

Timeline for N555LB landing off end of runway, times estimated

12/14 15:30	Engine preheat plugged in, checked fuel level, (1/2 tank)
12/15 6:40	Confirmed engine preheat working, engine case dry, and not cold to touch. Turned on electric heater in the cabin. (OAT 0F)
8:00	Preflight and pushed plane out of hangar. ½ tanks fuel, oil 6+ Removed excess gear from plane, heat remained on. All three Fuel drains behaved normal, clean fuel out of each one.
8:50	Brought Lyn from the house, unplugged all heaters, load plane for departure
9:00	Started engine, ran for a few minutes at 1,000 rpm before taxi. Oil temps about 50F at start

We proceeded to the end of the runway to reduce blowing snow and prop-wash into hangar. Stopped at north end of runway and allowed engine temperatures to warm to about 75 degrees prior to run-up.

Run-up at 1,700 rpm, included mag check, carb heat check, instrument checks. Once back at idle checked fuel levels, set trim, checked fuel on both, flaps set; set idle up at 1,200 and waited for oil temperatures to rise until about 90 degrees.

Confirmed that Lyn was ready and belted into her seat and advanced the throttle. The plane behaved normal, engine gauges all green and sound was appropriate for normal operations. Estimated time between start and take off 12-15 minutes.

Lifted off after about 300' of ground roll, gained speed and set attitude for best rate of climb. As we climbed equal to the tree tops, I went to one notch of flaps and immediately the engine faltered. I pushed the nose over and re-set to two notches of flaps. I then confirmed I had full throttle- by this time we were below the treetops and still descending when we crossed the end of the runway, leaving us about 2,500' of logged area prior to a spruce stand.

I made the decision that setting the plane in the snow between the stump piles was a better option than trying to limp a sick engine over the spruce stand ahead, if I could even get it to climb over top of the spruce. I closed the throttle and pointed between stump piles, we touched down, bounced, on the second touch the tires sunk into the snow and we did not have enough tail authority to keep the tail down, the plane rolled slowly over. We were about 700' from the end of the developed runway.

Once I confirmed Lyn was ok, I asked her to remain in her seat belt until I could help her. I exited the plane, helped her release her belt, lower herself and exit the plane.

Weather was clear, near 0F, wind calm

Runway was hard packed snow and ice, plowed in excess of 60' wide for 1,200'; south obstacle is a 12' tall gravel hill at the end of the runway.

The area to the south of our runway where we landed is being developed to extend our runway. The area has been logged, but not all the stumps are cleared, and there are two stream crossings. Beyond the end of the cleared area is a large stand of spruce, extending about a mile to the river south. To the south east there is a swampy area about a quarter to half mile away, had we continued and had further issues, safe landing options would be very limited, and further from any help.

George R. Campbell
Via Email December 22, 2021