



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Buena Vista, Colorado	Accident Number:	DEN06CA086
Date & Time:	June 11, 2006, 15:34 Local	Registration:	N48CW
Aircraft:	Rolladen-Schneider GmbH LS-3	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot had been soaring for about 4 hours when he decided to return to the airport. The AWOS (automated weather observation system) had been indicating that the wind was generally from the south-southeast at 10 to 18 knots. As the pilot got closer to the airport, AWOS indicated the wind was from 240 degrees and greater than 20 knots, then 250 degrees at 20 knots. When the pilot had descended to 700 feet agl (above ground level), he encountered a "strong sink." He said that he lost 400 feet in 12 seconds (2,000 fpm descent) and there was a barn, aircraft, and vehicles in his flight path. He decided to make a 180-degree turn in an attempt to land in a field west of the airport. The pilot rolled out of the turn at 30 feet agl. At 15 feet agl, the glider stalled and landed hard on rough, uneven terrain. The landing gear was torn off and the fuselage was buckled.

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 aircraft control resulting in an inadvertent stall/mush. Contributing to the accident was the downdraft.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER
Phase of Operation: APPROACH

Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - DOWNDRAFT

Occurrence #2: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT

Phase of Operation: APPROACH

Findings

2. (C) STALL/MUSH - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Findings

3. TERRAIN CONDITION - GROUND

Factual Information

On June 11, 2006, at 1534 mountain daylight time, a Rolladen-Schneider GMBH, N48CW, piloted by a private pilot, was substantially damaged when it impacted terrain during an off-airport landing at Buena Vista, Colorado. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident. The local personal flight was being conducted under the provisions of Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91 without a flight plan. The pilot, the sole occupant on board the airplane, was seriously injured. The flight originated from Buena Vista at 1106.

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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	55, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Glider	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	July 1, 2004
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	December 1, 2005
Flight Time:	930 hours (Total, all aircraft), 233 hours (Total, this make and model), 5 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Rolladen-Schneider Gmbh	Registration:	N48CW
Model/Series:	LS-3	Aircraft Category:	Glider
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	3196
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tailwheel	Seats:	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	June 1, 2005 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	846 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	0
Airframe Total Time:	1126 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	MYP	Distance from Accident Site:	22 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	15:29 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	200°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 6500 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 9000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	14 knots / 18 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	260°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.55 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	14°C / -7°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	BUENA VISTA, CO (7V1)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Buena Vista, CO (7V1)	Type of Clearance:	Unknown
Departure Time:	11:06 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	Central Colorado Regional 7V1	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	7946 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:		IFR Approach:	Unknown
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Unknown

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	38.813331,-106.117225

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Scott, Arnold
Additional Participating Persons:	Robert C Dixon; FAA Flight Standards District Office; Denver, CO
Original Publish Date:	October 3, 2006
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=63908

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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](#).