



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Jackson, Michigan	Accident Number:	CEN11LA488
Date & Time:	July 16, 2011, 19:30 Local	Registration:	N341MD
Aircraft:	DIXON VOLKSPLANE VP-1	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of engine power (partial)	Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Flight test		

Analysis

The accident occurred during the airplane’s first flight. The pilot reported the airplane seemed sluggish during the takeoff roll, but he thought it was due to the warm outside temperature. The airplane lifted off halfway down the 4,000-foot-long runway. The pilot reported that the airplane was out of ground effect when it reached the end of the runway, at which time the airspeed and engine power began to decrease. The pilot initiated a turn to return to the airport, during which the airplane stalled and contacted a pole barn before impacting the ground. A postaccident inspection of the engine did not reveal any failures or malfunctions that would have resulted in the loss of engine power.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: A partial loss of engine power during initial climb after takeoff for undetermined reasons.

Findings

Not determined	(general) - Unknown/Not determined
Aircraft	(general) - Not specified

Factual Information

History of Flight

Initial climb	Loss of engine power (partial) (Defining event)
Landing	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

On July 16, 2011, at 1930 eastern daylight time, an amateur built Dixon Volksplane VP-1, N341MD, collided with a barn following a partial loss of engine power on takeoff from the Jackson County Airport (JXN), Jackson, Michigan. The pilot received minor injuries. The airplane was substantially damaged. The 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91 flight was operating in visual meteorological conditions without a flight plan. The flight was originating at the time of the accident.

The pilot reported he was making the first flight in the airplane which was built by someone else. He stated that he inspected the airplane and paperwork, and he felt the airplane was satisfactory to fly.

The pilot was cleared for takeoff on runway 32 and the winds were calm. He stated the takeoff roll seemed sluggish, but he thought it was due to the warm outside temperature. The airplane lifted off about halfway down the 4,000 foot long runway. He stated the airplane was significantly left wing heavy, but he was able to maintain control with the application of right aileron. The airplane was out of ground effect when he reached the end of the runway at which point the airspeed and engine rpm were decreasing very slowly. The pilot made a shallow turn in an attempt to land on runway 26. The engine continued to lose power and the airplane stalled at tree top height. The left wing contacted a pole barn which spun the airplane around prior to it contacting the ground resulting in substantial damage to the wings and fuselage.

The Volkswagen engine was equipped with dual carburetors and an oil cooler. The mixture control setting was preset and was not adjustable from the cockpit.

The airplane owner stated that he performed a teardown inspection on the engine following the accident and he was not able to identify any mechanical failures/malfunctions that would have resulted in the loss of engine power.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight instructor	Age:	74, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Single
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane multi-engine; Airplane single-engine; Instrument airplane	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	February 24, 2011
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	13000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 0 hours (Total, this make and model), 8000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 20 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 10 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	DIXON	Registration:	N341MD
Model/Series:	VOLKSPLANE VP-1	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental (Special)	Serial Number:	A606D1X-2006
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	May 9, 2011 Condition	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	883 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	0 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	0 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	VOLKSWAGEN
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	1600cc
Registered Owner:	DIXON BARTLEY M	Rated Power:	36 Horsepower
Operator:	DIXON BARTLEY M	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	JXN,1001 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:	19:56 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 5500 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	3 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	250°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.06 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	29°C / 18°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Jackson, MI (JXN)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Jackson, MI (JXN)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	19:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class D

Airport Information

Airport:	Jackson County JXN	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:		IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Forced landing

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	
Total Injuries:	1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	42.259723,-84.459167(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Sullivan, Pamela
Additional Participating Persons:	Raymond Drew; FAA-DTW-FSDO; Belleville, MI eric Haft; FAA-DTW-FSDO; Belleville, MI
Original Publish Date:	November 3, 2011
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=81168

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