



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	Labelle, Florida	<b>Accident Number:</b>	MIA04LA069
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	April 4, 2004, 09:52 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	UNREG
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Louis Amato Buccaneer	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

## Analysis

A witness stated that he heard the engine cease operating and saw a turn being initiated to reverse course and land on the runway. According to the witness, the nose of the aircraft lowered, and the sink rate increased as the turn was tightened to turn back to the runway. An FAA licensed airframe and powerplant mechanic who examined the engine stated that he found fuel in the airplane which had aged and had a "gel-like" consistency. In addition, he said he one of the pistons had become seized, and there was evidence that detonation had occurred.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilots improper preflight preparation resulting in loss of engine power due to contaminated fuel and his failure to maintain airspeed while attempting to reverse direction to land resulting in an inadvert stall, uncontrolled descent, and impact with terrain.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER  
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

### Findings

1. (C) PREFLIGHT PLANNING/PREPARATION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. FLUID,FUEL - CONTAMINATION

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Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING  
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING AFTER TAKEOFF  
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Occurrence #3: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT  
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING - TURN TO REVERSE DIRECTION

Findings  
3. (C) AIRSPEED - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND  
4. STALL - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND  
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Occurrence #4: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Findings  
5. TERRAIN CONDITION - GROUND

## Factual Information

On April 4, 2004, about 0952 eastern standard time, an unregistered Louis Amato Buccaneer aircraft, operated by a private individual as a Title 14 CFR Part 91 personal flight, crashed in Labelle, Florida. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and no flight plan was filed. The pilot received fatal injuries, and the aircraft was destroyed. The flight was originating at the time of the accident.

A witness stated that the pilot had just performed maintenance on the aircraft, was conducting a maintenance test flight when the accident occurred. He stated that as he observed the accident aircraft he heard the engine cease operating, and he watched as the pilot initiated a turn to reverse course and land on the runway from whence he had departed. He said that he saw the nose of the aircraft being lowered, but the sink rate increased and the pilot appeared to tighten the turn in an effort to make it back to the field. According to the witness, the aircraft "stalled", and descended, impacting the ground. The witness recalled that the accident aircraft had not been operated for several months. He had observed it parked in an exposed area where it remained stationary, and was subjected to constant sunlight.

According to the FAA licensed airframe and powerplant mechanic who examined the accident aircraft's engine, the fuel inside the engine had an odor and exhibited characteristics consistent with automotive fuel that had aged. He said that the fuel had a gel-like viscosity, consistent with aged fuel. The mechanic said that in addition, one of the pistons had seized, and there was evidence that detonation had occurred.

The Rotax engine operators manual, for the Rotax 582 engine, installed in the accident aircraft, specifies the requirements for storing of the engine. Some of these requirements include draining of the fuel lines, fuel tanks, and the carburetor float chamber.

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>		<b>Age:</b>	Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>		<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Unknown
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>		<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>		<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>		<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Unknown Unknown	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	No	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	1992 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Louis Amato	<b>Registration:</b>	UNREG
<b>Model/Series:</b>	Buccaneer	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Experimental (Special)	<b>Serial Number:</b>	Unknown
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Retractable - ; Amphibian	<b>Seats:</b>	2
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	Unknown	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	1350 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>		<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>		<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Rotax
<b>ELT:</b>	Not installed	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	582
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	Louis Amato	<b>Rated Power:</b>	65 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>		<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual (VMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	FMY,17 ft msl	<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	22 Nautical Miles
<b>Observation Time:</b>	09:53 Local	<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	230°
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Clear	<b>Visibility</b>	10 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	10 knots /	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	320°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	30.02 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	21°C / 10°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Labelle, FL (FD20)	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	(FD20)	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	
<b>Departure Time:</b>	09:50 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	Sundance Farms Airport FD20	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	Grass/turf
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>	50 ft msl	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	Dry
<b>Runway Used:</b>	01	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	None
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>	3100 ft / 60 ft	<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Forced landing

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>		<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	26.744167,-81.432502

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Lovell, John
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	John Woods; FAA FSDO; Fort Lauderdale, FL
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	September 13, 2005
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class</a>
<b>Note:</b>	
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=59066">https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=59066</a>

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