



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	Slaughter, Louisiana	<b>Accident Number:</b>	CEN09LA255
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	April 20, 2009, 11:00 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N226BW
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Whitehead Titan	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Defining Event:</b>	Loss of control in flight	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Ferry		

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## Analysis

The pilot had just purchased the experimental light sport airplane and was ferrying it to his home airport. Witnesses said that after the airplane took off, it started what appeared to be a pilot-induced oscillation. The pilot returned to the airport and was attempting to land when it collided with terrain. The oscillations continued all the way to the ground. The former owner told FAA inspectors that the pilot was over-correcting, or chasing the oscillations. He also said the airplane was quite sensitive around the lateral (pitch) axis. The pilot was a student pilot, and had never flown this airplane or any other light sport aircraft (LSA). The last time he had flown was almost a year before the accident. The airplane's last conditional inspection was more than two years old. The airplane's previous owner told FAA inspectors that the airplane was sold on an "as is, where is" basis, and the new owner was fully aware of these stipulations.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's incorrect use of pitch control, resulting in induced pitch oscillations and loss of aircraft control. Contributing to the accident were the pilot's total lack of experience in aircraft make/model, and his lack of recency of experience.

## Findings

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<b>Aircraft</b>	Pitch control - Incorrect use/operation
<b>Personnel issues</b>	Total experience w/ equipment - Pilot
<b>Personnel issues</b>	Recent experience - Pilot
<b>Personnel issues</b>	Scheduled/routine inspection - Pilot
<b>Personnel issues</b>	Aircraft control - Pilot

## Factual Information

### History of Flight

<b>Approach</b>	Loss of control in flight (Defining event)
<b>Uncontrolled descent</b>	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

On April 20, 2009, approximately 1100 central daylight time, a Titan Tornado II, N226BW, was destroyed when it collided with terrain during an attempted emergency landing at A&P Airpark Airport (LS77), Slaughter, Louisiana. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident. The personal flight was being conducted under the provisions of Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 91 without a flight plan. The student pilot, the sole occupant aboard, was fatally injured. The proposed cross-country flight had originated minutes before the accident, and was destined for Jonesville, Louisiana (L32).

The pilot had just purchased the airplane and was going to ferry it to Jonesville, Louisiana, his home airport. The former owner of the airplane wrote, "The airplane took off on runway 36 and the takeoff looked normal until he got airborne and started what appeared to be a pilot-induced oscillation. He flew a circle still oscillating and came back to try to land. The oscillations continued all the way to the ground. His altitude appeared to be 0-20 feet when he oscillated nose down into the ground." The airport manager, also a witness, said the airplane appeared to "oscillate violently." A third witness, who was fishing nearby, saw the airplane overhead and waved at the pilot. He said everything "seemed fine." Shortly thereafter the airplane reappeared. He wrote, "It seemed like the motor was wide open, then shut off. This happened 2-3 times and the motor stopped."

FAA inspectors who went to the accident site said they found no mechanical discrepancies with the airplane or engine. The former owner told them it appeared that the pilot was over-correcting, or chasing the oscillations. He also said the airplane was quite sensitive around the lateral (pitch) axis.

Examination of the pilot's logbook, containing entries from September 6, 1992, to May 17, 2008, revealed he had logged a total of 196.5 flight hours in the following airplane types:

Cessna 150: 10.0  
Cessna 152: 15.0  
Cessna 170A: 6.8  
Cessna 172: 105.3  
Piper PA-22-108: 32.5  
Piper PA-28-140: 54.5

The logbook also revealed that the pilot was a student pilot, he had never flown a Titan

Tornado II or any other light sport aircraft (LSA), and that his last flight was on May 17, 2008, almost a year before the accident.

The airplane's last conditional inspection was accomplished by the airplane's previous owner on November 13, 2006, at a total airframe time of 40.1 hours. He told FAA inspectors that the airplane was sold on an "as is, where is" basis, and the new owner was fully aware of these stipulations.

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Student	<b>Age:</b>	56, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<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>	Yes
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 3 With waivers/limitations	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	January 28, 2008
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	No	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	197 hours (Total, all aircraft), 0 hours (Total, this make and model), 158 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft)		

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Whitehead	<b>Registration:</b>	N226BW
<b>Model/Series:</b>	Titan Tornado II	<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>	D97618SOHK0277
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tricycle	<b>Seats:</b>	2
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	November 13, 2006 Condition	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	1320 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>		<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	40 Hrs as of last inspection	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Bombardier Rotax
<b>ELT:</b>		<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	912S
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	Walter J. Book	<b>Rated Power:</b>	100
<b>Operator:</b>	Walter J. Book	<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>		<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Observation Time:</b>		<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>		<b>Visibility</b>	
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>		<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	/	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>		<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>		<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>			
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Slaughter, LA (LS77)	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	Jonesville, LA (L32')	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	10:50 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class G

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	A&P Airpark Airport LS77	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	Grass/turf
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>	140 ft msl	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	Dry
<b>Runway Used:</b>	36	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	None
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>	3000 ft / 100 ft	<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	None

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<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>	30.727222,-91.142501

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Scott, Arnold
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	Joseph Pocher; FAA Flight Standards District Office; Baton Rouge, LA
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	August 13, 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.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=73691">https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=73691</a>

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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](#).