

National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, DC 20594

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Brief of Accident

Adopted 12/20/2007

NYC06LA231
File No. 22819 09/29/2006 Lexington, KY Aircraft Reg No. N397A Time (Local): 13:30 EDT

Make/Model: Mooney / M-18L
Engine Make/Model: Lycoming / O-145
Aircraft Damage: Substantial
Number of Engines: 1
Operating Certificate(s): None
Type of Flight Operation: Personal
Reg. Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation

| | Fatal | Serious | Minor/None |
|------|-------|---------|------------|
| Crew | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Pass | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Last Depart. Point: Same as Accident/Incident Location
Destination: Local Flight
Airport Proximity: Off Airport/Airstrip

Condition of Light: Day
Weather Info Src: Weather Observation Facility
Basic Weather: Visual Conditions
Lowest Ceiling: 4900 Ft. AGL, Broken
Visibility: 10.00 SM
Wind Dir/Speed: Calm
Temperature (°C): 14
Precip/Obscuration: No Obscuration; No Precipitation

Pilot-in-Command Age: 52

Flight Time (Hours)

Certificate(s)/Rating(s)
Private; Single-engine Land

Total All Aircraft: 240
Last 90 Days: 35
Total Make/Model: 43
Total Instrument Time: 4

Instrument Ratings
None

After the airplane reached its cruising altitude of 3,000 feet, the engine lost power. The pilot cycled the magnetos and applied carburetor heat; however, engine power was not regained. The pilot then performed a forced landing to a field, during which the airplane impacted a fence. Examination of the engine revealed the magnetos did not produce spark when tested. The magnetos were disassembled and it was noted that the left magneto had a shorted condenser and the right magneto points were almost closed. The right magneto points were properly adjusted; the magneto was tested and produced spark. According to the aircraft maintenance records, the magnetos were last overhauled 40 years prior to the accident, and had accumulated 500 hours of operation since then.

Brief of Accident (Continued)

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Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

1. (C) IGNITION SYSTEM,MAGNETO - FAILURE
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Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

Occurrence #3: ON GROUND/WATER COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings

2. OBJECT - FENCE

Findings Legend: (C) = Cause, (F) = Factor

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident as follows.
The failure of both magnetos which resulted in a loss of engine power during cruise flight.