



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Eagle River, Wisconsin	Accident Number:	CEN23LA098
Date & Time:	January 25, 2023, 13:00 Local	Registration:	N73034
Aircraft:	Cessna 120	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Collision during takeoff/land	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot reported that, during takeoff, the airplane reached an airspeed of about 35 mph and “hit an ice / snow berm”. The airplane became airborne, stalled, and impacted the terrain. The ski dug into the snow and the airplane flipped over. The airplane sustained substantial damage to the left wing and left strut. The pilot reported that there were no preaccident 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 decision to takeoff from an unsuitable surface which resulted in collision with an object.

Findings

Environmental issues	Snow/slush/ice covered surface - Decision related to condition
Personnel issues	Decision making/judgment - Pilot

Factual Information

History of Flight

Takeoff	Collision during takeoff/land (Defining event)
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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	69,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	3-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 3 None	Last FAA Medical Exam:	August 23, 2021
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	March 4, 2021
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 1981 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1416 hours (Total, this make and model), 1889 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N73034
Model/Series:	120	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1946	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	10242
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel; Ski	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	April 5, 2022 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1450 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	6185 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	C-90-12F
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	97
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:	KEGV, 1642 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	23 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	12:55 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	349°
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 9000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	29.73 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	-1°C / -6°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Eagle River , WI	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Eagle River , WI	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	Eagle River Union Airport KEGV	Runway Surface Type:	Ice;Snow
Airport Elevation:	1642 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Ice;Rough;Snow
Runway Used:	13	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	1600 ft / 60 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	45.5594,-89.161(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Otterstrom, Kevin
Additional Participating Persons:	Mike Pieczynski; MKE FSDO / FAA; Milwaukee , WI
Original Publish Date:	April 20, 2023
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class 4
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=106663

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](#).