



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Sheridan, Arkansas	Accident Number:	CEN12LA146
Date & Time:	January 31, 2012, 11:42 Local	Registration:	N2677A
Aircraft:	Piper PA-22-135	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of control in flight	Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot reported that the takeoff was normal until the airplane was climbing through about 200 feet above the ground, at which time he observed that the passenger suddenly tensed up. The pilot said he was then unable to move the rudder pedals because the passenger was stepping on the passenger-side rudder controls. The airplane skewed to the left, descended, and impacted terrain on the left side of the runway. A postaccident examination confirmed flight control continuity and revealed no evidence of mechanical malfunctions or failures that would have precluded normal operation.

The passenger reported this was his first flight ever in any aircraft. He also reported that he was not pressing on the rudder pedals. However, given the pilot's experience in the accident airplane and the lack of evidence of a preimpact anomaly, it is likely that the passenger did inadvertently interfere with the rudder pedals.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The passenger's interference with the flight controls during the initial climb, which resulted in a loss of control and impact with terrain.

Findings

Aircraft	Yaw control - Attain/maintain not possible
Personnel issues	Incorrect action performance - Passenger

Factual Information

History of Flight

Initial climb	Cabin safety event
Initial climb	Loss of control in flight (Defining event)
Initial climb	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

On January 31, 2012, at 1142 central standard time, a Piper Aircraft, Inc., PA-22-135 single engine airplane, N2677A, impacted terrain and obstructions during initial climb at Sheridan Municipal Airport (9M8), Sheridan, Arkansas. The airplane was registered to and operated by an individual as a personal flight under the provisions of 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and no flight plan was filed. The private pilot was seriously injured and the passenger suffered minor injuries. The airplane was substantially damaged. At the time of the accident the flight was originating from 9M8 for a local flight.

During climbout the nose of the airplane started to skid sharply to the left and the pilot lowered the nose to avoid stalling. The airplane descended and impacted terrain on the left side of the runway coming to rest upright in the edge of a tree line. The impact completely separated the engine and propeller from the fuselage and there was substantial damage to both wings, the forward fuselage, and the empennage.

The pilot reported that during the initial climb the passenger had suddenly tensed up and the pilot was unable to move the rudder pedals to correct the nose-left skidding because of interference from the passenger who was stepping on the passenger side rudder controls.

The passenger reported this was his first flight ever in any aircraft and added that he was certain that his feet were clear and he was not pressing on the rudder pedals.

A postaccident examination confirmed flight control continuity and revealed no evidence of mechanical malfunctions or failures that would have precluded normal operation.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	76, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	May 19, 2011
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	June 25, 1994
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 6500 hours (Total, all aircraft), 600 hours (Total, this make and model), 10 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N2677A
Model/Series:	PA-22-135	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	22-935
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	January 12, 2011 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1950 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	61 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	2529 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	C91A installed	Engine Model/Series:	0-290 SERIES
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	135 Horsepower
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:	KPBF,206 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	23 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	11:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	112°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	10000 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 10000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	14 knots / 23 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	190°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.13 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	18°C / 12°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Sheridan, AR (9M8)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Sheridan, AR (9M8)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	11:42 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	Sheridan Municipal Airport 9M8	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	235 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	19	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	3027 ft / 71 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	34.32389,-92.349998(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Latson, Thomas
Additional Participating Persons:	Bill Kelly; FAA Little Rock FSDO; Little Rock, AR
Original Publish Date:	February 14, 2013
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=82789

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