



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	ROME, Georgia	Accident Number:	ATL86LA234
Date & Time:	August 30, 1986, 16:00 Local	Registration:	N545JS
Aircraft:	BENHAM MIDGET MUSTANG M-1	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE PLT REPORTED HE TOOK OFF TOO CLOSE BEHIND A PRECEDING ACFT AND WAS CAUGHT IN THE WING TIP VORTICES. THE VORTICES COMBINED WITH A 110 DEG LEFT CROSSWIND (WIND 070/20 GUSTING HIGHER) RESULTED IN A LOSS OF CONTROL AND GROUND IMPACT. THE PLT SAID HE WAS IN A HURRY TO GET HOME BEFORE DARK.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - TAILWIND
2. (C) WRONG RUNWAY - SELECTED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) CLEARANCE - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (C) DIRECTIONAL CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
5. (C) SELF-INDUCED PRESSURE - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	47, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane single-engine	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Expired	Last FAA Medical Exam:	July 23, 1984
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	2049 hours (Total, all aircraft), 310 hours (Total, this make and model), 1718 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 18 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	BENHAM	Registration:	N545JS
Model/Series:	MIDGET MUSTANG M-1 MIDGET MUS	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental (Special)	Serial Number:	1001
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tailwheel	Seats:	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	July 21, 1981 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	O-290-D
Registered Owner:	JOHN E. SIMS	Rated Power:	135 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	ATL ,1000 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	37 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	16:00 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	130°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	Visibility	25 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 1800 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	14 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	60°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	16°C / 11°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	EVANSVILLE , IN	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	14:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	RICHARD B. RUSSELL RMG	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	644 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	18	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	6000 ft / 150 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	34.240425,-85.170867(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Hicks, Preston

Additional Participating Persons: JOE RICHARDS; ATLANTA, GA

Original Publish Date:

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=7174>

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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](#).