



Aviation Investigation Final Report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| Location: | Great Barrington, Massachusetts | Accident Number: | ERA09CA277 |
| Date & Time: | April 30, 2009, 13:05 Local | Registration: | N8034Y |
| Aircraft: | Piper PA-30 | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Defining Event: | Runway excursion | Injuries: | 1 None |
| Flight Conducted Under: | Part 91: General aviation - Personal | | |

Analysis

The pilot was flying to the accident airport to have scheduled maintenance accomplished on the airplane's cabin heater. The airplane approached Runway 29, a 2,579-foot-long, 50-foot-wide, asphalt runway. While crossing the runway threshold, the pilot felt that the "ground speed was faster" than he thought. After touching down "about one-third down" the runway, the pilot utilized maximum braking and instead of running off the end of the runway, he elected to "ground loop" the airplane. The airplane veered to the right, departed the paved portion of the runway, and slid down into a ditch approximately 20 feet from the edge of the runway, damaging the left wing spar. The pilot also reported that, after exiting the airplane, the windsock was varying; however, it appeared to be indicating a quartering tailwind. A Federal Aviation Administration inspector confirmed continuity to all control surfaces and damage to the outboard section of the wing spar. The recorded wind at an airport located about 15 miles north of the accident site, about the time of the accident, was variable at 3 knots, gusting to 19 knots.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's improper decision to land with a tailwind.

Findings

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| Personnel issues | Decision making/judgment - Pilot |
| Environmental issues | Sloped/uneven terrain - Contributed to outcome |
| Environmental issues | Tailwind - Effect on operation |
| Aircraft | (general) - Not attained/maintained |

Factual Information

History of Flight

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|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Landing-flare/touchdown | Other weather encounter |
| Landing-flare/touchdown | Landing area overshoot |
| Landing-landing roll | Runway excursion (Defining event) |

Pilot Information

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|----------------------------------|---|--|-----------------|
| Certificate: | Airline transport; Commercial; Flight instructor | Age: | 77, Male |
| Airplane Rating(s): | Single-engine land; Multi-engine land | Seat Occupied: | Left |
| 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 3 With waivers/limitations | Last FAA Medical Exam: | March 27, 2008 |
| Occupational Pilot: | No | Last Flight Review or Equivalent: | August 13, 2008 |
| Flight Time: | 5569 hours (Total, all aircraft), 4417 hours (Total, this make and model), 4898 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 7 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft) | | |

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

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|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Aircraft Make: | Piper | Registration: | N8034Y |
| Model/Series: | PA-30 | Aircraft Category: | Airplane |
| Year of Manufacture: | | Amateur Built: | |
| Airworthiness Certificate: | Normal | Serial Number: | 30-1143 |
| Landing Gear Type: | Retractable - Tricycle | Seats: | 4 |
| Date/Type of Last Inspection: | March 21, 2009 Annual | Certified Max Gross Wt.: | 3800 lbs |
| Time Since Last Inspection: | | Engines: | 2 Reciprocating |
| Airframe Total Time: | 6382 Hrs as of last inspection | Engine Manufacturer: | Lycoming |
| ELT: | C91A installed, not activated | Engine Model/Series: | IO-320-C1A |
| Registered Owner: | Questair | Rated Power: | 160 Horsepower |
| Operator: | Fred Kantor | Operating Certificate(s) Held: | None |

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

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|---|----------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Conditions at Accident Site: | Visual (VMC) | Condition of Light: | Day |
| Observation Facility, Elevation: | PSF,1194 ft msl | Distance from Accident Site: | 15 Nautical Miles |
| Observation Time: | 12:54 Local | Direction from Accident Site: | 23° |
| Lowest Cloud Condition: | | Visibility | 10 miles |
| Lowest Ceiling: | Overcast / 8000 ft AGL | Visibility (RVR): | |
| Wind Speed/Gusts: | 3 knots / 19 knots | Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Wind Direction: | | Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Altimeter Setting: | 30.31 inches Hg | Temperature/Dew Point: | 17°C / -6°C |
| Precipitation and Obscuration: | No Obscuration; No Precipitation | | |
| Departure Point: | New Haven, CT (HVN) | Type of Flight Plan Filed: | None |
| Destination: | Great Barrington, MA (GBR) | Type of Clearance: | None |
| Departure Time: | 12:30 Local | Type of Airspace: | |

Airport Information

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|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Airport: | Walter J. Koladza Airport GBR | Runway Surface Type: | Asphalt |
| Airport Elevation: | 739 ft msl | Runway Surface Condition: | Dry |
| Runway Used: | 29 | IFR Approach: | None |
| Runway Length/Width: | 2579 ft / 50 ft | VFR Approach/Landing: | Traffic pattern |

Wreckage and Impact Information

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|----------------------------|--------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 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: | 42.184165,-73.404167 |

Administrative Information

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| Investigator In Charge (IIC): | Etcher, Shawn |
| Additional Participating Persons: | Robert Reckert; FAA/FSDO; Windsor Locks, CT |
| Original Publish Date: | July 28, 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=73759 |

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

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](#).