

Witness Statement Form

Place of Incident: Manistee County-Blacker Airport (KMBL)		
Witness Name: Scott C. Mason		Date: 08/13/2014
Mailing Address: [REDACTED]	City: Charlotte	State: MI
Zip Code: 48813	Time of Incident: 15:10 (Local)	
Aircraft No. N468LE	Color: White / Maroon Stripe	Other Description:
Telephone (Cell): [REDACTED]	(Work): [REDACTED]	

Tell in your own words what you saw and heard before and at the time the incident occurred.

On 08/05/2014 at approximately 3:10 pm, the Cessna Cardinal RG (N468LE) that I was flight instructing in crashed during the initial climb while departing runway 19 out of KMBL.

The intended route, prior to the accident, was from KMBL direct to KLDM. About 20 minutes before our takeoff, I was obtaining weather information pertinent to our route of flight. At the time, the weather reporting station (AWOS-3) at KMBL was inoperative, as stated in the airport NOTAM's. The main source for obtaining wind information at the point of departure was the windsock located at the northwestern part of the airport near the FBO. Preceding our taxi from the parking ramp of the FBO to runway 19, the windsock showed that the winds were light and variable, mainly coming from the east. Due to the fact that the purpose of this flight was for training, the winds being light and variable, and our direction of flight being south, I made the decision to perform a short field takeoff from runway 19 (2721 by 75 ft.). According to the aircrafts POH, at maximum weight and with the conditions for that day, the amount of runway needed to clear a 50ft obstacle was approximately 1850 feet. According to the weight and balance, the aircrafts C.G was centered and the aircraft was under maximum gross weight. Around 3:00 pm myself, the student, and two other passengers approached the hold short line for runway 19.

At this time, the student and I performed the before takeoff checklist using the call and response method. I called out each item on the checklist, the student performed, and I confirmed. We had originally set our flaps to 20 degrees for the short field takeoff. Once I realized my mistake, I called for the standard short field takeoff flap setting of 10 degrees. At this time the student rolled onto runway 19, using the most available runway. Once the nose wheel of the aircraft was centered, the student held the brakes and set the throttle for maximum power. We confirmed that engine temperatures and pressures were within limits and released the brakes. As the aircraft began the takeoff roll, I noticed that the flaps were still set at 20 degrees so I proceeded to change the flap setting to 10 degrees. I called out that the airspeed was alive as we continued with our takeoff roll. Approaching

approximately 66 knots, the student called out rotation speed and began to pull back on the elevator, lifting off right around 70 knots. By the time the aircraft lifted off the ground we had approximately 1000 ft. of runway remaining. We continued to climb only about 5-10 ft. above the runway when all of a sudden the aircrafts airspeed dropped rapidly and began to sink back to the ground. The aircrafts wheels had touched down right before the end of the runway and continued its forward momentum down the hill and into the tree line about 350ft from the end of runway 19 where it came to a rapid halt.

The only thing that I remember feeling or seeing, when the aircraft lost airspeed about 5-10 ft. above the surface of the runway, was a downward force on the airplane as we neared the top of the tree line from the runway surface. To the best of my knowledge, the dramatic change in airspeed was not due to any maintenance issues. The aircraft's throttle setting was still set to full power during the loss of airspeed and altitude. I did not hear or see anything during the time of the accident that would lead me to believe otherwise.

Witness Signature: 	Date: 08/13/2014
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