



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	CHESTER, Vermont	Accident Number:	BF093LA108
Date & Time:	July 4, 1993, 13:00 Local	Registration:	N164SS
Aircraft:	Burkhart Grob SPEED ASTIR II	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE PILOT REPORTED THAT HE ATTEMPTED TO RETURN TO THE AIRPORT AFTER A LOCAL SOARING FLIGHT. HE ENCOUNTERED A 'SUDDEN HEAVY SINK' AND IMPACTED TREES NEAR A FIELD LOCATED ABOUT TWO MILES FROM THE AIRPORT.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE PILOT'S INADEQUATE INFLIGHT PLANNING AND AN IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH A DOWNDRAFT WHILE ON FINAL APPROACH.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER
Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - FINAL APPROACH

Findings

1. (C) WEATHER CONDITION - DOWNDRAFT
2. (C) IN-FLIGHT PLANNING/DECISION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING - TURN TO LANDING AREA (EMERGENCY)

Findings

3. OBJECT - TREE(S)

Factual Information

On July 4, 1993, about 1300 hours eastern daylight time, N164SS, a Grob Speed Astir II glider, registered to Louis Groundal, Newtown, Connecticut, was destroyed after impacting trees during landing near Chester, Vermont. The certificated private pilot, the sole occupant, was not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and a flight plan was not filed. The local personal flight originated from Springfield, Vermont, and was conducted under 14 CFR 91.

According to the pilot;

"After about one hour of soaring, attempts to return to airport to land [were] hampered by sudden heavy sink. Terrain consisted of trees and [lacked] appropriate off field landing sites, except a pond and one small very rough field (1.5 to 2 miles from airport). Attempted to land glider in field, but on final approach heavy sink put glider in a tree near the edge of the field."

No mechanical malfunctions were reported.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	59, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Glider	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Unknown Unknown	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	251 hours (Total, all aircraft), 63 hours (Total, this make and model), 233 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 55 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 20 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Burkhart Grob	Registration:	N164SS
Model/Series:	SPEED ASTIR II SPEED ASTI	Aircraft Category:	Glider
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental (Special)	Serial Number:	4020
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	September 12, 1992 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1135 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	64 Hrs	Engines:	0 Unknown
Airframe Total Time:	220 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:		Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	LOUIS GROUNDAL	Rated Power:	
Operator:	LOUIS GROUNDAL	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	LEB ,598 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	30 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	12:55 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	200°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 5000 ft AGL	Visibility	25 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	10 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	340°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	27°C / 12°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	SPRINGFIELD , VT (VSF)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	(VSF)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	12:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	HARTNESS STATE VSF	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	577 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Guzzetti, Jeffrey
Additional Participating Persons:	GARY READIO; PORTLAND , ME
Original Publish Date:	May 17, 1994
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=8782

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