

Hi David

As requested, here are as many details of the flight that I can remember. I stayed up the whole night of the accident running through the flight trying to figure out what went wrong and why.

I have two log books, I never received back the one you looked at while at the scene. My hope is it was accidentally shipped by Paul Tucker [REDACTED], who works for John Burt, [REDACTED] the owner, with the engine logs to the insurance company. Both were in the airplane. Unfortunately I do not have a full backup and the back up I do have on Foreflights Logbook have not been proofed yet for accuracy. I only received the first log book, the second one, the current one, is missing.

Between my recent IACRA application, and the records I have inputted into electronic Logbook, I put together the times you requested. I also added the source for the hours since it is not from the primary source. I expect these numbers to be very close to the real ones, but doubt they are 100% accurate. If you need 100% accuracy, let me know, as soon as I get my hands on my missing log book, I will verify.

- Total Time 1311 (obtained from my IACRA application, most likely missing a few hours, I would say less than 5, from the most recent flight(s).
- Total Time In the Pa-23-250 Aztec is 2.5 hrs (memory, but does not include that last flight)
- Total Multiengine Time 709.6 hours (IACRA application)
- Last 8-9 years of Multiengine Time: 2.5 hours
- Last 12 months (actually last 9-10 years), 2.5 hours
- Multiengine was all done in a PA44-180 (9 hours), PA-23-250 (2.5 hours) and the rest done in C-310s and B58s, 698.1 hours
- Last year: 94.9 hrs (from the electronic logbook all in a BE35C except the Aztec time)
- Last 90 days: 30.1 hrs (from the electronic logbook)
- Last 30 days: 8.0 hrs (from the electronic logbook)

Single engine commercial rating (11/20/2017), multiengine rating (1/6/1997), instrument rating (10/7/1996).

The recall from the beginning: I did the preflight. Here's what I remember about that. The airplane was parked in front of the fuel tanks where Paul Tucker (ID'ed later) had just fueled it up. I grabbed the checklist and followed through it practicing the details for readiness of my checkride. The only details I remember from that are, Bob and Jerry (ID'ed later) were standing near the right wing talking (I asked them a question about one of the checklist items, it was odd because it had something to do with RMS Tape), checking the fuel for water on the right side and checking the oil on the right, had Bob check if the exterior lights were on. Other than that, I am confident to say I performed all the checklist items especially since I had two CFI's there and I was practicing for the checkride.

I got into the pilot seat, a gentleman named Jerry Morretta got into the back seat to observe since he was working on his Multiengine Instructor rating. Bob Gintz, a CFI that John Burt had gotten to help out so I could fly as much as I needed to get ready for the commercial checkride, climbed in the co-pilot seat. We loaded up and taxi to 26.

During the Before Takeoff Check, I followed the checklist, performed the prop exercise and the mag check. And we also went through the crossfeed check. I gave my Takeoff briefing, we rolled somewhere near 2:30pm. we took off on runway 26, rotated at 85mph, pulled up the landing gear with positive rate of climb and no runway left. Turned left cross wind, then left downwind, continued to climb to 4,500 and called Knoxville Approach for flight following.

We flew out to the practice area that we call House Mountain, which is Northeast of the airport about 10-15 miles out. We practiced steep turns, slow maneuvering, approach and departure stalls and the Vmc maneuver. The maneuvers went well, I noted to myself, that I needed to tighten up a bit more with some of the altitude and heading standards. The last maneuver, the toughest, was the inop instrument approach. At Knoxville Downtown, we have two. For this maneuver we were doing the Localizer 26.

My instrument approach briefing was: Once established on the localizer, we will descend to no less than 2,500. Once we identify the Final Approach Fix, Rizen, by use of the Outer Marker Beacon, we will start the timer for 3:24, lower the landing gear, read the landing checklist and descend to less than 1820'. Next, once we identify Wogle, we will descend to no less than 1460. Once the timer runs its course, we will climb to circle to land altitude of no less than 1,600, turn for left downwind Runway 26.

Bob started off by giving me vectors to the approach inside of SPROC to mimic Knoxville Approach. After setting up the Garmin 530/430 stack, and about 10, maybe 15 miles north of the approach, Bob pulled back the throttle for the left engine (please see my note on this below). Part of the procedure is that I Identify, Verify (pretend), and feather (pretend). I identified the left engine. Usually the engine that is acting Inop has about 12" of manifold pressure to act like a windmilling prop, I am not sure if that was done.

[Note: After talking with John Burt, Steve Abrew [REDACTED], and Kevin Ferrell [REDACTED], I thought hard if it was the left engine we made inop on the approach. John and Steve both told me normally you do not make the critical engine inop on an approach for this airplane because the only engine driven hydraulic pump is on that engine. Then I remembered, I had to Identify, Verify, and Feather, and I am close to 100% positive it was the left engine we made inop. Steve Abrew is one of my partners with the Bonanza I fly regularly, and Kevin Ferrell is also a Multiengine Commercial student. I have talked with both about concerns before the accident]

We performed the maneuver, lined up with the localizer, descended to above 2500' and after Rizen, descended to above 1820' with a near 90 knots to keep the timer accurate (note that I purposely change between mph which is the airspeed indicator and knots which is anything modern like the Garmins). I identified Wogel with NAV2 VOR and descended to above 1460'. I noted that I needed to improve on communications but everything else was good enough to pass the checkride (I did not call Downtown Knoxville radio at the start of the approach to inform of position and what we were doing and I did not cancel flight following with Knoxville Approach). The 3:24 timer ran out, and we were right over the runway. At that point, I turned for the circle to land for runway 26. The turn started between the numbers and midpoint. I believe I climbed up to 1600' but not 100% sure. My last lesson with John Burt, he strongly lectured me about how important it was not to keep the nose of the airplane facing away from the runway with an inop engine too long. This was the first circle to land I practiced after putting that in my head. After turning perpendicular to the runway, I turned left downwind, then base for runway 26. I noticed that I was too high when turning final, probably due to using too much power. I pulled the right throttle to idle and added full flaps to attempt a descent. I don't remember what altitude I got down to, but it was not enough. Once near the runway, I called missed approach and began my turn for another circle to land and noticed the left engine propeller stopped. I pointed to it showing Bob, and immediately Bob said "I got the controls".

Bob's first action was taking the checklist and aiming the airplane nose toward KTYS, I was confused that he was flying away from the airport but was not yet worried because I knew enough about that airplane that it was capable of climbing on a single engine. Bob started the engine restart procedure, which again confused me. I became very concerned when the airspeed hit the Vmc blueline, 80mph and at this point, I am not sure of the order of my details. I pointed out the airspeed several times and each time Bob reacted. Bob tried the restart the engine several times. I noticed the left fuel pump was on during the restart, I told Bob it needed to be off and turned it off. Bob snapped, "no it doesn't", and turn it back on. Little doubt that the engine was hot, and flooded. At some point, I told Bob the flaps were still down and I remember he lifted the flap lever, but I do not remember any hydraulic pump action. After several no start attempts, he turned the airplane back toward KDKX, runway 8.

Bob called on the radio stating something like "Aztec 285 landing Runway 8". I do not believe he crossed the river when he made that call, I believe we were still on the south side. John Burt was up in the sky flying a lesson and John responded something like "Bob you have about a 7 knot tailwind on that runway". Bob responded something like, "we have a real engine failure"., this was the first report that we had a mayday. Bob crossed the river, I am not sure if he was headed to runway 8 or right downwind 26. Somewhere before crossing the river or after, Jerry had stated that the landing gear was down, and I saw Bob reach down to pull up the landing gear lever. This was the first and only radio communications Bob made. Also somewhere in this mess, Jerry had told Bob the landing gear was still down, I seen Bob lift landing gear lever. Finally, at some point, I remember thinking we are missing something since this airplane should be climbing, so I grabbed the checklist, however, as known now, I did not make it happen.

Before the crash, I saw the tree and knew we were not going to make it over. I knew we were crashing and really tightened up over the fear of a stalled landing. The fear of a stalled landing existed throughout the entire experience from the moment I told Bob we were at Vmc. As might be expected, the crash happened as quick as it was over, surprisingly very fast, I did not see what we were hitting. I remember being dazed and being the last one in the airplane. My right eye was completely shut but I heard Jerry on the wing telling me I had to unbuckle my seat belt. Jerry needed care, so he was gone when I got to the door. There was a brave young woman with a great pearly white smile giving me a hand and braving the gas soaked soaked airplane guiding my steps to a safe area.

So thankful no one on the ground got hurt and so thankful the 3 of us are alive. Assuming I get back on the horse, my learning will take on a new intensity because I now know the reason we do some of the things such as some items on the checklist, is because they are written in blood.

Please let me know if I need to explain anything, or if something doesn't match up correctly. Also David, if you have any insight into my logbook or thoughts of where I should look, please let me know (we can wait until the insurance company gets the mailed engine logbooks and see if it is mixed in, I'll let you know).

Sincerely;
Mike Spinazzola

Banning Brice

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, December 22, 2017 6:30 AM
To: Banning Brice
Subject: FW: Aviation accident at downtown island Knoxville Jerry Marotta

This just came in, he was in the back seat He is a SEL CFI

-----Original Message-----

From: Jerry Marotta [mailto:[REDACTED]]
Sent: Friday, December 22, 2017 9:21 AM
To: Alderman, David (FAA) <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Aviation accident at downtown island Knoxville Jerry Marotta

Jerry Marotta's perspective from sitting in the backseat behind the instructor. We are on the left downwind runway two six at Downtown island. One engine has simulated failure, as they turn base two final they realize they're too high and decide to do a go around all engines. As they Powered up start climbing before they turn crosswind, one engine fails, it is the left one. I can see the propeller is now standing still on crosswind they realize they're too low and cannot turn down wind, there is a Hillside they would slam into so they start turning to the right on a right base for runway eight. As they're trying to turn on towards final for runway eight, the airplane is too slow and they keep lowering the nose as it's turning to the left away from the runway. Right on the edge of 80 mph they're saying they have to lower the nose or they are going to stall and It will roll over on its back. As they pick up speed when they lower the nose, they now are trying to turn to the left to reacquire runway eight. Which would have put them on a low left base runway eight. By now we're too low and still on the edge of a stall when I hear them hollering we're going to stall lower the nose at that point I braced for impact we are that low and that slow. Then we impacted the ground. This is to the best of my recollection under the circumstances of being in the back seat.

Sent from my iPhone