



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	Princeton, Texas	<b>Accident Number:</b>	CEN23LA309
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	July 16, 2023, 17:36 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N41317
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Piper J3C-65	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

## Analysis

The student pilot attempted to depart from a rough grass field. The student pilot reported that the airplane did not climb as expected and during a turn, the airplane struck a pipe protecting a gas meter. He landed the airplane to avoid trees in his flight path. During the precautionary landing, the airplane sustained substantial damage to the fuselage and both wings.

During an interview with the Federal Aviation Administration inspector assigned to the accident the student pilot did not allude to any mechanical issues with the airplane. The student pilot stated further that he did not have enough room for the takeoff. It was estimated that the field length was about 700 feet.

## Probable Cause and Findings

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

The student pilot's decision to attempt a takeoff from an unimproved field which resulted in an impact with an obstacle.

## Findings

<b>Environmental issues</b>	Fence/fence post - Effect on equipment
<b>Aircraft</b>	Takeoff distance - Capability exceeded
<b>Personnel issues</b>	Decision making/judgment - Student/instructed pilot

## Factual Information

### History of Flight

Takeoff	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT) (Defining event)
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### Student pilot Information

Certificate:	Student	Age:	57,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Rear
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Lap only
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 3 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	April 18, 2023
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	100 hours (Total, all aircraft), 90 hours (Total, this make and model), 25 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 99 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 20 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2.5 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N41317
Model/Series:	J3C-65	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1941	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	8008
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	September 12, 2022 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1159 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3206.4 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	C85-12
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	85 Horsepower
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	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>	KTKI, 569 ft msl	<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	5 Nautical Miles
<b>Observation Time:</b>	16:53 Local	<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	263°
<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>	6 knots /	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	130°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	30 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	27°C / 22°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Princeton, TX	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	Anna, TX	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>		<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class G

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	33.19294,-96.49116(est)

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Rutt, Brian
Additional Participating Persons:	Stephen Simpson; FAA - North Texas FSDO
Original Publish Date:	January 4, 2024
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	<a href="#">Class 4</a>
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	<a href="https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=192634">https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=192634</a>

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

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](#).