



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Marion, Virginia	Accident Number:	WPR19TA142
Date & Time:	April 30, 2019, 18:50 Local	Registration:	N396PH
Aircraft:	Zenair Zenith CH 701	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of control in flight	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The noncertificated pilot had purchased the airplane about 3 months before the accident and was flying the airplane for the second time. During landing, the airplane descended rapidly from about 15 ft above ground level (agl), landed hard, and bounced back into the air. The pilot added full power; however, as the airplane climbed through about 20 ft agl, it dropped rapidly a second time and landed hard. The right main landing gear wheel assembly separated, and the airplane veered to the right before it came to rest upright on the edge of the runway, resulting in substantial damage. The pilot reported that there were no preaccident mechanical failures or malfunctions with the airplane that would have precluded normal operation.

The pilot had obtained some flight training about 18 years before the accident in a different airplane make and model. He did not obtain a certificate and had not flown since then until purchasing the accident airplane. The circumstances of the accident are consistent with the pilot's failure to maintain control during a bounced landing.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

The noncertificated pilot's failure to maintain control following a bounced landing and his decision to fly the airplane without proper training.

Findings

Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot
Personnel issues	Decision making/judgment - Pilot
Personnel issues	Total experience - Pilot

Factual Information

History of Flight

Landing-flare/touchdown	Loss of control in flight (Defining event)
Landing-flare/touchdown	Hard landing

On April 30, 2019, about 1850 eastern daylight time, an experimental, amateur-built Zenith CH701 airplane, N396PH, was substantially damaged when it was involved in an accident near Marion, Virginia. The noncertificated pilot was not injured. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flight.

The pilot reported that he had purchased the airplane in January with the intent of obtaining his sport pilot certificate and had flown it to his home airport. The pilot stated that, on the day of the accident, he decided to fly the airplane around the airport traffic pattern "to see how it did." The accident flight was his second flight in the airplane. While landing on runway 26, the airplane descended rapidly from about 15 ft above ground level (agl), landed hard, and bounced. The pilot applied full throttle; however, as the airplane climbed through about 20 ft agl, it dropped rapidly a second time and landed hard. The right main landing gear wheel assembly separated, and the airplane veered to the right before it came to rest upright on the edge of the runway. The fuselage and left wing were substantially damaged. The pilot reported that there were no preaccident mechanical failures or malfunctions with the airplane that would have precluded normal operation.

The pilot further reported that he began learning to fly in 2001 and accumulated about 60 total hours of flight experience. He did not complete his training, nor had he flown an airplane since that time, until he purchased the accident airplane.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	None	Age:	91,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	3-point
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	None	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 60 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1 hours (Total, this make and model), 40 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 0 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 0 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 0 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Zenair	Registration:	N396PH
Model/Series:	Zenith CH 701	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	2007	Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental (Special)	Serial Number:	7-5308
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	April 1, 2019 Condition	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1100 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	3 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Rotax
ELT:	C91 installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	912
Registered Owner:		Rated Power:	100 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:	KMKJ, 2559 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	22:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	39°
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 4900 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.26 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	26°C / 15°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Marion, VA (MKJ)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Marion, VA (MKJ)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	18:44 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MKJ	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	2558 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	26	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	5252 ft / 75 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full stop; Traffic pattern

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	36.894443, -81.350555(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Cawthra, Joshua		
Additional Participating Persons:	John Osborne; Federal Aviation Administration; Charleston, WV		
Original Publish Date:	February 9, 2022	Investigation Class:	3
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.		
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=99404		

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