



AVIATION



HIGHWAY



MARINE



RAILROAD



PIPELINE

# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	Greencastle, Indiana	<b>Accident Number:</b>	CEN09LA196
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	March 7, 2009, 10:30 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N933WF
<b>Aircraft:</b>	FRITZ RV3-A	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>	Loss of engine power (partial)	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

## Analysis

The airplane was observed descending while banking. A witness said the airplane's engine was "quiet, low RPM." The airplane lost altitude, the bank angle increased to 90 degrees, the engine revved, and the airplane impacted terrain in a nose-down attitude. The pilot reported that he had fuel pressure and engine problems. The wreckage was examined and residual fuel was found. No preimpact anomalies were detected during the examination. Wind conditions at an observation facility about 25 nautical miles from the airport were from 200 degrees at 16 knots, gusting to 23 knots.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: A partial loss of engine power for undetermined reasons and the pilot's failure to maintain aircraft control during the emergency descent.

## Findings

<b>Personnel issues</b>	Aircraft control - Pilot
<b>Environmental issues</b>	Gusts - Not specified
<b>Aircraft</b>	(general) - Not specified
<b>Aircraft</b>	(general) - Not attained/maintained

# Factual Information

## History of Flight

Initial climb	Loss of engine power (partial) (Defining event)
Emergency descent	Off-field or emergency landing
Emergency descent	Aerodynamic stall/spin

On March 7, 2009, about 1030 eastern standard time, N933WF, an experimental amateur-built Fritz RV3-A, sustained substantial damage during a forced landing following a loss of engine power on initial climb from the Putnam County Airport (4I7), near Greencastle, Indiana. The private pilot was seriously injured, was hospitalized, and subsequently died while hospitalized on March 26, 2009. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and no flight plan was on file for the Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91 personal flight. The flight originated from 4I7 and was destined for the Hendricks County Airport-Gordon Graham Field (2R2), near Indianapolis, Indiana.

The airport manager at 4I7 reported that the accident pilot “departed the field at approximately 1030 without requesting or receiving any services. Nothing looked abnormal to me during his takeoff.”

According to eyewitness statements, the airplane was descending while banking and the engine was “quiet, low RPM.” The airplane lost altitude, the bank angle increased to 90 degrees, the engine revved, and the airplane impacted terrain nose down. According to one of the witnesses it appeared that the pilot was trying to land with an engine problem. The witnesses drove to the accident site and talked to the pilot. The pilot reportedly indicated that he had a fuel pressure problem and engine problems. One of the witnesses stated that the engine was running at impact. The pilot reportedly said that he was flying from 2R2 for breakfast at 4I7. The smell of fuel was present at the accident site and when asked, the pilot indicated to the witnesses that he turned off the ignition and fuel.

The pilot held a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) private pilot certificate with a single engine land rating. He held a Third Class Medical certificate that was issued on July 8, 1996 with a limitation that it was “valid for student pilot purposes only.” The pilot subsequently applied for a Third Class Medical certificate on April 12, 1999. That application was deferred due to his uncorrected vision. The pilot reported his total flight time was 1,700 hours on the application for that medical certificate and he reported that he had accumulated 7 hours of flight time in the six months prior to that application.

N933WF was a single-engine, single-seat, low-wing, experimental amateur-built Fritz RV3-A, monoplane. Airworthiness documents indicated the airplane was powered by a Lycoming O-320-E3D engine, serial number L-36447-27A.

An examination of the wreckage revealed no pre-impact anomalies.

At 0954, the recorded weather at the Indianapolis International Airport was: Wind 200 degrees at 16 knots, gusting to 23 knots; visibility 10 statute miles; sky condition scattered 4,700 feet, overcast 250,000 feet; temperature 19 degrees C; dew point 12 degrees C; altimeter 29.94 inches of mercury.

The airport manager at 417 reported, "The conditions at the time were blustery. ... The winds were 230 @ 11 [knots] gusting to 21 and the temperature was 20C."

An autopsy was not performed on the pilot. An Indiana State Department of Health Certificate of Death was issued. That certificate indicated the cause of death was, "Renal Failure and Aviation Accident."

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private	<b>Age:</b>	79, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Single
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 3 None	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	April 12, 1999
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	No	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	1700 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	FRITZ	<b>Registration:</b>	N933WF
<b>Model/Series:</b>	RV3-A	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	Yes
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Experimental (Special)	<b>Serial Number:</b>	11316
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tailwheel	<b>Seats:</b>	1
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>		<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>		<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>		<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	LYCOMING
<b>ELT:</b>		<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	O-320-E3D
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	On file	<b>Rated Power:</b>	150 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>	On file	<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>	Dusk
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	IND,797 ft msl	<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	25 Nautical Miles
<b>Observation Time:</b>	09:54 Local	<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	80°
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Scattered / 4700 ft AGL	<b>Visibility</b>	10 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	Overcast / 25000 ft AGL	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	16 knots / 23 knots	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	200°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	29.94 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	19°C / 12°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Greencastle, IN (4I7 )	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	Indianapolis, IN (2R2 )	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	10:30 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class B

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	Putnam County Airport 4I7	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>	842 ft msl	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	
<b>Runway Used:</b>		<b>IFR Approach:</b>	None
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>		<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Forced landing

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>		<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	39.633609,-86.813613(est)

## Administrative Information

**Investigator In Charge (IIC):** Malinowski, Edward

**Additional Participating Persons:** Joseph D Cerny; Federal Aviation Administration; Indianapolis, IN

**Original Publish Date:** November 9, 2009

**Last Revision Date:**

**Investigation Class:** [Class](#)

**Note:**

**Investigation Docket:** <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=73456>

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