



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Location: | VENTURA, CA | Accident Number: | LAX87LA174 |
| Date & Time: | 04/12/1987, 1403 PST | Registration: | N32BB |
| Aircraft: | GRUMMAN G-44A | Aircraft Damage: | Destroyed |
| Defining Event: | | Injuries: | 2 Serious, 1 None |
| Flight Conducted Under: | Part 91: General Aviation - Personal | | |

Analysis

DURING A LOCAL PLEASURE FLIGHT, THE PILOT HAD REDUCED POWER AND DESCENDED TO A LOWER ALTITUDE TO TAKE PICTURES OF A SAILBOAT RACE. AT APPROXIMATELY 200 FEET THE PILOT MADE A DESCENDING RIGHT TURN, THEN LEVELED OFF. THE AIRCRAFT STALLED AND THE PILOT LOWERED THE NOSE AND ABRUPTLY ADDED POWER. THE ENGINES DID NOT RESPOND IN TIME TO REGAIN ALTITUDE AND AIRSPEED. THE AIRCRAFT THEN IMPACTED THE WATER LEFT WING FIRST. ON IMPACT A FIRE STARTED. THE AIRCRAFT EVENTUALLY SANK AND WAS NOT RECOVERED.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - NORMAL

Findings

1. (F) THROTTLE/POWER CONTROL - EXCESSIVE - PILOT IN COMMAND
 2. (C) STALL - UNCONTROLLED - PILOT IN COMMAND
 3. (F) REMEDIAL ACTION - DELAYED - PILOT IN COMMAND
-

Occurrence #2: DITCHING

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Findings

4. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - WATER, ROUGH
-

Occurrence #3: FIRE

Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Factual Information

Pilot Information

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|------------|
| Certificate: | Private | Age: | 43, Male |
| Airplane Rating(s): | Multi-engine Land; Multi-engine Sea; Single-engine Land; Single-engine Sea | Seat Occupied: | Left |
| Other Aircraft Rating(s): | None | Restraint Used: | Seatbelt |
| Instrument Rating(s): | Airplane | Second Pilot Present: | No |
| Instructor Rating(s): | None | Toxicology Performed: | No |
| Medical Certification: | Class 3 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim. | Last FAA Medical Exam: | 02/19/1987 |
| Occupational Pilot: | Last Flight Review or Equivalent: | | |
| Flight Time: | 2100 hours (Total, all aircraft), 450 hours (Total, this make and model), 2045 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 10 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft) | | |

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Aircraft Make: | GRUMMAN | Registration: | N32BB |
| Model/Series: | G-44A G-44A | Aircraft Category: | Airplane |
| Year of Manufacture: | | Amateur Built: | No |
| Airworthiness Certificate: | Normal | Serial Number: | 1475 |
| Landing Gear Type: | Amphibian | Seats: | 5 |
| Date/Type of Last Inspection: | 100 Hour | Certified Max Gross Wt.: | 4525 lbs |
| Time Since Last Inspection: | 10 Hours | Engines: | 2 Reciprocating |
| Airframe Total Time: | 5500 Hours | Engine Manufacturer: | LYCOMING |
| ELT: | Installed | Engine Model/Series: | GO-480-B1 |
| Registered Owner: | SCHWAMM, JOHN A. | Rated Power: | 270 hp |
| Operator: | SCHWAMM, JOHN A. | Operating Certificate(s) Held: | None |

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Conditions at Accident Site: | Visual Conditions | Condition of Light: | Day |
| Observation Facility, Elevation: | OXR, 43 ft msl | Distance from Accident Site: | 14 Nautical Miles |
| Observation Time: | 1454 PST | Direction from Accident Site: | 106° |
| Lowest Cloud Condition: | Thin Broken / 20000 ft agl | Visibility | 7 Miles |
| Lowest Ceiling: | None / 0 ft agl | Visibility (RVR): | 0 ft |
| Wind Speed/Gusts: | 11 knots / | Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Wind Direction: | 220° | Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Altimeter Setting: | 29 inches Hg | Temperature/Dew Point: | 19° C / 13° C |
| Precipitation and Obscuration: | | | |
| Departure Point: | SANTA BARBARA, CA (SBA) | Type of Flight Plan Filed: | None |
| Destination: | | Type of Clearance: | None |
| Departure Time: | 1300 PST | Type of Airspace: | Class G |

Wreckage and Impact Information

| | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-----------|
| Crew Injuries: | 1 Serious | Aircraft Damage: | Destroyed |
| Passenger Injuries: | 1 Serious, 1 None | Aircraft Fire: | On-Ground |
| Ground Injuries: | N/A | Aircraft Explosion: | None |
| Total Injuries: | 2 Serious, 1 None | Latitude, Longitude: | |

Administrative Information

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|--------------|------------|
| Investigator In Charge (IIC): | DEBRA J ECKROTE | Report Date: | 04/25/1988 |
| Additional Participating Persons: | LADD SCOTT; VAN NUYS, CA | | |
| Publish Date: | | | |
| Investigation Docket: | NTSB accident and incident dockets serve as permanent archival information for the NTSB's investigations. Dockets released prior to June 1, 2009 are publicly available from the NTSB's Record Management Division at pubinquiry@ntsb.gov , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/ . | | |

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), established in 1967, is an independent federal agency mandated by Congress through the Independent Safety Board Act of 1974 to investigate transportation accidents, determine the probable causes of the accidents, issue safety recommendations, study transportation safety issues, and evaluate the safety effectiveness of government agencies involved in transportation. The NTSB makes public its actions and decisions through accident reports, safety studies, special investigation reports, safety recommendations, and statistical reviews.

The Independent Safety Board Act, as codified at 49 U.S.C. Section 1154(b), precludes the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an incident or accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report. A factual report that may be admissible under 49 U.S.C. § 1154(b) is available [here](#).