



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Fairfield, Utah	Accident Number:	WPR18TA212
Date & Time:	August 5, 2018, 08:00 Local	Registration:	N951RA
Aircraft:	ICP Savannah	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of control in flight	Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The private pilot was on a personal cross-country flight and had maneuvered the airplane onto the base leg of the traffic pattern for his destination airport. He stated that the airplane likely encountered a downdraft and experienced a loss of lift. Despite his attempts to arrest the descent by adding full throttle, the airplane impacted terrain short of the runway. The pilot thought that the accident may have been prevented if he had configured the airplane to land in a steeper and higher approach, combined with more airspeed. He reported that there were no mechanical malfunctions or failures with the airplane that would have precluded normal operation.

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 airplane control after encountering a downdraft on approach to the runway.

Findings

Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot
Environmental issues	Downdraft - Effect on operation

Factual Information

History of Flight

Approach-VFR pattern base	Other weather encounter
Approach-VFR pattern base	Loss of control in flight (Defining event)
Approach-VFR pattern base	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

On August 05, 2018, about 0800 mountain daylight time, an experimental Jensen ICP Savannah airplane, N951RA, encountered a downdraft and impacted terrain short of the runway at the West Desert Airpark, Fairfield, Utah. The private pilot received minor injuries; the airplane sustained substantial damage to the right wing. The airplane was registered to and operated by the pilot under the provisions of Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91. Day visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and no flight plan had been filed. The personal cross-country flight originated from Spanish Fork Airport Springville-Woodhouse Field, Spanish Fork, Utah, about 0700 and was destined for Fairfield.

The pilot stated that while on the base leg of the traffic pattern, the airplane experienced a loss of lift. Despite his attempts to arrest the descent by adding full throttle, the airplane collided with the desert terrain short of the runway.

The pilot opined that the airplane had likely encountered a severe downdraft and the engine power was not sufficient to overcome the resulting descent rate. He thought that the accident may have been prevented if he had configured the airplane to land in a steeper and higher approach combined with more airspeed. He further stated that there were no mechanical malfunctions or failures with the airplane that would have precluded normal operation.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	61
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	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:	Class 3 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	March 1, 2018
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	March 19, 2017
Flight Time:	606 hours (Total, all aircraft), 379 hours (Total, this make and model), 555 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 8 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	ICP	Registration:	N951RA
Model/Series:	Savannah	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	2010	Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental (Special)	Serial Number:	05-01-51-365
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	December 12, 2017 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Rotax
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	912ULS
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:	KPVU, 4497 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	17 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	13:56 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	99°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	4 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	140°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29.98 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	19°C / 13°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Spanish Fork, UT (SPK)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Fairfield, UT (UT99)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	07:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class E

Airport Information

Airport:	West Desert Airpark UT99	Runway Surface Type:	Dirt
Airport Elevation:	4902 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry;Soft
Runway Used:		IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Traffic pattern

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	40.262222,-112.093055(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Keliher, Zoe
Additional Participating Persons:	
Original Publish Date:	September 27, 2019
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=97998

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