



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Office of Aviation Safety
Western Pacific Region

November 23, 2021

ACCIDENT SITE EXAMINATION SUMMARY

WPR22FA044

This document contains 2 embedded photos.

A. ACCIDENT

Location: Big Bear City, CA
Date: November 20, 2021
Aircraft: N291KT Experimental
Amateur-built Glasair III
NTSB IIC: Albert Nixon

B. EXAMINATION PARTICIPANTS:

Albert Nixon
Senior Aviation Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Federal Way, WA

C. SUMMARY

D. DETAILS OF THE INVESTIGATION

1.0 Accident Site Examination

Examination of the accident site revealed that the airplane impacted mountainous terrain near the top of Mount Bernardino. The terrain consisted of tall trees and rocks on a mountain side slope of about 45°. The first point of impact was near the top of a ridgeline at an elevation of about 9,720 ft. Several tree branches were observed broken along with airplane fragments embedded in the tree. Additionally, a disturbed area of rocks and separated tree branches were found in this area. A majority of the airplane fuselage and wing fragments were found near this location. The tail of the airplane had separated and was inverted.

The engine controls and portions of the wings were found in this area. A couple of orange tarps were also found in this area. The only portion of the airplane that was intact was the tail section. All the flight control surfaces on the vertical stabilizer and horizontal stabilizers were relatively intact and attached.

Fragments of the airplane were scattered about 200 ft upslope from the main wreckage and 100 ft below it. The debris trail was on about a 97° magnetic heading. The engine had separated from the fuselage and was located about 100 ft past and upslope of the main wreckage. The engine sustained substantial impact damage. The propeller blades and hub had separated. Damage to the airplane, the debris dispersal pattern, and impact markings, were all consistent with it impacting in a high-speed, level flight attitude.



Figure 1: Airplane wreckage debris on ground and in tree.

Flight control continuity was unable to be established due to the extensive damage sustained by the airplane. Most of the wreckage debris, consisted of small fragments of the fuselage and wings.

Both main landing gears were separated and located near the main wreckage.

Only a limited time was available to examine the airplane on the mountain, due to the challenging weather conditions.



Figure 2: Airplane wreckage debris on side of mountain.

Submitted by: Albert Nixon