

When it comes to what I did, I have no words. I lot of what took place is the fault of my own. I regret it everyday and I am reminded about the bad choice I made.

It started when I was deployed last year, I came home on leave to visit family and found myself with an offer to purchase a Ultralight airplane that I could not refuse. I purchased it and learned there where no log books or any documents of any kind for the aircraft. Which I knew I would have to start all over with the logbooks. I also knew that the engine needed to have a A&P Mechanic look of the engine. I jumped the gun on this and did not get it looked at by one. I was also told the engine was overhauled and I checked out the pistons and saw they where brand new. I also did numerous engine run ups and the engine run perfect and within the limits of the manual.

As for the registration for the aircraft, I was in the process of getting it registered due to the fact that it was an experimental aircraft. There was no registration numbers on the aircraft because I took off the plate to take off the old numbers and put on the new numbers. I did not have it on the plane at the time of the crash which skipped my mind and I am at fault for not having it on the plane as required.

As for the category of the aircraft, I learned that back in 2008 when the aircraft was built there was no LSA category, so it was giving the experimental tag. It has been called an ultralight by people I talked through out my research giving me the impression that it was an ultralight. Thru my research I tried to find an instructor and was unable to find anyone. Not even at flight schools, Which I figured didn't really require much training to learn how to fly. And since I had some flight training I felt confident to teach myself to fly the ultralight.

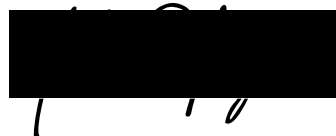
I have been flying on and off since high school as training is really expensive for me. The last time I was learning to fly, (about 2014) I was told that I was one or two flights away from soloing but never continued due to funds. I have held a student pilot medical about three years ago. But due to my deployment, It expired.

As for the day I crashed. It was a calm Sunny, Sunday. There was no winds. Because it was a private airport I checked the weather thru my firelight app from the closest airport which was Eleison Airport. After that I checked to make sure there was no local traffic and then put on my helmet and started the aircraft. I taxied to the west end of the runway and did a engine run up and then completed the RPM check and it passed. After that I did a mental check and felt good. I full throttled that engine and the aircraft started down the runway. Once it reached the take off speed I pushed forward on the bar and the aircraft took off. The Ultralight was perfect climbing and straight. As soon as I looked right I noticed that I was going right and I tried to correct and turn left. I was way too low to the ground. At which point I knew I was going to hit the ground, I let off the throttle to lessen the impact. I hit the ground. The whole flight only lasted 16 Seconds.

Again, Everyday I think to myself about what I did wrong and how I truly wish I could go back and change what happen. I hurt everyday. When It comes to flying it is a true love for me. And I let the best get to me. I promise nothing like this will EVER happen again. And I am happy to live and watch my kids grow.

Thank you.

Michael Cook

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Michael Cook. Below the box, there are some faint, handwritten scribbles.