Local	Registration:	N200TZ
Aircraft:	Menefee RAF Vari-Eze	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot reported that shortly after takeoff the aircraft developed a rough running engine. The pilot stated he turned back toward the departure runway, but was unable to land due to traffic on the runway. The pilot stated he entered the traffic pattern and continued to the south for a landing on the departure runway. The pilot said the airplane was low, slow and unresponsive to roll inputs after turning final. Shortly after turning final, the pilot reported that the airplane "pancaked" in, coming to rest in a grassy area adjacent to runway 19. The pilot later reported that he believed the rough running engine was caused by a fouled sparkplug. An FAA inspector inspected the airplane after the accident and reported that there was no evidence found to indicate a mechanical failure and the cause of the engine vibration was undetermined.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: Failure to maintain airspeed while on final approach resulting in a stall. Factors include a rough running engine for undetermined reasons and rough/uneven terrain.

Findings

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

Findings

1. REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED

Occurrence #2: HARD LANDING

Phase of Operation: LANDING

Findings

2. (C) AIRSPEED - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

3. STALL

Occurrence #3: GEAR COLLAPSED

Phase of Operation: LANDING

Findings

4. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - ROUGH/UNEVEN

5. LANDING GEAR - OVERLOAD

Factual Information

On March 21, 2004, at 1000 Pacific standard time, an amateur built, experimental category, Menefee RAF Vari-Eze airplane, N200TZ, sustained substantial damage during a hard landing at the Bremerton National Airport, Bremerton, Washington. The airplane was being operated as a visual flight rules (VFR) local flight under the provisions of 14 CFR Part 91, when the accident occurred. The private pilot, the sole occupant of the airplane, received minor injuries. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and no flight plan was filed for the flight.

During a telephone conversation with the National Transportation Safety Board IIC, the pilot reported that shortly after takeoff the aircraft developed a rough running engine. The pilot stated he turned back toward the departure runway (19/1), but was unable to land due to traffic on the runway. The pilot stated he entered the traffic pattern and continued to the south for a landing on the departure runway. The pilot said the airplane was low, slow and unresponsive to roll inputs after turning final. Shortly after turning final, the pilot reported that the airplane "pancaked" in, coming to rest in a grassy area adjacent to runway 19.

The pilot reported that he believed the rough running engine was caused by a fouled sparkplug.

An FAA inspector from Seattle, Washington, Flight Standards District Office inspected the airplane after the accident and reported that there was no evidence found to indicate a mechanical failure and the cause of the engine vibration was undetermined.

The airplane was powered by an E81T Subaru engine rated at 100 horsepower.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	43, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	
Instructor Rating(s):		Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3	Last FAA Medical Exam:	October 18, 2003
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1022 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Menefee	Registration:	N200TZ
Model/Series:	RAF Vari-Eze	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental (Special)	Serial Number:	98383
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:		Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1326 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Subaru
ELT:		Engine Model/Series:	E81T
Registered Owner:	Michael O. Menefee	Rated Power:	
Operator:	Allan E. Martin	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Visibility	
Lowest Ceiling:		Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Bremerton, WA (PWT)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Bremerton, WA (PWT)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class E

Airport Information

Airport:	BREMERTON NATIONAL PWT	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	16	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	47.492778,-122.762496

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Hogenson, Dennis
Additional Participating Persons:	Patrick M Paden; FAA-FSDO; Renton, WA
Original Publish Date:	June 30, 2004
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=58937

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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](#).