



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Sanford, Florida	Accident Number:	ERA23LA379
Date & Time:	September 26, 2023, 15:51 Local	Registration:	N708WC
Aircraft:	DORR DAN W SEQUOIA F.8L FALCO	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of control in flight	Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot performed a preflight inspection before he initiated the startup and taxi without any anomalies noted. During the initial climb after takeoff, about 100 ft above ground level over the runway, an engine compartment access cover opened. The pilot called the air traffic control tower and was cleared to land on a parallel runway. The pilot continued in the traffic pattern, but slowed the airplane in hopes that the access cover would not detach. The pilot became focused on the open cover and let the airspeed decrease, which resulted in a buffet, the left wing dropping, and the airplane “[falling] out of the sky.” The airplane subsequently impacted a taxiway and came to rest on the parallel runway, resulting in substantial damage to the fuselage and left wing. The pilot reported that there were no preimpact mechanical malfunctions or failures of the airplane that would have precluded normal operation. He also stated that he, “...focused way too much on the open engine cover and way too little on flying the airplane... The result was classic stall/spin scenario too close to the ground.”

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 airplane control after an engine access cover opened during the initial climb.

Findings

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

Factual Information

History of Flight

Takeoff-rejected takeoff	Loss of control in flight (Defining event)
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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	72, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	5-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 3 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	May 22, 2023
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	May 22, 2023
Flight Time:	1875 hours (Total, all aircraft), 167 hours (Total, this make and model), 1875 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 15 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 8 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	DORR DAN W	Registration:	N708WC
Model/Series:	SEQUOIA F.8L FALCO	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	2003	Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Utility; Experimental (Special)	Serial Number:	1046
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	August 1, 2023 Condition	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2008 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	20 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	675 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	IO-360-B1E
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	180 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:	SFB,55 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	1 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	15:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	258°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 3500 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	8 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:	180°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	29.98 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	32°C / 23°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Sanford, FL	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Sanford, FL	Type of Clearance:	VFR
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class C

Airport Information

Airport:	ORLANDO SANFORD INTL SFB	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	54 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	9L	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	11002 ft / 150 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	28.781715,-81.234602

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Kemner, Heidi
Additional Participating Persons:	Jennifer Viteritto; FAA/FSDO; Orlando, FL
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.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=193148

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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](#).