



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	IONIA, Michigan	Accident Number:	CHI94LA165
Date & Time:	May 20, 1994, 12:57 Local	Registration:	N140BG
Aircraft:	BURKHART GROB BG 103	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation		

Analysis

THE SIGHTSEEING GLIDER FLIGHT WAS BEING TOW LAUNCHED BY A PIPER CUB. AT AN ESTIMATED ALTITUDE OF 100 FEET AGL, THE TOW PLANE HAD A COMPLETE LOSS OF ENGINE POWER. THE PILOT OF THE TOW PLANE DISCONNECTED THE GLIDER AND MADE A SUCCESSFUL FORCED LANDING IN A WHEAT FIELD. THE GLIDER PILOT ATTEMPTED TO LAND IN THE SAME FIELD. THE GLIDER TOUCHED DOWN IN A NOSE LOW ATTITUDE, BOUNCED BACK INTO THE AIR. WHEN IT TOUCHED DOWN THE SECOND TIME THE TAIL HIT BEFORE THE LANDING GEAR.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: a hard landing as a result of the early disconnect of the glider launch/tow equipment.

Findings

Occurrence #1: HARD LANDING
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - ABORTED

- Findings
1. (C) GLIDER LAUNCH/TOW EQUIPMENT - DISCONNECTED

Factual Information

On May 20, 1994, about 1257 eastern daylight time, a Burkhart Grob BG 103, N140BG, sustained substantial damage in an off-airport landing near Ionia, Michigan. During the takeoff sequence, the tow airplane lost engine power, and the tow plane pilot disconnected the glider. Both the airplane and the glider landed in a field near the airport. The tow airplane was not damaged. The sightseeing glider flight originated at the Ionia County Airport. Neither the commercial pilot nor the passenger were injured.

The pilot of the glider stated he landed in a nose-down attitude, the glider bounced back into the air approximately 10-15 feet, and touched down a second time striking the tail before the landing gear touched the ground.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight instructor; Private	Age:	23, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Rear
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Glider	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Glider	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	May 17, 1991
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	650 hours (Total, all aircraft), 327 hours (Total, this make and model), 422 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 10 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 10 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	BURKHART GROB	Registration:	N140BG
Model/Series:	BG 103 BG 103	Aircraft Category:	Glider
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Aerobatic	Serial Number:	33902-K
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	May 6, 1994 100 hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1279 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	8 Hrs	Engines:	Unknown
Airframe Total Time:	1875 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	BENZ AVIATION	Rated Power:	
Operator:		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:	LAN ,860 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	23 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	12:50 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	120°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	25000 ft AGL	Visibility	15 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	6 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	190°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	22°C / 8°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	12:57 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:		Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Forced landing

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 None	Latitude, Longitude:	42.919593,-85.200653(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Doub, Mark
Additional Participating Persons:	DANIEL E CARIS; GRAND RAPIDS , MI
Original Publish Date:	January 12, 1995
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=9534

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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](#).