



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Kotzebue, Alaska	Accident Number:	GAA17CA527
Date & Time:	September 6, 2017, 11:30 Local	Registration:	N4088M
Aircraft:	Piper PA 12	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of control on ground	Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 135: Air taxi & commuter - Non-scheduled		

Analysis

The pilot reported that, while landing uphill on an unimproved gravel airstrip, the tailwheel-equipped airplane landed "smooth." He added that, while taxiing to the crest of the hill, a wind gust forced the airplane to become airborne. The airplane then drifted to the left, and he attempted to correct with full right aileron and maximum power. The airplane continued to bank left until "the wind forced the tail in a counter clockwise motion," which resulted in the airplane landing on the right main landing gear (MLG). Subsequently, the right MLG collapsed, and the right wing and right horizontal stabilizer struck the ground.

The airplane sustained substantial damage to the right wing lift strut and the right horizontal stabilizer and elevator.

The pilot reported that there were no preaccident mechanical failures or malfunctions with the airplane that would have precluded normal operation.

The pilot reported the weather at the time of the accident to be wind from 360° at 20 knots, gusting to 25 knots. The pilot landed on about a 360° heading.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

The pilot's failure to maintain directional control while landing on an unimproved airstrip in gusting wind conditions.

Findings

Aircraft	Directional control - Not attained/maintained
Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot
Environmental issues	Gusts - Effect on operation
Environmental issues	(general) - Effect on equipment

Factual Information

History of Flight

Landing	Loss of control on ground (Defining event)
Landing	Attempted remediation/recovery
Landing	Landing gear collapse
Landing	Dragged wing/rotor/float/other

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	29, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	4-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	February 28, 2017
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	June 13, 2017
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 696.7 hours (Total, all aircraft), 282 hours (Total, this make and model), 583.5 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 202 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 103 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 7.9 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N4088M
Model/Series:	PA 12 NO SERIES	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1946	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	12-3003S
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	3
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	August 30, 2017 100 hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1935 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	4900.7 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	C91A installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-360
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	180 Horsepower
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	On-demand air taxi (135)

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	PAIK, 168 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	22 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	19:56 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	176°
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 4900 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	3 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/ None
Wind Direction:	130°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/ N/A
Altimeter Setting:	29.37 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	10°C / 3°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	KOTZEBUE, AK (OTZ)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	VFR
Destination:	Kotzebue, AK	Type of Clearance:	VFR
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class G

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:	67.353057,-160.493896(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Swenson, Eric
Additional Participating Persons:	William Mallula; FAA; Fairbanks, AK
Original Publish Date:	December 15, 2017
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=95981

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