



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Athens, Tennessee	Accident Number:	ERA11CA288
Date & Time:	May 7, 2011, 15:15 Local	Registration:	N27LX
Aircraft:	Schleicher ASW-27	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of lift	Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Air race/show		

Analysis

While participating in a soaring competition, the pilot of the glider realized that a layer of high cirrus clouds had moved into the area and had stopped the heating of the ground by the sun. The thermal activity began to get progressively weaker and the pilot began to look for a place to make an off-airport landing. He observed a mowed hay field, did not see any obstructions, and chose it for his landing site. After turning on final approach with the wing flaps and spoilers extended, the glider struck two electrical transmission lines that were running diagonally across the glidepath, about 15 feet above ground level. The airplane sustained substantial damage to the fuselage and wing during the impact with the wires.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's inadequate visual lookout resulting in a collision with power lines while making an off-airport landing.

Findings

Environmental issues	Thermal lifting - Not specified
Environmental issues	Wire - Contributed to outcome
Personnel issues	Incorrect action performance - Pilot
Personnel issues	Monitoring environment - Pilot

Factual Information

History of Flight

Enroute-cruise	Loss of lift (Defining event)
Enroute-descent	Off-field or emergency landing
Landing	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	64, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Single
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Glider	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	None	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	October 25, 2010
Flight Time:	2871 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1111 hours (Total, this make and model), 2771 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 70 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 20 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Schleicher	Registration:	N27LX
Model/Series:	ASW-27	Aircraft Category:	Glider
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental (Special)	Serial Number:	27074
Landing Gear Type:	N/A	Seats:	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	April 10, 2011 Condition	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1102 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	0
Airframe Total Time:	1309 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	TYS,981 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	38 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	14:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	45°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 5000 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	11 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	230°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29.98 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	21°C / 8°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Benton, TN (92A)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Dayton, TN (2A0)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	12:45 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	35.397777,-84.756385(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Gunther, Todd
Additional Participating Persons:	Rocky Davidson; FAA/FSDO; Nashville, TN
Original Publish Date:	August 22, 2011
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=79055

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](#).