



AVIATION



HIGHWAY



MARINE



RAILROAD



PIPELINE

Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Millbrook, New York	Accident Number:	ERA23LA343
Date & Time:	August 21, 2023, 09:55 Local	Registration:	N4814H
Aircraft:	Piper PA-17	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of control on ground	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot was landing the vintage, tailwheel-equipped airplane. As he touched down on the paved runway that had slight downhill, the pilot described that he “tapped” the brakes, and the right brake “grabbed a little harder than the left.” The pilot attempted to correct with rudder but the airplane ground looped after the right main landing gear separated from the fuselage. The airplane came to rest in the grass area next to the runway. During the accident sequence, the left wing and fuselage were substantially damaged. A Federal Aviation Administration inspector examined the airplane after the accident did not observe any abnormalities of the airplane’s brakes. Based on the lack of any anomalous findings during the postaccident examination of the brakes, it is likely that the pilot lost directional control of the tailwheel-equipped during landing, which resulted in a ground loop.

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 during landing, which resulted in a ground loop.

Findings

Aircraft	Directional control - Not attained/maintained
Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot

Factual Information

History of Flight

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

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Sport Pilot	Age:	74, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
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:	October 25, 2022
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	January 11, 2023
Flight Time:	486 hours (Total, all aircraft), 74 hours (Total, this make and model), 330 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 30 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 6 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N4814H
Model/Series:	PA-17	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1948	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	17-112
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	October 4, 2022 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1150 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	5474 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	C91 installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	C-85-8
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	85 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:	POU,153 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	8 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	09:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	233°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 9000 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:		Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	30.06 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	24°C / 18°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Poughkeepsie, NY (POU)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Millbrook, NY	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	08:15 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	SKY ACRES 44N	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	697 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	35	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	3828 ft / 60 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Straight-in

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	41.707424,-73.738022(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Mccarter, Lawrence
Additional Participating Persons:	Michael J. Reichert; FAA/FSDO; Allentown, PA
Original Publish Date:	December 21, 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=192904

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](#).