



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Connellsville, Pennsylvania	Accident Number:	NYC07LA123
Date & Time:	May 22, 2007, 11:55 Local	Registration:	N7760
Aircraft:	Dever Stits Playmate SA11A	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

Just before the accident airplane touched down on the runway, the left wing "dipped," and the airplane departed the left side of the runway and struck a parked vehicle. The pilot was unable to recall the final portion of the 3-hour long cross country flight, including the approach and landing. The pilot stated that he may have been "knocked out" by a medication that he began taking two days prior to the accident flight. While taking the drug the pilot did not "feel right" and reported that he was "dizzy." The pilot had taken the drug on the day the accident occurred. What role, if any, the pilot's other medical conditions played in the accident could not be determined. Examination of the airplane revealed no evidence of any mechanical abnormalities. The pilot's most recent FAA medical certificate was issued 5 years prior to the accident.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's inability to maintain control of the airplane due to an undetermined physiological impairment.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings

1. AIRCRAFT CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (C) PHYSIOLOGICAL CONDITION - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

On May 22, 2007, at 1155 eastern daylight time, an amateur built Stits Playmate SA11A, N7760, was substantially damaged when it impacted a parked vehicle while landing at Connellsville Airport (VVS), Connellsville, Pennsylvania. The certificated private pilot/owner was seriously injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and no flight plan was filed for the flight, which departed from Penn Yan Airport (PEO), Penn Yan, New York, about 0900. The personal flight was conducted under 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91.

According to a report prepared by the Pennsylvania State Police, a witness observed the airplane as it approached to land on runway 23. She stated that just before the airplane touched down, the left wing "dipped." After touchdown, the airplane departed the left side runway surface and proceeded across the taxiway, a grass area, and a parking lot before it struck a parked truck.

During a telephone interview, the pilot stated that he recalled taking off and reaching the cruise portion of the flight. The 330-mile cross-country flight, one of the longest flights the pilot had ever made, lasted about 3 hours. About 30 miles from the destination airport, the pilot made a radio transmission, but could not recall any of the flight following that transmission.

In a subsequent interview with a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector, the pilot recounted a possible explanation of his in-flight incapacitation. He stated that he may have been "knocked out on final approach by the medication he was taking while on the flight." The pilot elaborated that he began taking a drug called "Flomax" about two days prior to the accident flight. He stated that while taking the drug he felt "dizzy" and that he did not "feel right" while taking it. The pilot had taken the drug on the day the accident occurred.

Review of the pilot's post-accident medical treatment records revealed that the pilot was being treated for numerous conditions including high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Additionally, he was taking a prescription anti-depressant as well as a medication used in controlling the symptoms of an enlarged prostate (tamsulosin, or Flomax). During his post-accident hospitalization, the pilot was noted to have multiple abnormalities in his spine consistent with either multiple myeloma or cancer that had spread from some other source in the body. The pilot did not provide any further information as to the cause of these bone abnormalities.

An FAA inspector examined the runway and identified the point where the airplane touched down. The heading from that point to where the airplane came to rest was 180 degrees. Examination of the airplane's flight controls, engine controls, and brakes revealed that they were functional, with no abnormalities noted.

The pilot held a private pilot certificate with a rating for airplane single engine land. His most recent application for an FAA third class medical certificate was dated May 16, 2002, and on that date he reported 600 total hours of flight experience. The pilot's most recent flight review was completed in June 2002.

Runway 23 was a 3,458-foot long by 100-foot wide asphalt runway.

The weather conditions reported at Morgantown Municipal Airport (MGW), Morgantown, West Virginia, about 22 nautical miles southwest of the accident site, at 1153, included variable winds at 3 knots, 10 statute miles visibility, scattered clouds at 25,000 feet, temperature 24 degrees Celsius, dewpoint 12 degrees Celsius, and an altimeter setting of 30.28 inches of mercury.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	73, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	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:	May 1, 2002
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	June 1, 2002
Flight Time:	600 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Dever	Registration:	N7760
Model/Series:	Stits Playmate SA11A	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental (Special)	Serial Number:	23
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1500 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	O-320
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	150 Horsepower
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:	MGW,1248 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	22 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	11:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	260°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 25000 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	3 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.28 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	24°C / 12°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Penn Yan, NY (PEO)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Connellsville, PA (VVS)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	09:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	Connellsville Airport VVS	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	180 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	23	IFR Approach:	Unknown
Runway Length/Width:	3458 ft / 100 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Straight-in

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:	39.959167,-79.657218

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Muzio, David
Additional Participating Persons:	Joe McBride; FAA/FSDO; West Mifflin, PA
Original Publish Date:	April 30, 2008
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=65835

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](#).