



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	SOMERSET, Ohio	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ATL89LA181
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	July 18, 1989, 20:00 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N8914W
<b>Aircraft:</b>	PIPER PA-28-235	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	2 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

## Analysis

THE AIRPLANE EXPERIENCED A LOSS OF PWR DURING CRUISE, AND SUBSEQUENTLY MADE A FORCED LDG IN A FIELD. THE AIRPLANE LANDED HARD AT THE EDGE OF THE FIELD, AND SUSTAINED STRUCTURAL DAMAGE. A MECHANIC WHO EXAMINED THE AIRPLANE AFTER THE MISHAP REPORTED THAT HE FOUND THE MAIN FUEL SUMP AND CARB BOWL TO BE 95% FULL OF WATER. SUBSEQUENT EXAMINATION OF THE FUEL TANK FILLER CAP GASKETS BY AN FAA INSPECTOR REVEALED THAT THE GASKETS WERE IN SERVICEABLE CONDITION. THE PLT REPORTED ONLY THAT HE PERFORMED A 'PROPER PREFLIGHT' PRIOR TO DEPARTURE.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE PILOT'S FAILURE TO ADEQUATELY PERFORM AN AIRPLANE PRE-FLIGHT INSPECTION AND DRAIN WATER PRESENT IN THE AIRPLANE FUEL SUPPLY. THE AIRPLANE ENGINE SUBSEQUENTLY LOST POWER DUE TO THE WATER CONTAMINATION.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - NONMECHANICAL  
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

### Findings

1. (C) FLUID,FUEL - CONTAMINATION

- 2. (C) FLUID,FUEL - WATER
- 3. (C) AIRCRAFT PREFLIGHT - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND

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Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - EMERGENCY

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Occurrence #3: HARD LANDING

Phase of Operation: LANDING

## Factual Information

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private	<b>Age:</b>	56, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea	<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>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 3 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	UNK	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	1018 hours (Total, all aircraft), 620 hours (Total, this make and model), 21 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	PIPER	<b>Registration:</b>	N8914W
<b>Model/Series:</b>	PA-28-235 PA-28-235	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	28-10483
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tricycle	<b>Seats:</b>	4
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	August 3, 1988 Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	2900 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	46 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	1560 Hrs	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	LYCOMING
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	O-540
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	FULKS, DONALD	<b>Rated Power:</b>	235 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>	FULAKS, DONALD D.	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None
<b>Operator Does Business As:</b>		<b>Operator Designator Code:</b>	

## 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>	Unknown	<b>Visibility</b>	5 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	Overcast / 3500 ft AGL	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	/ None	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	0°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>		<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	27°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	NEW LEXINGTON (I86 )	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	UNKNOWN	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	19:00 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class G

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>		<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>	0 ft msl	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	
<b>Runway Used:</b>	0	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	None
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>	0 ft / 0 ft	<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Forced landing

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	2 None	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	39.799556,-82.29924(est)

## Administrative Information

**Investigator In Charge (IIC):** Strickland, Scott

**Additional Participating Persons:** JAMES B MCNUTTY; COLUMBUS , OH  
GEORGE E SHIRK; CINCINNATI , OH

**Original Publish Date:** June 26, 1992

**Last Revision Date:**

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

**Note:**

**Investigation Docket:** <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=8047>

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