Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Groveton, Texas	**Accident Number:**	DFW08LA106
Date & Time:	April 19, 2008, 13:00 Local	**Registration:**	N3921
Aircraft:	TOMBLINGSON-LEATHERS BREEZY RLU-1	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of engine power (total)	**Injuries:**	1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

While in cruise flight the experimental airplane's single engine lost complete power. Following an unsuccessful engine restart attempt, the pilot with one hour in airplane make and model, elected to perform a forced landing to a clearing. While about 50 feet above the ground, the airplane stalled and entered a spin. Moments later the airplane impacted the ground. The airplane came to rest nose pointing upward with the pilot elevated about eight feet above the ground. The pilot released his seatbelt, fell to the ground, and was able to pull himself away from the wreckage. There was no post crash fire. An airframe and powerplant (A&P) mechanic examined the engine for the IIC. The examination did not reveal the cause of the loss of engine power.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The loss of engine power for undetermined reasons and the pilot's failure to maintain airspeed during the forced landing. Contributing factors were the non-suitable terrain for the forced landing and the pilot's lack of experience in the airplane.

Findings

Aircraft	(general) - Failure
Personnel issues	Total experience w/ equipment - Pilot
Environmental issues	Tree(s) - Contributed to outcome
Aircraft	(general) - Not attained/maintained
Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot

Factual Information

History of Flight

Enroute	Loss of engine power (total) (Defining event)
Emergency descent	Loss of control in flight
Emergency descent	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

On April 19, 2008, approximately 1300 central daylight time, a single-engine Tomblingson-Leathers Breezy RLU-1 experimental airplane, N3921, was substantially damaged during a forced landing following a total loss of engine power near Groveton, Texas. The pilot, the sole occupant, sustained serious injuries. The airplane was registered to and operated by Raymond Rodgers Enterprise LLC. Visual meteorological prevailed and no flight plan was filed for the 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91 personal flight. The 123 mile cross-country flight originated from Cleveland Municipal Airport (6R3), Cleveland Texas, at 1200 and was destined for the David Campbell Field-Corsicana Municipal Airport (CRS), Corsicana, Texas.

The pilot reported that while in cruise flight the engine began sputtering and then lost complete power. Following an unsuccessful engine restart attempt, the pilot elected to perform a forced landing to a clearing. The pilot reported that while about 50 feet above the ground, the airplane stalled and entered a spin. Moments later the airplane impacted the ground. The airplane came to rest nose pointing upward with the pilot elevated about eight feet above the ground. The pilot released his seatbelt, fell to the ground, and was able to pull himself away from the wreckage. There was no post crash fire.

The pilot further reported that he had accrued about one hour flying time in the airplane make and model before the accident. In addition, the pilot reported that he had "topped off" both fuel tanks a short time before the accident.

According to photographs provided to the NTSB investigator-in-charge (IIC), the airplane's fuselage and both wings sustained structural damage.

An airframe and powerplant (A&P) mechanic examined the engine for the IIC. The mechanic reported that both magnetos were removed and spun on a test bench. No anomalies were noted. The carburetor venturi was found secure in place. The ignition timing was found at 32-degrees before top dead center (TDC). All spark plugs appeared normal. A cylinder compression check was performed with the following results: #1 76/80, #2 75/80, #3 76/80, and #4 74/80. The examination did not reveal the cause of the loss of engine power.

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 Without waivers/limitations	**Last FAA Medical Exam:**	July 13, 2006
Occupational Pilot:	No	**Last Flight Review or Equivalent:**	September 15, 2006
Flight Time:	809 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1 hours (Total, this make and model), 648 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	TOMBLINGSON-LEATHERS	**Registration:**	N3921
Model/Series:	BREEZY RLU-1	**Aircraft Category:**	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		**Amateur Built:**	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental (Special)	**Serial Number:**	EL2-2
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	**Seats:**	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	April 16, 2008 Condition	**Certified Max Gross Wt.:**	1500 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		**Engines:**	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	638 Hrs as of last inspection	**Engine Manufacturer:**	Continental
ELT:	Not installed	**Engine Model/Series:**	O-200
Registered Owner:	On file	**Rated Power:**	100
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:	LFK,296 ft msl	**Distance from Accident Site:**	20 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	12:53 Local	**Direction from Accident Site:**	36°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	**Visibility**	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	**Visibility (RVR):**	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	11 knots /	**Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:**	/
Wind Direction:	240°	**Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:**	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.06 inches Hg	**Temperature/Dew Point:**	26°C / 7°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	CLEVELAND, TX (6R3)	**Type of Flight Plan Filed:**	None
Destination:	CORSICANA, TX (CRS)	**Type of Clearance:**	None
Departure Time:	13:00 Local	**Type of Airspace:**	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	**Aircraft Fire:**	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	**Aircraft Explosion:**	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious	**Latitude, Longitude:**	30.934999,-95.011665(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	LeBaron, Timothy
Additional Participating Persons:	Cory Storm; Federal Aviaiton Administration; Houston, TX
Original Publish Date:	January 29, 2009
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=67850