



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	HIXSON, Tennessee	Accident Number:	ATL82DA177
Date & Time:	June 26, 1982, 22:52 Local	Registration:	N2604P
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-22-150	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE PILOT ELECTED TO TAKEOFF ON A DARK NIGHT WITHOUT RUNWAY LIGHTS. HE STATED THAT THE RUNWAY LIGHTS WERE NOT AVAILABLE AT THE TIME SINCE THE OPERATOR WAS OUT OF TOWN. ACCORDING TO THE PILOT AND OTHER WITNESSES, AT LEAST PART OF THE AIRPORT ENVIRONMENT WAS ILLUMINATED BY THE LIGHTS NEAR THE APPROACH END OF RUNWAY 23. THE PILOT REPORTED THAT HE CLIMBED STRAIGHT AHEAD TO 400 FT AGL AFTER TAKING OFF FROM RUNWAY 23. REPORTEDLY AT THAT ALTITUDE, HE TURNED RIGHT, THEN BACK LEFT, INTENDING TO LAND ON RUNWAY 05. HE SAID THAT HE TURNED TO WHERE HE EXPECTED TO FIND THE RUNWAY AND BEGAN HIS DESCENT. THE LANDING LIGHT WAS NOT AS BRIGHT AS HE ANTICIPATED, THE VISIBILITY WAS RESTRICTED SLIGHTLY BY HAZE, AND THE BRIGHT LIGHTS OF THE BALL PARK MADE IT DIFFICULT TO SEE. ALSO, HE REPORTED THAT MANY OF THE BALL PARK LIGHTS WERE TURNED OFF CAUSING A BLACK AREA WHICH WAS DISORIENTING. WHILE DESCENDING TO RUNWAY 05, THE PLANE STRUCK A TREETOP AND CAME TO REST IN A WOODED AREA.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - FINAL APPROACH

Findings

1. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - DARK NIGHT
2. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - HAZE/SMOKE
3. (F) AIRPORT FACILITIES, RUNWAY EDGE LIGHTS - NOT OPERATING
4. (C) JUDGMENT - POOR - PILOT IN COMMAND
5. (F) OVERCONFIDENCE IN PERSONAL ABILITY - PILOT IN COMMAND
6. (F) LACK OF RECENT EXPERIENCE IN TYPE OF AIRCRAFT - PILOT IN COMMAND
7. (F) VISUAL/AURAL DETECTION - PILOT IN COMMAND
8. (F) OBJECT - TREE(S)

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	56, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):		Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	June 25, 1982
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	3000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 3 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N2604P
Model/Series:	PA-22-150 PA-22-150	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:		Serial Number:	22-2937
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1840 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	10 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed	Engine Model/Series:	O-320-A1A
Registered Owner:	MICHAEL B. SMITH	Rated Power:	150 Horsepower
Operator:	JAMES G. GODSEY	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Night/dark
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	Visibility	6 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 2000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	0°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	72°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	N/A - None - Haze		
Departure Point:	HIXSON , TN (1A0)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	HIXSON , TN (1A0)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	22:50 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	DALLAS BAY SKY PARK 1A0	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	0 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	5	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	3025 ft / 50 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	35.160282,-85.200759(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):

Additional Participating Persons:

Original Publish Date: June 26, 1983

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=71037>

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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](#).