



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	Kalispell, Montana	<b>Accident Number:</b>	WPR19LA134
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	May 4, 2019, 11:46 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N185FT
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Cessna A185	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>	Loss of control on ground	<b>Injuries:</b>	2 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

## Analysis

The pilot and his pilot-rated passenger conducted a landing on a turf airstrip when the airplane pulled to the right as it slowed. The pilot was able to make a full stop landing and taxi back to take off. The takeoff was uneventful, so he remained in the airport area for another landing. During that landing, the airplane pulled hard to the right as it slowed. The pilot initiated a balked landing and returned to the original departure airport. During the final landing the airplane touched down on centerline for what initially appeared to be a normal landing. However, shortly after landing the pilot was unable to maintain directional control of the tailwheel equipped airplane and it veered off the right side of the runway, despite the pilot's attempt to correct back to the left with left rudder and braking.

Postaccident examination of the airplane revealed the tailwheel did not turn to the left properly; however, it could not be determined if the anomaly existed before the accident or if it resulted from the accident.

## Probable Cause and Findings

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

The loss of directional control during landing for reasons that could not be determined based on available evidence.

## Findings

<b>Not determined</b>	(general) - Unknown/Not determined
<b>Aircraft</b>	Directional control - Not attained/maintained

# Factual Information

## History of Flight

Landing-landing roll	Loss of control on ground (Defining event)
Landing-landing roll	Runway excursion

On May 4, 2019, about 1146 mountain daylight time, a Cessna A185F, N185FT, sustained substantial when it was involved in an accident at Glacier Park International Airport (GPI), Kalispell, Montana. The pilot and the pilot-rated passenger were not injured. The airplane was operated under the provisions of Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 as a personal flight.

According to the pilot, while landing at Ferndale Airport (53U), Bigfork, Montana, in light and variable wind conditions, the tailwheel-equipped airplane pulled to the right as it slowed. He accomplished a full stop landing and taxied back to take off. The pilot stated that the takeoff was uneventful, and he remained at 53U for another landing pattern. During the second landing, the airplane pulled hard to the right as it slowed, which prompted the pilot to initiate a balked landing; he elected to return to GPI where the flight had originated earlier that day.

The pilot stated that the wind was reported at 210° magnetic at 5 knots at GPI. The landing on runway 20 was normal, on centerline, and with the tailwheel lock engaged. However, shortly after touching down, he lost control of the airplane, and it veered off the right side of the runway, despite his left rudder inputs. The pilot believed there was an issue with the tailwheel. He stated that the airplane came to rest about halfway down and 10 ft off the edge of the runway.

Postaccident examination of the airplane revealed substantial damage to the left wing. The airplane was further examined by an airframe and powerplant mechanic under the oversight of a Federal Aviation Administration inspector. The tailwheel and flight control system, including the rudder system, were examined. It was noted the tailwheel would turn right freely and “break free” normally. The tailwheel would only turn left about 15° and would not break free. It could not be determined if the anomaly with the tailwheel was present before the accident or resulted from the accident.

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Airline transport; Commercial; Flight instructor	<b>Age:</b>	71,Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	3-point
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	Yes
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	Airplane multi-engine; Airplane single-engine; Instrument airplane	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 2 With waivers/limitations	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	August 24, 2018
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	Yes	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	April 12, 2019
<b>Flight Time:</b>	(Estimated) 24376 hours (Total, all aircraft), 3510 hours (Total, this make and model), 18810 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 90 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 35 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 7 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Pilot-rated passenger Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private	<b>Age:</b>	46,Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine sea	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Right
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	3-point
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	Yes
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Unknown	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	May 14, 1999
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	No	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	(Estimated)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Cessna	<b>Registration:</b>	N185FT
<b>Model/Series:</b>	A185 F	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>	1977	<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	18503329
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tailwheel	<b>Seats:</b>	4
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	May 11, 2018 100 hour	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	3350 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>		<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	2117.7 Hrs at time of accident	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Continental
<b>ELT:</b>	C91 installed, not activated	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	IO-520-D-4
<b>Registered Owner:</b>		<b>Rated Power:</b>	285 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>	On file	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual (VMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	GPI, 2977 ft msl	<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Observation Time:</b>	11:55 Local	<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Clear	<b>Visibility</b>	10 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	3 knots /	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>		<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	29.89 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	8°C / 1°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Bigfork, MT (53U )	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	Kalispell, MT (GPI )	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	VFR
<b>Departure Time:</b>	11:20 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class D

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	Glacier Park Intl GPI	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	Asphalt
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>	2976 ft msl	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	Dry
<b>Runway Used:</b>	20	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	None
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>	9007 ft / 150 ft	<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Full stop;Traffic pattern

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>		<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	2 None	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	48.310554,-114.256111(est)

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Nixon, Albert	
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	Clifford Carpenter; Federal Aviation Administration; Helena, MT	
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	May 3, 2022	<b>Investigation Class:</b> 3
<b>Note:</b>	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.	
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=99386">https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=99386</a>	

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), established in 1967, is an independent federal agency mandated by Congress through the Independent Safety Board Act of 1974 to investigate transportation accidents, determine the probable causes of the accidents, issue safety recommendations, study transportation safety issues, and evaluate the safety effectiveness of government agencies involved in transportation. The NTSB makes public its actions and decisions through accident reports, safety studies, special investigation reports, safety recommendations, and statistical reviews.

The Independent Safety Board Act, as codified at 49 U.S.C. Section 1154(b), precludes the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an incident or accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report. A factual report that may be admissible under 49 U.S.C. § 1154(b) is available [here](#).