



AVIATION



HIGHWAY



MARINE



RAILROAD



PIPELINE

Aviation Investigation Final Report

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|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------|-------------|
| Location: | Wake Forest, North Carolina | Accident Number: | ERA23LA207 |
| Date & Time: | April 15, 2023, 15:11 Local | Registration: | N33873 |
| Aircraft: | Schweizer SGS 1-26E | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Defining Event: | Aerodynamic stall/spin | Injuries: | 1 Minor |
| Flight Conducted Under: | Part 91: General aviation - Instructional | | |

Analysis

According to the student pilot of the glider, another glider was still on the runway as he was entering the downwind leg of the airport traffic pattern for landing. He decided to land short of the turf runway and entered the glider into a forward slip in order to touch down in the intended area. He reported that, upon removing the slip, he noted that the airspeed decayed "from 60 to 30," and about 40 to 45 ft above the ground, he realized that the glider was "stalled" and that he "had no control over the aircraft." The glider impacted a parked tow airplane and terrain, resulting in substantial damage to the leading edge of the left wing and the aft fuselage. The student pilot reported no preimpact mechanical malfunctions or failures with the glider 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 student pilot's failure to maintain airspeed during the landing approach, which resulted in an exceedance of the glider's critical angle of attack, an aerodynamic stall, and a loss of control.

Findings

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| Aircraft | Angle of attack - Not attained/maintained |
| Personnel issues | Aircraft control - Pilot |

Factual Information

History of Flight

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| Landing | Aerodynamic stall/spin (Defining event) |
| Landing | Loss of control in flight |
| Landing | Collision during takeoff/land |

Student pilot Information

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|---------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|----------|
| Certificate: | None | Age: | 16, Male |
| Airplane Rating(s): | None | Seat Occupied: | Single |
| Other Aircraft Rating(s): | None | Restraint Used: | 3-point |
| Instrument Rating(s): | None | Second Pilot Present: | No |
| Instructor Rating(s): | None | Toxicology Performed: | |
| Medical Certification: | None | Last FAA Medical Exam: | |
| Occupational Pilot: | No | Last Flight Review or Equivalent: | |
| Flight Time: | 25 hours (Total, all aircraft), 25 hours (Total, this make and model), 10 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft) | | |

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

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|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------|
| Aircraft Make: | Schweizer | Registration: | N33873 |
| Model/Series: | SGS 1-26E | Aircraft Category: | Glider |
| Year of Manufacture: | 1974 | Amateur Built: | |
| Airworthiness Certificate: | Normal | Serial Number: | 615 |
| Landing Gear Type: | Tandem | Seats: | 1 |
| Date/Type of Last Inspection: | June 1, 2022 Annual | Certified Max Gross Wt.: | 700 lbs |
| Time Since Last Inspection: | | Engines: | 0 |
| Airframe Total Time: | 1425 Hrs as of last inspection | Engine Manufacturer: | |
| ELT: | Not installed | Engine Model/Series: | |
| Registered Owner: | NORTH CAROLINA SOARING ASSOCIATION | Rated Power: | |
| Operator: | NORTH CAROLINA SOARING ASSOCIATION | 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: | KLHZ, 369 ft msl | Distance from Accident Site: | 11 Nautical Miles |
| Observation Time: | 11:15 Local | Direction from Accident Site: | 44° |
| Lowest Cloud Condition: | | Visibility | 10 miles |
| Lowest Ceiling: | Broken / 1400 ft AGL | Visibility (RVR): | |
| Wind Speed/Gusts: | 4 knots / | Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual: | None / None |
| Wind Direction: | 260° | Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual: | N/A / N/A |
| Altimeter Setting: | 29.98 inches Hg | Temperature/Dew Point: | 18°C / 15°C |
| Precipitation and Obscuration: | No Obscuration; No Precipitation | | |
| Departure Point: | Wake Forest, NC | Type of Flight Plan Filed: | None |
| Destination: | Wake Forest, NC | Type of Clearance: | None |
| Departure Time: | | Type of Airspace: | Class G |

Airport Information

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|-----------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|------------|
| Airport: | CROOKED CREEK 7NC5 | Runway Surface Type: | Grass/turf |
| Airport Elevation: | 250 ft msl | Runway Surface Condition: | Dry |
| Runway Used: | 22 | IFR Approach: | None |
| Runway Length/Width: | 2500 ft / 50 ft | VFR Approach/Landing: | Full stop |

Wreckage and Impact Information

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|----------------------------|---------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Crew Injuries: | 1 Minor | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Passenger Injuries: | | Aircraft Fire: | None |
| Ground Injuries: | | Aircraft Explosion: | None |
| Total Injuries: | 1 Minor | Latitude, Longitude: | 35.89035,-78.486213(est) |

Administrative Information

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| Investigator In Charge (IIC): | Boggs, Daniel |
| Additional Participating Persons: | Eden King; FAA; Greensboro, NC |
| Original Publish Date: | June 29, 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=107132 |

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](#).