

Sent: Friday, February 13, 2015 7:15 AM

To: Schmidt, Mark L (FAA)

Subject: Witness Account of February 11, 2015 @ KGXY

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To whom it may concern,

This is my witness account of the events that happened on February 11, 2015 at KGXY.

During my lunch break (12:00pm - 1:00pm) I heard an aircraft taxi into and park on the terminal ramp in front of the airport terminal. As the aircraft was running the engine could be hear making odd noises, backfiring and what sounded like one or more cylinders missing. I walked outside to see what kind of aircraft it was and saw that it was a low wing tri-cycle gear home built airplane that had just landed, for what I assumed was to eat at the restaurant next door. I never saw who got out of the aircraft at that time.

After I returned to work after my lunch break, I was in the process of putting an engine on our test stand, to do test runs after repair work. From my recollection, two men Rich and Jack, walked into the hangar about 1:35pm and asked for my boss (Joseph Folchert). They wanted to ask him a few questions about their airplane. I told them that Joe was gone at the moment, but would be back shortly.

They proceeded to tell me they were the ones flying the aircraft on the ramp and where having difficulties in getting the aircraft engine to run well. They were concerned that they expected the aircraft to cruise at an airspeed of 170 knots and where only able to get around 135 knots in cruise. They stated that the engine was removed from an Aerostar aircraft and that they removed the turbo charging system and installed it into their aircraft.

I asked if they had changed the fuel system from the turbo charged system to a normally aspirated system and was told yes they had, and had also changed the propeller governor after the engine had over sped on previous flights. Rich stated that they knew the propeller was not the

correct propeller for the airframe and engine combination. It was stated that the propeller on the aircraft was something of a 80-82 inch propeller and the aircraft was supposed to have a 74 inch propeller.

At this moment I told them that I wasn't the best person to talk to when it came to the problems they were having. I called my boss Joe and asked how far away he was from coming back to the airport and he stated that he was 35-40 minutes away from returning and to have the men wait until he got back if they wanted to talk to him. I hung up the phone and told Rich that if he didn't mind waiting 35 minutes that Joe would be back and would talk to him then. They both stated that they didn't want to wait and would fly back to Front Range airport. I had Rich write down his contact information, engine model, and what propeller was installed on the engine, on a notepad on our front desk.

As they were leaving I mentioned to them that I would walk out with them to see the aircraft and to listen to the engine as they started it to see what I thought might be an issue. As I walked out to the aircraft on the terminal ramp, I took out my cell phone and took a couple pictures of the aircraft. After taking the pictures, both men got into the aircraft. Without doing any kind of a preflight inspection except for looking at something to do with the horizontal trim tab. They attempted to start the aircraft, but they had no electrical power to any part of the aircraft.

They asked if I had any way of jump starting the aircraft battery, I mentioned that the shop had a 12-volt portable jump starter and I could go grab it. When I returned to the aircraft, Rich had the luggage compartment open and was looking at the battery. I held the jump starter up enough to hand Rich the cables and he connected them to the battery. Our jump starter has a master switch on it, and it will tell you if the battery it's attached to has voltage or not. When the cables were attached to the battery in the aircraft the jump starter read that the battery had 12.9 volts. They tried to turn the master switch on and turn the ignition switch to the start position, but nothing happened. The starter solenoid didn't click like it should, and no engagement of the starter motor happened.

At this moment I mentioned that the starter solenoid didn't click over and that it was probably their issue. Rich said he didn't think that was the issue and thought that Jack may have kicked something loose under the dash as

they got out of the aircraft. After this I said I had to get back to work, so I took our jump starter and went back into our shop and back to work.

Probably 5-10 minutes later, Rich came in and asked for a jumper wire so he could bypass something in the aircraft. I gave him a jumper wire I had in my toolbox and went about my work. Rich came back into our shop a couple minutes later and asked if I could bring our jump starter back out and a step stool so he could reach the battery better. I handed him the step stool and I carried the jump starter back out to the aircraft. Rich took the jump starter and sat it inside the luggage compartment and hooked it up in a way that bypassed the starter solenoid. He then tried turning the master switch on and turning the ignition switch to start, the starter engaged and the engine started turning over.

After he got the engine to turn over, he waited for Jack to come out of the terminal building and come back to the aircraft. Rich told Jack that he had the starter working and to get into the aircraft. Jack entered the aircraft and sat in the left front seat and Rich stayed on the right side wing leaning into the cockpit. He told Jack how to start the engine, and after four or five tries they engine started and was running at idle. Rich came off of the wing and said they were good to go. I reached in and unhooked the jump starter from where Rich had it hooked into. Then I picked up the step stool, the jump starter, a pair of wheel chocks, and the jump wire off of the ground and Rich said thank you and I told him no problem.

I started walking back to our hangar and about half way back to the hangar I put my tools on the ground and walked over to in front of the terminal to put the wheel chocks back where they belonged. As I reached the sidewalk in front of the terminal the ramp attendant came out and grabbed the wheel chocks from me. By this moment, Jack and Rich had begun taxiing the aircraft out to the runway. As they taxied by and raised the RPM of the engine, the engine started to run rough again, but they kept on going on out to the run way.

I didn't watch them taxi to the run way or watch them take off from KGXY. I went back to work on the engine I was hooking up to our test stand. About 20 minutes after returning to work, Linda (owner of the Barnstormer Restaurant) came into our hangar and told me that she overheard that the men I had been helping get their aircraft started had crashed and where on County Road 50. I thanked her for letting me know,

and immediately called my boss Joe, told him what happened and he said to keep him posted.

After I finished with the work I was doing at the time, I walked next door to the airport terminal and ran into the Assistant airport manager, Anthony, and asked him if he know what was going on with the crashed aircraft. He stated he didn't know but Cooper, the airport operations manager, might know. We walked into Coopers office and I asked him if he knew what had happened and if the men were ok. He stated that as far as he knew they were still alive but the aircraft was severely damaged. I asked him to keep me posted if he heard any further news, then went back to our hangar and continued working.

Approximately 30 minutes later I was running an engine on the test stand and a customer came up and asked if I heard about the accident, I stated that I had heard about it and that I had heard the men were alive but aircraft was destroyed. He stated that the men were killed in the crash and showed me the 9news breaking story on his phone.

This is my own account of the events I was witness to on the before mentioned date and times. Any further questions may be made by contacting me at this email address or by calling the phone numbers stated below. I have attached the picture I took of the aircraft as stated above.

Sincerely,
Brian L. Rosin, Mechanic
Aircraft Cylinders & Engines Inc.
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