



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Glendale, Arizona	Accident Number:	LAX04CA286
Date & Time:	August 5, 2004, 07:34 Local	Registration:	N1529A
Aircraft:	Piper PA-20	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

During the takeoff roll the airplane departed the left side of the runway and collided with a ditch. The pilot usually raised the tail as soon as the elevator was effective, accelerated to takeoff speed, and rotated. On this flight he was attempting a 3-point takeoff technique that he had been shown, but never attempted himself. During the takeoff roll he lost directional control, departed the left side of the runway at a low speed, crossed a taxiway, and impacted a ditch. The pilot indicated that the airplane had no mechanical failures or malfunctions during the flight.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the pilot's failure to maintain directional control during the takeoff roll.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - ON GROUND/WATER

Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - ROLL/RUN

Findings

1. (C) DIRECTIONAL CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. GROUND LOOP/SWERVE - NOT CORRECTED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - ROLL/RUN

Findings

3. TERRAIN CONDITION - DITCH

Factual Information

On August 5, 2004, at 0734 Pacific daylight time, a Piper PA-20, N1529A, collided with terrain during takeoff at Glendale Municipal Airport, Glendale, Arizona. The private pilot owned the airplane, and was operating it under the provisions of 14 CFR Part 91. The pilot and passenger were not injured, and the airplane sustained substantial damage. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and a visual flight plan had not been filed. The personal cross-country flight was originating at Glendale.

The pilot submitted a Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident Report (NTSB Form 6120.1/2). He stated that he was purchasing the airplane, and made an acceptance flight with the seller. The seller made the initial takeoff from a 3-point attitude. The pilot then did three landings and two takeoffs. For his takeoffs, the pilot raised the tail as soon as the elevator was effective, accelerated to takeoff speed, and rotated. He had been trained using this technique. He had never attempted a takeoff using a 3-point attitude.

After the acceptance flight, the pilot discussed takeoff technique with the seller, and decided that he would attempt the seller's 3-point technique on his flight home. During the takeoff roll, the airplane swerved left. The pilot stated that he undercorrected. The airplane departed the left side of the runway at a low speed, crossed a taxiway, and impacted a ditch.

The pilot indicated that the airplane had no mechanical failures or malfunctions during the flight.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Private	Age:	49, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	
Instructor Rating(s):		Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2	Last FAA Medical Exam:	July 16, 2004
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1925 hours (Total, all aircraft), 2 hours (Total, this make and model), 5 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N1529A
Model/Series:	PA-20	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	20-723
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:		Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:		Engine Model/Series:	O-290-D
Registered Owner:	James D. Dunn	Rated Power:	
Operator:		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:	Glendale, AZ (KGEU)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	St George, UT (KSGU)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class E

Airport Information

Airport:	Glendale Muni KGEU	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	01	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	
Total Injuries:	2 None	Latitude, Longitude:	33.526943,-112.29528

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	McKenny, Van
Additional Participating Persons:	Federal Aviation Administration; Scottsdale, AZ
Original Publish Date:	October 28, 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=59834

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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](#).