



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	Phoenix, Arizona	<b>Accident Number:</b>	LAX05CA211
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	June 17, 2005, 13:00 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N617MA
<b>Aircraft:</b>	American Champion (ACAC) 8GCBC	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	2 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

## Analysis

The airplane ground looped during the landing rollout. The pilot was landing on runway 25. An aviation routine weather report issued for the airport 7 minutes before the accident reported that the winds were from 160 degrees at 6 knots. The pilot stated that the airplane and engine 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 inadequate compensation for the wind conditions and failure to maintain directional control during the landing rollout.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - ON GROUND/WATER  
Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

### Findings

1. WEATHER CONDITION - CROSSWIND
2. (C) COMPENSATION FOR WIND CONDITIONS - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) DIRECTIONAL CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. GROUND LOOP/SWERVE - ENCOUNTERED - PILOT IN COMMAND

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Occurrence #2: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings

5. TERRAIN CONDITION - DIRT BANK/RISING EMBANKMENT

## Factual Information

On June 17, 2005, about 1300 mountain standard time, an American Champion 8GCBC, N617MA, ground looped at the Phoenix Deer Valley Airport (DVT), Phoenix Arizona. The pilot/owner was operating the airplane under the provisions of 14 CFR Part 91. The private pilot and one passenger were not injured; the airplane sustained substantial damage. The personal cross-country flight departed Albuquerque (ABQ), New Mexico, about 1030, with a planned destination of Phoenix. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and no flight plan had been filed.

In a written statement, the pilot reported that he performed a standard wheel landing, and ground looped on the landing rollout due to unforeseen dust devil activity in the area. During the ground loop, the right wing, right wheel and landing strut, and right horizontal stabilizer were damaged from impact with the dirt off the side of the runway.

The pilot stated that the airplane and engine had no mechanical failures or malfunctions during the flight.

In a telephone conversation, a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector reported that he was at the Raytheon building at the time of the accident. He talked to the pilot after the accident, and the pilot stated to him that he ground looped.

In his conversation, the FAA inspector stated that there might have been dust devil activity in the area. However, there was no dust devil activity on the runway at the time of the accident.

The pilot was landing on runway 25. An aviation routine weather report (METAR) issued for Deer Valley at 1253 reported that the winds were from 160 degrees at 6 knots.

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private	<b>Age:</b>	55, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Front
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 3 With waivers/limitations	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	February 1, 2004
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	No	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	February 1, 2004
<b>Flight Time:</b>	1043 hours (Total, all aircraft), 273 hours (Total, this make and model), 1043 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 26 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 20 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	American Champion (ACAC)	<b>Registration:</b>	N617MA
<b>Model/Series:</b>	8GCBC	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	444-2003
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tailwheel	<b>Seats:</b>	2
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	June 1, 2005 Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	2150 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	90 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	90 Hrs as of last inspection	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Lycoming
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed, not activated	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	O-360-C1G
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	Michael D. Sarti	<b>Rated Power:</b>	180 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>	DVT,1478 ft msl	<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Observation Time:</b>	12:53 Local	<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	
<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>	6 knots /	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	160°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	29.79 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	34°C / -1°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	ALBUQUERQUE, NM (ABQ )	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	PHOENIX, AZ (DVT )	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	VFR
<b>Departure Time:</b>	10:30 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	Phoenix Deer Valley Airport DVT	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	Asphalt
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>	1478 ft msl	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	Dry
<b>Runway Used:</b>	25L	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	None
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>	8208 ft / 100 ft	<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Full stop

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	2 None	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	33.688331,-112.082496

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Plagens, Howard
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	Bruce Bessette; Federal Aviation Administration; Scottsdale, AZ
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	September 13, 2005
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class</a>
<b>Note:</b>	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=61751">https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=61751</a>

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

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](#).