



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Mesquite, Nevada	Accident Number:	WPR24LA075
Date & Time:	January 12, 2024 15:15 Local	Registration:	N630L
Aircraft:	Harmon Rocket II	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event	Loss of control on ground	Injuries:	1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The day before the accident the airplane underwent maintenance on the brake system. The mechanic stated that after completing the maintenance, he advised the pilot to use caution during the first few brake applications to allow the system to wear in and recommended that the pilot perform at least three full-stop landings.

On the day of the accident, the mechanic reported that he and the pilot ate lunch together, after which he observed the pilot perform several brake checks before departing. A witness reported observing the tailwheel-equipped airplane on the landing roll. The airplane was to the right of the centerline and continued to veer right while the ground speed slowed. The airplane then pitched forward, and the propeller contacted the runway surface. The airplane continued to slide forward and exited the right side of the runway before it nosed over and came to rest inverted with the pilot's head against the pavement.

Following the impact, first responders found the pilot in cardiac arrest after a prolonged extrication. He was resuscitated and was admitted to a hospital with serious injuries, including neurological injury that made him unable to communicate any history of the event. No significant pre-impact medical event was specifically identified during his hospitalization. ~~The pilot died over 30 days after the accident.~~

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:
The pilot's loss of control on the landing roll, which led to the airplane coming to rest inverted.

Findings

Aircraft (A1)	Directional control - Not attained/maintained
Personnel issues (A1)	Aircraft control - Pilot

Factual Information

History of Flight

Landing-landing roll	Loss of control on ground (Defining event)
Landing-landing roll	Runway excursion
Landing-landing roll	Nose over/nose down

On January 12, 2024, about 1515 Pacific Daylight time, an experimental amateur-built Harmon Rocket II airplane, N630L, was substantially damaged when it was involved in an accident near Mesquite, Nevada. The pilot was seriously injured. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flight.

The pilot's mechanic stated that the day before the accident, he performed maintenance on the right main landing gear brake system. He stated that after completing the maintenance, he advised the pilot to use caution during the first few brake applications to allow the system to wear in and recommended that the pilot perform at least three full-stop landings. On the day of the accident, the mechanic reported that he and the pilot ate lunch together, after which he observed the pilot perform several taxi brake checks before departing.

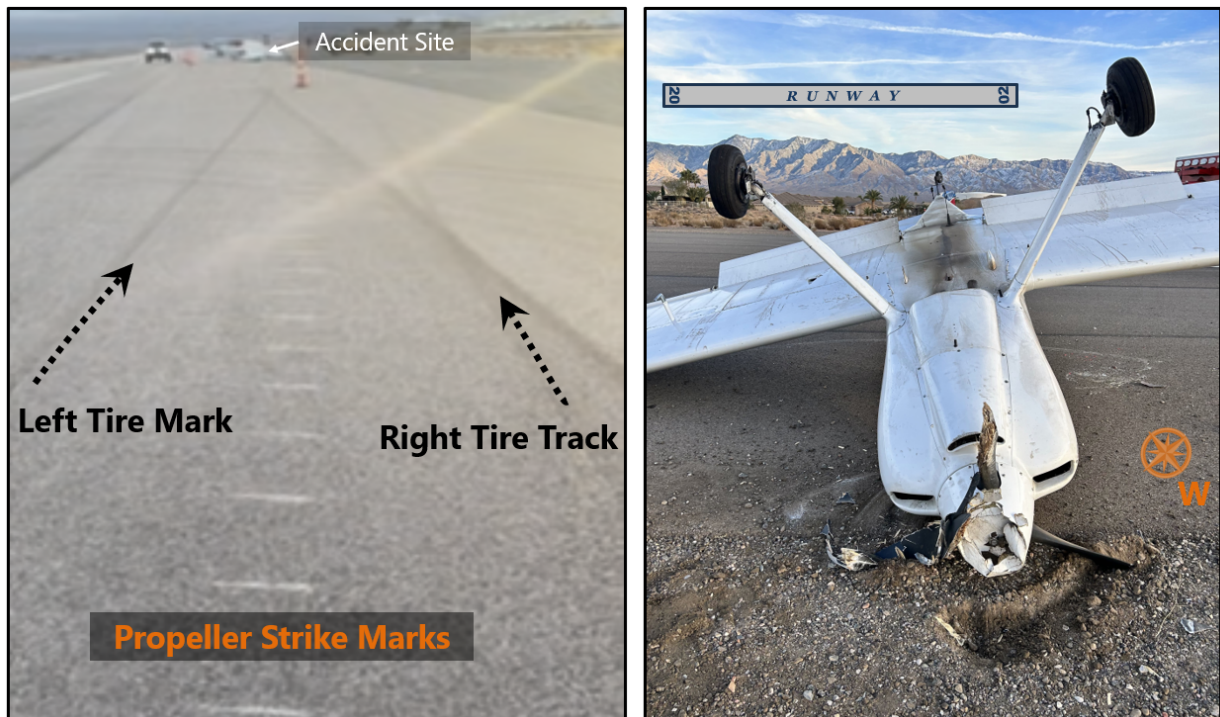
A witness reported observing the tailwheel-equipped airplane during the landing roll on runway 20. The airplane was right of the runway centerline and continued to veer right as ground speed decreased. The airplane then pitched forward, and the propeller contacted the runway surface. The airplane continued to slide forward, departed the right side of the runway, and nosed over, coming to rest inverted and oriented about 90° to the right of the runway heading.

Witnesses who responded immediately after the accident reported that the canopy was broken into pieces on the pavement. The pilot remained restrained by the seatbelt, with his head pressed against the canopy. One witness assessed the pilot and was unable to detect a radial or carotid pulse. Based on this assessment, responders extricated the pilot and initiated cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). After approximately 4 minutes of CPR, a pulse returned, and the pilot was placed on a cardiac monitor, which indicated intermittent bradycardia. The pilot was resuscitated and transported to a hospital with serious injuries, including neurological injury that rendered him unable to communicate any history of the event. No significant pre-impact medical condition was identified during his hospitalization. A hospital urine drug screen performed two days after admission did not detect any tested-for substances not attributable to post-accident medical treatment. ~~The pilot died over 30 days after the accident.~~

According to the pilot's FAA medical certification file, his most recent aviation medical examination was conducted on December 7, 2023, at which time he was issued a first-class medical certificate with no limitations.

According to a witness, the first identified point of contact with the runway occurred about 1,200 ft from the approach end of runway 20, where tire marks were observed near the runway centerline. The tire marks subsequently veered right, and multiple propeller strike marks extended approximately 30 ft down the runway. Pieces of the

wooden propeller were located in this area. Tire marks continued to the right of the runway, and propeller strike marks resumed approximately 150 ft beyond the initial strike marks. The witness reported that runway markings indicated the airplane pitched forward and slid on the propeller hub and fuselage until it reached the right edge of the runway and entered the adjacent deep gravel. Depressions in the gravel were consistent with the airplane flipping over and coming to rest inverted along its longitudinal axis (see figures 1 and 2). The pilot's mechanic stated that from the tire marks, it appeared the pilot was applying brakes at the same time the engine was producing power.



Figures 1 and 2: The tire marks showing the propeller strike marks and the main wreckage showing orientation to the runway.

Occupant Information

Certificate:	Airline transport	Age:	71, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine land, Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	4-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	[SAFTIToxicologyPerformed]
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	December 7, 2023
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	[SAFTILastFlightReviewDate]
Flight Time:	40 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Harmon	Registration:	N630L
Model/Series:	Rocket II	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	2006	Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental (Special)	Serial Number:	GR001
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel;	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2000 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	[SAFTITimeSinceLastInspectionHrs]	Engines:	Engine #1: Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	[SAFTIAirframeTotalHrsAirframeHrsSince]	Engine Manufacturer:	Engine #1: Lycoming
ELT:	Installed	Engine Model/Series:	Engine #1: IO-540-C4B5
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	Engine #1: 260
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:	[SAFTIOperatorDoesBusinessAs]	Operator Designator Code:	[SAFTIOperatorDesignatorCode]

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KSGU, 2936 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	27 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	14:56:00 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	54°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	[SAFTILowestCeiling]	Visibility (RVR):	[SAFTIVisualRange FT]
Wind Speed/Gusts:	3 knots,none	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:	240°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	30.07 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	4°C / -10°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Mesquite, NV	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Mesquite, NV	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	[SAFTIDepartureTime]	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	MESQUITE 67L	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	1978 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	20	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	5121 ft / 75 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Touch and go; Traffic pattern

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	[SAFTIIInjuryGround Total]	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	36.833139°, -114.05588°

[SAFTISafetyMessage]

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Keliher, Zoe
Additional Participating Persons:	Jason Ramie; FAA-FSDO; Las Vegas, NV
Original Publish Date:	February 11, 2026
Last Revision Date:	[SAFTILastRevisionDate]
Investigation Class:	Class 3
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=193673

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