



Aviation Investigation Final Report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| Location: | Kalispell, Montana | Accident Number: | WPR23LA280 |
| Date & Time: | July 21, 2023, 08:00 Local | Registration: | N48MR |
| Aircraft: | Piper PA-12S | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Defining Event: | Loss of control on ground | Injuries: | 1 None |
| Flight Conducted Under: | Part 91: General aviation - Personal | | |

Analysis

The pilot of the tailwheel-equipped airplane reported that, during the landing roll with a right crosswind, he felt the right-wing lift, causing the airplane to veer to the left. He attempted to correct with right rudder; however, the airplane ground looped and came to rest in a nosed down position. The airplane sustained substantial damage to the right aileron. The pilot reported no preaccident mechanical failures or malfunctions 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 directional control of the airplane during landing with a crosswind.

Findings

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| Environmental issues | Crosswind - Response/compensation |
| Personnel issues | Aircraft control - Pilot |
| Aircraft | Directional control - Not attained/maintained |

Factual Information

History of Flight

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|----------------------|--|
| Landing-landing roll | Other weather encounter |
| Landing-landing roll | Loss of control on ground (Defining event) |
| Landing-landing roll | Nose over/nose down |

Pilot Information

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|---------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Certificate: | Private | Age: | 60,Male |
| Airplane Rating(s): | Single-engine land | Seat Occupied: | Front |
| Other Aircraft Rating(s): | None | Restraint Used: | Unknown |
| Instrument Rating(s): | None | Second Pilot Present: | |
| Instructor Rating(s): | None | Toxicology Performed: | |
| Medical Certification: | Class 3 With waivers/limitations | Last FAA Medical Exam: | September 10, 2021 |
| Occupational Pilot: | No | Last Flight Review or Equivalent: | December 13, 2022 |
| Flight Time: | 303 hours (Total, all aircraft), 30 hours (Total, this make and model), 283 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 10 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft) | | |

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

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|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Aircraft Make: | Piper | Registration: | N48MR |
| Model/Series: | PA-12S | Aircraft Category: | Airplane |
| Year of Manufacture: | 1947 | Amateur Built: | |
| Airworthiness Certificate: | Normal | Serial Number: | 12-2583 |
| Landing Gear Type: | Tailwheel | Seats: | 3 |
| Date/Type of Last Inspection: | August 2, 2022 Annual | Certified Max Gross Wt.: | 1750 lbs |
| Time Since Last Inspection: | 11 Hrs | Engines: | 1 Reciprocating |
| Airframe Total Time: | 2926 Hrs | Engine Manufacturer: | Lycoming |
| ELT: | Installed, not activated | Engine Model/Series: | O-320-A2B |
| Registered Owner: | On file | Rated Power: | 150 Horsepower |
| Operator: | On file | Operating Certificate(s) Held: | None |

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

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|---|----------------------------------|---|------------------|
| Conditions at Accident Site: | Visual (VMC) | Condition of Light: | Day |
| Observation Facility, Elevation: | KGPI, 2973 ft msl | Distance from Accident Site: | 1 Nautical Miles |
| Observation Time: | 08:55 Local | Direction from Accident Site: | 219° |
| Lowest Cloud Condition: | Clear | Visibility | 10 miles |
| Lowest Ceiling: | None | Visibility (RVR): | |
| Wind Speed/Gusts: | 4 knots / | Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual: | None / None |
| Wind Direction: | 60° | Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual: | N/A / N/A |
| Altimeter Setting: | 30.12 inches Hg | Temperature/Dew Point: | 22°C / 8°C |
| Precipitation and Obscuration: | No Obscuration; No Precipitation | | |
| Departure Point: | Whitefish, MT (58S) | Type of Flight Plan Filed: | None |
| Destination: | Kalispell, MT | Type of Clearance: | None |
| Departure Time: | 07:45 Local | Type of Airspace: | Class D |

Airport Information

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|-----------------------------|---|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Airport: | Glacier Park International Airport GPI | Runway Surface Type: | Asphalt |
| Airport Elevation: | 2977 ft msl | Runway Surface Condition: | Dry |
| Runway Used: | 2 | IFR Approach: | Unknown |
| Runway Length/Width: | 9007 ft / 150 ft | VFR Approach/Landing: | Traffic pattern |

Wreckage and Impact Information

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|----------------------------|--------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| Crew Injuries: | 1 None | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Passenger Injuries: | | Aircraft Fire: | None |
| Ground Injuries: | | Aircraft Explosion: | None |
| Total Injuries: | 1 None | Latitude, Longitude: | 48.3105, -114.256(est) |

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Rho, Paul

Additional Participating Persons: Casey W. Stevens; Federal Aviation Administration; MT

Original Publish Date: November 16, 2023

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class 4](#)

Note: The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.

Investigation Docket: <https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=192683>

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](#).