



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	Dansville, New York	<b>Accident Number:</b>	NYC08LA168
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	April 19, 2008, 16:00 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N90870
<b>Aircraft:</b>	LET Blanik L-13	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>	Landing area undershoot	<b>Injuries:</b>	2 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Instructional		

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## Analysis

The flight instructor was conducting a glider familiarization flight with the private pilot, who had not flown in a glider for about 3 years. The private pilot entered the traffic pattern for the grass landing area adjacent to runway 14. The flight instructor stated that the private pilot was "a little reluctant" to remove the dive brakes and that the instructor removed them while on final approach at 600 feet above ground level. He further stated that the glider encountered a wind gradient that substantially reduced the glider's glide ratio. The glider subsequently landed short of the desired touchdown point and the left wing struck a tree. The glider came to rest about 100 feet before the runway. The private pilot stated that she felt the glider was "too high" until she turned onto the final approach path and realized it was actually "too low." Winds reported at the airport about the time of the accident were from 140 degrees at 15 knots.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to attain the proper glide path and the flight instructor's delayed remedial action. Contributing to the accident was the encountered headwind.

## Findings

<b>Aircraft</b>	Descent/approach/glide path - Not attained/maintained
<b>Personnel issues</b>	Aircraft control - Pilot
<b>Personnel issues</b>	Delayed action - Instructor/check pilot
<b>Environmental issues</b>	(general) - Effect on operation

## Factual Information

### History of Flight

Landing	Landing area undershoot (Defining event)
Landing	Collision during takeoff/land

On April 19, 2008, about 1600 eastern daylight time, a Let Blanik L-13 glider, N90870, was substantially damaged when it impacted terrain while landing at the Dansville Municipal Airport (DSV), Dansville, New York. The certificated flight instructor (CFI) and the certificated private pilot were not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and no flight plan had been filed for the local instructional flight conducted under 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91.

The flight instructor was conducting a familiarization flight with the private pilot, who had not flown in a glider for about 3 years.

According to the CFI, the glider was towed to an altitude of the 2,000 feet and released. The private pilot was flying and subsequently entered the traffic pattern for the grass landing area adjacent to runway 14, a 3,500-foot-long, by 100-foot-wide, asphalt runway. The turn from the base leg to the final approach course was performed at an altitude of approximately 700 feet above ground level (agl). The CFI stated that the private pilot was "a little reluctant" to remove the dive brakes and he removed them at 600 feet agl. He further stated:

"At this point in the flight the runway touchdown point appeared ok, so we continued. As we approached approximately 200 [feet] agl we began to sink, so I was forced to take over the controls. We encountered a wind gradient which substantially reduced the glide ratio of the aircraft, which resulted in landing short of the desired touchdown point. The left-hand wind struck a tree which ground-looped the aircraft and we came to a full stop facing the opposite direction of landing...."

The glider came to rest about 100 feet prior to the runway and sustained substantial damage to its left wing and fuselage.

The private pilot stated that she felt the glider was "too high" until she turned onto the final approach path and realized it was "too low."

The CFI reported 7,679 hours of total flight experience which included 145 hours in gliders. The private pilot reported 300 hours of total flight experience, all in gliders. Neither pilot reported any mechanical malfunctions of the glider during the accident flight.

A weather observation taken at DSV, at 1554, reported: wind from 140 degrees at 15 knots,

visibility 10 statute miles, clear skies, temperature 29 degrees Celsius (C), dew point 2 degrees C, altimeter 29.82 inches of mercury.

### Flight instructor Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Airline transport; Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	56, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Rear
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Glider	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	Yes
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	Airplane multi-engine; Airplane single-engine; Glider; Instrument airplane	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 1 With waivers/limitations	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	June 25, 2007
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	No	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	December 10, 2007
<b>Flight Time:</b>	7679 hours (Total, all aircraft), 100 hours (Total, this make and model), 3493 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 18 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 12 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private	<b>Age:</b>	61, Female
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Front
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Glider	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	Yes
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	None None	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	No	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	300 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	LET	<b>Registration:</b>	N90870
<b>Model/Series:</b>	Blanik L-13	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Glider
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	025801
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Ski/wheel	<b>Seats:</b>	2
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	April 17, 2008 Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	1100 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>		<b>Engines:</b>	
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	2299 Hrs as of last inspection	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	
<b>ELT:</b>	Not installed	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	Finger Lakes Soaring Club	<b>Rated Power:</b>	
<b>Operator:</b>	Finger Lakes Soaring Club	<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>	DSV,662 ft msl	<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Observation Time:</b>	15:54 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>	15 knots /	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	140°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	29.81 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	29°C / 2°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>			
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Dansville, NY (DSV)	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	Dansville, NY	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	15:45 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	Dansville Municipal DSV	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	Grass/turf
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>	662 ft msl	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	Dry
<b>Runway Used:</b>	14	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	None
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>	3500 ft / 100 ft	<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Traffic pattern

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	2 None	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	N/A	<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>	42.570835,-77.712776

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Schiada, Luke
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	Gustav R Neubauer; FAA/FSDO; Albany, NY
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	March 5, 2009
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class</a>
<b>Note:</b>	
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=67880">https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=67880</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](#).