

Hodges Michael

From: Eric Hale <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, November 02, 2016 12:30 PM
To: Hodges Michael
Subject: Re: N6353E - Accident

Follow Up Flag: Follow Up
Flag Status: Flagged

On Saturday August 29th 2016 me, Curtis Justen, jimmy Venter's, and Cassie Wallace were watching ray Justen fly around the Knik river valley. At 2:44pm he performed a touch and go on a gravel bar adjacent to the Knik river heading southeast up the river valley. As he climbed out of the touch and go he got to about 100feet and made a left turn towards Friday creek valley, heading north. By the time he got to the tree line h had descended to about 75 feet. Right past the tree line he started a hard left turn towards the west. As he did he lost a little elevation. He continued his banked turn towards the south. As he did he lost more elevation and was banked pretty hard. At that point he was at about 40 feet above the ground. He continued his turn towards the southeast and as he made that last turn he seemingly dropped to about 25 feet. Right after he turned toward the southeast he mad contact with the ground with a distinct crushing aluminum sound. I did not hear any abnormal engine sounds nor did I hear it revving up. I did not hear any alarms or screams. We were about 100 yards away at the time of the crash. As soon as it happened Curtis and I gunned our wheelers over to the wreck. He went strait to the left side of the cockpit. I was on the other side but in front of the plane. I immediately called 911 and reported my buddy crashed his plane where the Friday creek trail meets the Knik river. There were extensive injuries. I could not get closer to the plane without losing contact with the operator. Once she told me help was on the way I hung up and went over beside Curtis. By this time jimmy had come over as well. He left Cassie where we had originally been as she was also on the phone with 911. We pulled ray from the cockpit and away from the leaking fuel tanks. After about 20 minutes life med showed up. Then around 5:10 ast ntsb arrived. The wind at the time of the accident was coming from the upper Knik valley blowing steady in a northwest direction. I'd say probably around 20-25 mph with gusts higher. There was also periodically a slight wind coming from the Friday creek valley blowing in a southern direction. Ray had been flying around us a good part of the afternoon while we rode around on wheelers and never did we hear any abnormal sounds from the engine nor the plane.

I greatly appreciate the professionalism and sincerity and condolences coming from the officials Involved with this incident, investigation, and recovery.

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 31, 2016, at 10:27 AM, Hodges Michael <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Hi Eric,

Thank you for your time yesterday out by the glacier. I send my condolences for the passing of your friend.

If you could, please send me a written statement/email about what you saw the day of the accident.

If you could be as detailed as possible with the events of what happened, that would be greatly appreciated. Please include any information about the estimated accident time, what the wind conditions were like (estimated direction and speed) in addition to what direction the airplane was flying right before the impact.

Thanks,

Mike J. Hodges
Aviation Accident Investigator
Alaska Regional Office
Office of Aviation Safety
National Transportation Safety Board

222 West 7th Avenue
Room 216, Box 11
Anchorage, AK 99513-7500 USA

Cellular: [REDACTED]
Facsimile: [REDACTED]
Response Operations Center (24/7): 1-844-373-9922
Email: [REDACTED]
Internet: <http://www.nts.gov/air>

"From tragedy we draw knowledge to improve the safety of us all."

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Hodges Michael

From: Ak Chimney Sweep <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, November 09, 2016 10:43 AM
To: Hodges Michael
Subject: Re: N6353E - Accident

Hello Michael,

On Saturday, October 29, 2016 we (Jimmy Venters and Cassie Jordan) were out riding four wheelers with our friends, Curtis Justen and Eric Hale. Ray Justen, our friend, was supposed to go riding with us but had errands to do I guess and I imagine that's how he knew where we were. We were riding in the woods just south of Friday Creek on the west side of the Knik River when we were heard and saw N6353E flying over us. We then continued to ride North to the river bed, across Friday Creek, toward the original Friday Creek ATV Trail head. There is a large clearing there where we could see each other well and we thought he may land there. He did a couple of pass-bys/ fly overs. Then he came around and did a touch n go on a sand bar in the Knik River about 200 yards (this is a rough estimate) in front of us (we were facing across the river). He was not going very fast at all and we (Jimmy and Cassie) thought he may have been landing but then we heard him throttle up and saw that he started to slowly gain elevation. He took off from the touch n go and flew over directly in front of us, gaining elevation, at about 100'-200' (when he flew over us, standing on the edge of the river on the river bed) with a headwind of maybe 10-15 knots. We believe he was at full throttle and got up to maybe 300' when we saw the Cessna turn to the left hand side. We believe there was a gust of wind at that moment and all of a sudden the wings were perpendicular to the ground. The plane quickly fell and spun 360* with the nose down and dove nose first into the ground.

If you have any other questions or if we were not detailed enough for you to understand, feel free to contact us either y email of phone.

Thank you,
Jimmy and Cassie

On Monday, November 7, 2016 5:19 PM, Hodges Michael <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Hi Cassie,

Just checking in on this.

Thanks,

Mike J. Hodges
Aviation Accident Investigator
Alaska Regional Office
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"From tragedy we draw knowledge to improve the safety of us all."

From: Hodges Michael
Sent: Monday, October 31, 2016 12:30 PM
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Subject: N6353E - Accident
Importance: High

Hi Cassie and Jimmy,

Thanks again for your time this morning. I send my condolences for the passing of your friend.

If you could, please send me a written statement/email about what you saw the day of the accident.

If you could be as detailed as possible with the events of what happened, that would be greatly appreciated. Please include any information about the estimated accident time, what the wind conditions were like (estimated direction and speed) in addition to what direction the airplane was flying right before the impact.

Thanks,

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Hodges Michael

From: Curtis Justen <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, November 09, 2016 8:12 AM
To: Hodges Michael
Subject: Re: N6353E - Accident

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Sorry I haven't gotten to this earlier we have been busy.

Well on October 29th about 245ish maybe earlier my brother ray was out flying around us and making an touch and go on a small sand bar in front of us. The wind was blowing off the glacier towards Palmer about 30 mph I would give my best estimate. When he was making altitude after doing a touch and go he made a turn out of the wind, and it looked like the wind hit him with a hard gust and tried pushing the plane around when ray tried to correct the situation with Rutter, but the wind was to strong and it pushed him straight into the ground nose diving.

Sent from my iPhone

On Nov 7, 2016, at 5:20 PM, Hodges Michael <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Hi Curtis,

Just checking in on this.

Thanks,

Mike J. Hodges
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"From tragedy we draw knowledge to improve the safety of us all."

From: Hodges Michael
Sent: Monday, October 31, 2016 10:35 AM
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>

Subject: N6353E - Accident

Importance: High

Hi Curtis,

Thanks again for your time this morning. I send my condolences for the passing of your brother.

If you could, please send me a written statement/email about what you saw the day of the accident.

If you could be as detailed as possible with the events of what happened, that would be greatly appreciated. Please include any information about the estimated accident time, what the wind conditions were like (estimated direction and speed) in addition to what direction the airplane was flying right before the impact.

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