

Adopted: January 12, 1944

File No. 2963-43

REPORT OF THE CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD
on the
Investigation of an Accident Involving Aircraft
During a Local Instruction Flight

An accident which occurred at Hudson Airport, Garland, Texas, about 10:30 p.m. on July 19, 1943, resulted in serious injuries to Student Nick Charles Boyarko and minor injuries to his instructor, Kenneth Earl Morgan. Morgan, an instructor employed by the Dallas Aviation Company, Dallas, Texas held a commercial pilot certificate with single-engine land, 0-270 n.p., and flight instructor ratings. He had accumulated approximately 1300 hours of solo flight time, about 60 of which were night flying. Boyarko held a student pilot certificate and was enrolled for flight training at the Dallas Aviation School. The aircraft, a Fairchild 24 C3-F, NC 16833, owned by Long & Harmon, was extensively damaged.

Instructor Morgan had intended to solo Student Boyarko on the night of the accident, and had completed two dual practice flights around the airport, making two landings. About 10:30 p.m. they took off again toward the south on their third circuit of the field. When they had reached an altitude of approximately 300 feet, the aircraft was observed to make the customary left turn in the traffic pattern and head in an easterly direction. Almost immediately thereafter, several witnesses saw the aircraft turn 180° to the left, after which the engine was throttled and the plane descended in a glide across the line of traffic to the west in what appeared to be an intended emergency crosswind landing. Traveling at a speed estimated to have been between 80 to 100 n.p.h. it contacted the ground wheels first, skidded forward about 100 feet, somersaulted to its back and slid another 100 feet forward before coming to rest on the airport.

Examination of the wreckage revealed no evidence of failure of any part of the aircraft prior to impact. Instructor Morgan stated that immediately after they had made their first left turn in the traffic pattern, the student asked him if he "didn't smell smoke" and added, "Then I took a look out both left and right sides back towards the tail. It looked like smoke and flames and sparks were coming out the tail. I thought the tail end was on fire. Then I turned to the left 180°, heading west, throttling motor to an airspeed of 80 or 90 n.p.h., closed throttle before reaching boundary of field. Touched ground at approximately 80 n.p.h. I made a fast wheel landing. I could vision the tail burning and was in a hurry to get stopped. I must have pressed too hard on the brakes or was thrown forward on hitting the ground and pressed forward on the stick which put the airplane on its back." Marks on the ground indicated clearly that the wheels contacted the ground with the brakes locked and as the plane skidded forward the propeller had made its marks on the ground with each revolution. None of the many witnesses observed any fire and there was no indication of fire found in the airplane.

This model aircraft is equipped with a heating jacket around the carburetor intake with an exhaust tube which extends out of the side of the engine cowling and sparks and flame are visible during night

flight. This exhaust flame is present, in varying degrees, in all airplanes but is not visible in daylight. Without Morgan's statement, it would be difficult to believe that a pilot-instructor with 60 hours of night flying experience could be so confused. The moon had risen within five minutes of the reported accident and it is possible that when the pilot looked back, he saw a streak of the exhaust and at the same time caught a glimpse of the rising moon over his tail surfaces and this combination of ordinary circumstances so confused him that he was convinced that he had fire in the tail of the airplane.

The probable cause of this accident was the utter confusion of the instructor-pilot which resulted in complete lack of technique in executing an unnecessary emergency landing.

BY THE BOARD

/s/ Fred A. Tombs
Secretary