



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Adrian, Michigan	Accident Number:	CEN09CA269
Date & Time:	April 26, 2009, 15:10 Local	Registration:	N238SB
Aircraft:	LET L-23 Super Blanik	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Windshear or thunderstorm	Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Instructional		

Analysis

Before the accident flight, the glider flight instructor observed adverse weather approaching the airport from the south. He wanted to demonstrate a crosswind landing to his student before ceasing glider operations due to the adverse weather. The glider released from the tow airplane around 1,000 feet above ground level and then proceeded on downwind for runway 29. While on final approach, the flight instructor had difficulty maintaining proper runway alignment due to a strong, gusting crosswind. As a result, he elected to land the glider in a grassy area immediately north of the runway. He noted that his forward visibility was limited by heavy rain. The glider impacted a taxiway sign during the landing, substantially damaging the left wing. Weather radar and surface observations indicated that the airport was affected by a thunderstorm shortly after the glider departed on the local area flight. The thunderstorm produced heavy rain, lightning, and strong winds. During the accident flight, the airport's automated surface observing system recorded a peak wind from 220 degrees magnetic at 42 knots. The glider's maximum demonstrated crosswind component for safe approach, landing and aerotow launching was 16 knots.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The flight instructor's inadequate compensation for the strong, gusting crosswind during landing. Contributing to the accident was the flight instructor's decision to attempt flight with known adverse weather approaching the airport.

Findings

Environmental issues	Thunderstorm - Decision related to condition
Aircraft	Crosswind correction - Not attained/maintained
Aircraft	Maximum crosswind component - Capability exceeded
Personnel issues	Decision making/judgment - Instructor/check pilot
Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot

Factual Information

History of Flight

Prior to flight	Preflight or dispatch event
Approach-VFR pattern downwind	Windshear or thunderstorm (Defining event)
Approach-VFR pattern final	Loss of visual reference
Landing-flare/touchdown	Collision during takeoff/land

Flight instructor Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight instructor; Private	Age:	76, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea	Seat Occupied:	Rear
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Glider	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	Glider	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	None	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	September 23, 2007
Flight Time:	1041 hours (Total, all aircraft), 400 hours (Total, this make and model), 5 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Student pilot Information

Certificate:	None	Age:	41, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	None	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1 hours (Total, this make and model), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	LET	Registration:	N238SB
Model/Series:	L-23 Super Blanik	Aircraft Category:	Glider
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	928008
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tandem	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	November 8, 2008 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1124 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	0
Airframe Total Time:	1564 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	Adrian Soaring Club, Inc.	Rated Power:	
Operator:	Adrian Soaring Club, Inc.	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KADG,798 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	14:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	0°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	16 knots / 23 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	240°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.13 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	28°C / 12°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Adrian, MI (KADG)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Adrian, MI (KADG)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	15:05 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	Lenawee County Airport KADG	Runway Surface Type:	Grass/turf
Airport Elevation:	798 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Wet
Runway Used:	29	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	1810 ft / 150 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full stop;Traffic pattern

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	2 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 None	Latitude, Longitude:	41.867778,-84.077224(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Fox, Andrew
Additional Participating Persons:	Serge J Cote; Federal Aviation Administration - Detroit FSDO; Belleville, MI
Original Publish Date:	July 14, 2009
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=73750

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