

Ditching narrative

We loaded and preflighted the Twin Beech N103AF about 7:30 Seattle time.

Grant Hasting was riding along to observe.

I made sure the load was secure, the sumps were drained, and there was 7 gallons of oil in each engine tank.

We had just under 1000 pounds of goeducks on board.

I filed an IFR flight plan. The weather at KTN was marginal but just above minimums.

The weather at Klawock was decent.

We took off about 8 am.

The flight progressed normally, all temps and pressures good.

At decision height on the approach I didn't see the runway environment and initiated the missed approach.

Shortly after powering up I did glance down and see the taxiway but was not in a position to land.

The plan was to follow the missed approach procedure to ANN and decide whether to try again or go back to Klawock.

At about 2000 feet on the climb I felt a yaw and looked up.

One right prop blade was stopped at about 10 to 11 o'clock.

The right engine had seized without warning.

I pulled the right prop control all the way back to the feather position without much hope and nothing happened.

We declared an emergency to ANC center.

Grant was talking to ANC center or the Alaska flight relaying to them during the descent.

I went to take-off power, 36.5" and 2300 rpm on the left engine.

I turned about 20 degrees right and directed Grant to find open water.

He had a moving map on an Ipad-type device.

I knew the terrain around the Metlakatla airport was generally flat and close to sea level.

I maintained blue-line airspeed of 120 mph but with the drag of the unfeathered prop we were in a slow

descent.

At about 200 feet we could see the whitecaps on the water.

We had about a mile visibility.

Shortly we saw the trees of the shoreline.

We were a little below the treetops.

Grant said the airport was about 2 to 3 miles and a little over 100 feet elevation.

We were approaching the beach at about a 45 degree angle with the acute angle on the left.

I made a right turn to parallel the beach.

By now we were about 30 feet above the water.

Radio call was made that we were going in the water.

We ditched in the water in about a 15 degree right bank.

We stopped in less than 2 seconds, probably.

I think by touching down right wing low that the plane yawed to the right some and when the nose came down that it broke off.

I glanced at Grant, we were both alive, conscious, and seemingly unhurt.

Water was instantly up to my butt or my waist.

The crew door by my left shoulder was open and my headset off.

I started out the door face up.

The plane seemed slightly left wing down.

The water was up to the bottom of the door.

I had work boots on and my right foot was caught on something, probably the bottom of the instrument panel.

It wasn't jammed, but I knew I had to rotate my foot some to release the toes.

The water was about half way up the door.

I felt Grant rotate my foot and free it.

I got out right away.

By now the water was up to the top of the door.

Grant was right out.

There was some fire on the water but not in our way.

We started swimming for shore, about 200yards away.

Grant made it to shore before me.

I finally stood up and noticed that my left ankle hurt.

Grant helped me to the treeline where I sat on a rock.

He had some blood on his face, mainly on the left side from a gash above his left eyebrow.

I had a few dings on my face.

Other than that and my ankle we seemed okay, just soaked, cold, and shivering.

Maybe an hour and a half later the Metlakatla volunteer Fire Department boat nosed up to the beach and rescued us.

They took us to the clinic where we were warmed up, stitched up, and checked out.

Grant had 11 stitches above his left eye and another somewhere else.

I had 2, one above my right eye near the hairline and one on the left side of my nose near my left eye.

No broken bones, just a sprained ankle and some sore spots here and there.

The Coast Guard asked us some questions and took us to Ketchikan.

The owner, Laith, and his friend got us on Alaska Airlines and we came home to the Seattle area.