



Aviation Investigation Preliminary Report

Location:	Reno, NV	Accident Number:	WPR23FA345
Date & Time:	September 17, 2023, 13:55 Local	Registration:	N2897G (A1); N57418 (A2)
Aircraft:	North American T-6G (A1); North American AT-6B (A2)	Injuries:	1 Fatal (A1); 1 Fatal (A2)
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Air race/show (A1); Part 91: General aviation - Air race/show (A2)		

On September 17, 2023, about 1355 Pacific daylight time, a North American T-6G, N2897G (Race 6), and a North American AT-6B, N57418 (Race 14), were substantially damaged when they were involved in an accident near Reno, Nevada. The pilots of both airplanes were fatally injured. Both airplanes were operated as a Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91 personal flight.

Several witnesses reported observing both Race 14 and Race 6 collide while in the airport traffic pattern for runway 8. One witness, reported that Race 14 was on base leg (southerly heading) for runway 8, oriented along the airport perimeter fence line about 300 ft above ground level (agl), and Race 6, was on downwind, on a west-south-west heading about 300 ft agl. The witness stated that at the time of the collision, Race 6 was at about a 75° angle in relation to the flight path of Race 14.

Another witness, the pilot of Race 66, who was in the third position to land, reported after he had completed the race, he began a slow left turn to downwind. As he was about to complete the turn onto downwind, he heard the pilots of Race 14 and Race 6 both transmit "downwind, abeam." The pilot of Race 66 stated that he continued to slow his airplane to "create some space and time to see them." He heard Race 14 transmit "base with gear." As he got close to turning onto the base leg for the runway, he spotted Race 6, and transmitted downwind abeam. The pilot of Race 66 stated that he "finally spotted" Race 14 below his position to the right and on the base leg, and saw Race 6 in level flight, to his left, noting both airplanes were not where he expected them to be. He added that Race 14 was on a "wider base" than the previous 2 flights, and Race 6 was "tighter" than his position. The pilot of Race 66 stated that Race 14 crossed in front of his position from right to left and disappeared [from view] on the right side

of the engine cowling and Race 6 disappeared under his left wing. The pilot of Race 66 transmitted base with gear and began a left turn to the base leg for runway 8. Shortly after, he observed Race 14 where he expected him to be in level flight, with "nothing behind the passenger seat" briefly before it began to roll to the right and descend in a nose low attitude.

Review of recorded radio transmissions after the completion of the race revealed that the pilot of Race 14 reported downwind abeam. About 30 seconds later, the pilot of Race 6 reported downwind abeam, followed by another transmission from the pilot of Race 14 reporting base with gear 4 seconds later. Several transmissions were heard from pilots of other aircraft reporting downwind abeam until the announcement of a red flag about 1 minute, 11 seconds after Race 14's initial transmission.

Examination of the accident site revealed a debris path originated about 7,881 ft northwest of the approach end of runway 8 and extended south to the main wreckage of Race 14 and was about 1,366 ft in length. Identified pieces of Race 14 in the debris field included segments of the left aileron, segments of the left flap, right horizontal stabilizer, right elevator, sections of aft fuselage skin, and a plastic pouch with the airplane documents. Small pieces of black painted skin and plexiglass from Race 6 were identified in the debris field.

The wreckage of Race 6 came to rest in an open field. The wing structure was separated from the fuselage and the outboard left wing was separated at the attach joint. The wing sections were located about 30 ft south of the main wreckage. The fuselage was compressed aft significantly. The vertical stabilizer, rudder, tailwheel, left horizontal stabilizer, left elevator, and portions of fuselage skin from Race 14 were found comingled with the wreckage of Race 6. All major structural components of Race 6 were located within about 50 ft of the main wreckage.

The wreckage of Race 14 came to rest in an open sagebrush field. The entire wing section was compressed aft, separated from the fuselage, and located about 10 ft from the main fuselage wreckage

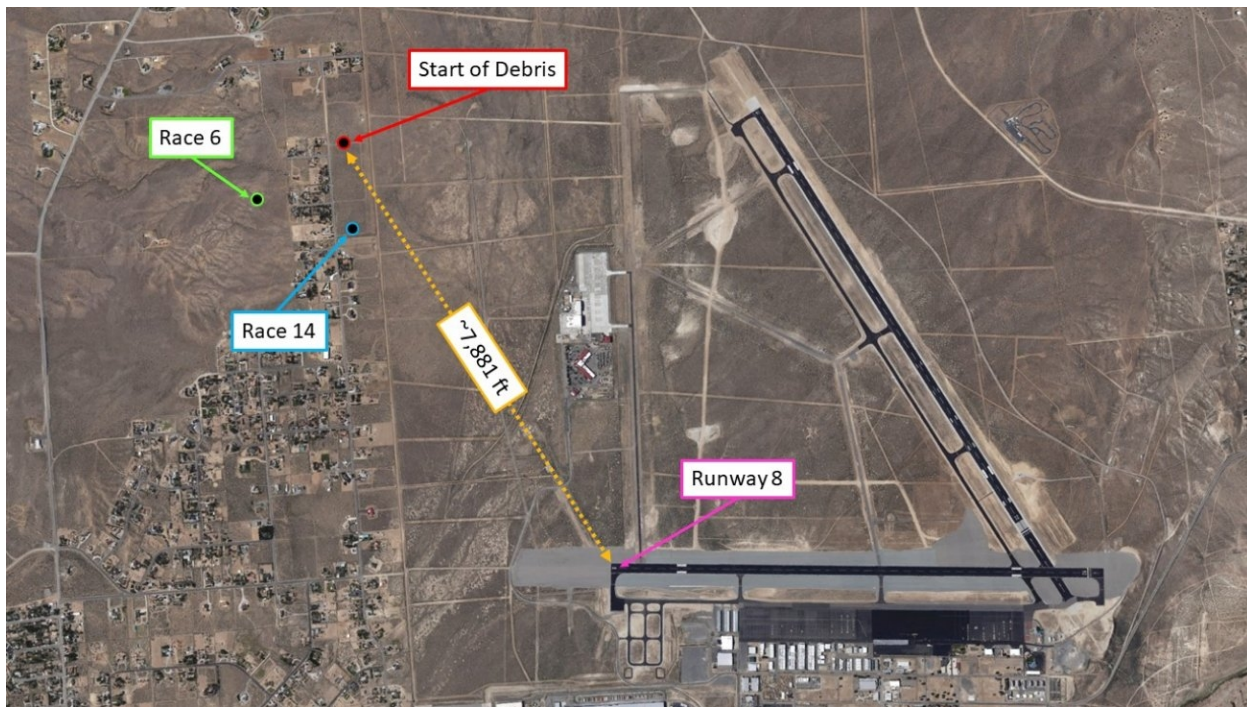


Figure 1: Wreckage location diagram.

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information (A1)

Aircraft Make:	North American	Registration:	N2897G
Model/Series:	T-6G	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Amateur Built:			
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Designator Code:			

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information (A2)

Aircraft Make:	North American	Registration:	N57418
Model/Series:	AT-6B	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Amateur Built:			
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Designator Code:			

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	VMC	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KRTS,5053 ft msl	Observation Time:	13:55 Local
Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles	Temperature/Dew Point:	27°C /-2°C
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	/ 13 knots,
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility:	10 miles
Altimeter Setting:	30.13 inches Hg	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	
Departure Point:		Destination:	

Wreckage and Impact Information (A1)

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	39.668177,-119.87644 (est)

Wreckage and Impact Information (A2)

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	39.668177,-119.87644 (est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Cawthra, Joshua
Additional Participating Persons:	Paul Adams; FAA Reno FSDO; Reno, NV
Note:	