

Good Evening Craig,

The following is my account of what happened on the evening of Aug 27th 2015 regarding the Long Easy Experimental Plane that crashed at WK Kellogg Airport in Battle Creek.

The experimental aircraft (N227TS I believe) was parked outside Duncan when I started my shift at 3pm. The pilot arrived back at Duncan around 8pm with a male friend. He told me with a grin that he was "here for the Toy Plane". My reply was "I recognize you from your last visit". That was the extent of our conversation. The pilot proceeded to the aircraft with his friend, who was carrying Take Out boxes. I did not watch them as they looked the aircraft over, but my impression was that his friend had not seen it before and they walked around it. The friend walked back inside and nodded goodbye as the Pilot climbed inside the aircraft.

When he was ready to depart, we had a Global taxiing into Duncan. The experimental was stopped at the exit of our ramp and blocking the Global from getting off the Taxiway. I was watching wondering "What is he doing?" as it was obvious the Global needed to get into Duncan; there was a member of Line Staff directing the Global. The experimental eventually pulled to the left (from my point of view) into the tie down area and allowed the Global to enter the Ramp. He then proceeded onto the taxiway heading right (from my point of view). I did video a few moments on my cell phone of him taxiing (please see attached file).

A little while later another Duncan employee (Tim Lanphear, who is deaf with limited communication skills) was watching the experimental taking off from an area on the second floor, directly above my desk. He started "yelling", trying to get my attention and pointing down to the runway to my left. He made hand signals telling me the small plane was bouncing around and the wings were touching the runway. He was distraught and a member of the Cleaning Crew joined in from across the Lobby. He was also on the second floor and had been watching through an office window. He asked "Are you seeing this? That plane is bouncing around, its all over the place!". He had watched it take off during the last visit so knew that the Experimental plane would bounce some, but he said this was "way worse than last time". I started looking out and then saw the experimental turning tightly in air back towards Duncan, then continue back along the runway (from left to right from my point of view). He was very low and as he passed by me I saw that the canopy was open. I am unsure of the position of the canopy, just that I could clearly see his head and there was no glass cover above him anymore. His altitude was increasing slowly, perhaps at a 15 or 20 degree angle, at that point my view was obscured by the global that had parked on our ramp. I moved closer to the window to see better and radio the Tower and at that's when Tim started screaming. I saw a large plume of very dark smoke and knew the plane had crashed. I radioed our Line staff, knowing the tower would already be dialing 911 and that the on-site fire trucks would also be responding.

This statement is accurate to my knowledge. I was very distraught at the time but have done my best to articulate everything in detail.

I hope this can help in uncovering what happened and giving closure to this mans family.

Please do not hesitate to call if you have any questions or if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth (Liz) McBride
08/29/15

STATEMENT OF WITNESS

Date 8/28/15

1. Place of incident Battle Creek Airport ^{KBTL} Date 8/27/15 Hour 20:20

2. Aircraft No. _____ Color _____ Other description _____

3. What is your name Chris Reichert Age 24

4. Address _____ City Climax State Mi

5. Telephone No. _____ Occupation Flight instructor WMU

6. Where were you at the time of the incident Supervisor of flying at WMU

- In Dispatch at the SOT Desk

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

- Heard the radio

Saw the plane heading north east - straight and level
on a Right downwind for 23R.

- Seemed to be going quite quick. but low
Below 200ft.

- He turned right heading straight towards the desk
the a descending right turn where he impacted
the ground. hit in a considerable bank and pitch
down. Plane went into pieces, 1 couple seconds later into flames

- Doors were open to the outside, ^{and think I} ~~felt~~ ~~the~~ heard the small
engine.

(If more space is required, continue on reverse)

STATEMENT OF WITNESS

Date 8/28/15

1. Place of incident Long EZ Date 8/27/15 Hour 8:20 pm Local
2. Aircraft No. — Color — Other description —
3. What is your name Kurtis John Guillan Age 20
4. Address [REDACTED] City Kalamazoo State MI 60013
5. Telephone No. [REDACTED] Occupation Flight Instructor
6. Where were you at the time of the incident Western Michigan University College of aviation flight Line (KBTZ)

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

I did not see the events leading to accident because I was in one of the hangers, but I did see the impact. Aircraft seemed to be in a turn when it struck the grass near Runway 23R on the left side (if looking down the Runway). The aircraft burst into flames within a couple seconds of impact and continued to burn until fire crew put it out about 3 minutes later. After extinguished there was almost nothing left of the aircraft.

[Signature]
(Signature)

(If more space is required, continue on reverse)

STATEMENT OF WITNESS

Date 8/28/15

1. Place of incident K3TL Date 8/27/15 Hour 20:15 local
2. Aircraft No. Unknown Color White Other description Experimental
3. What is your name Max Robert Mills Age 22
4. Address [REDACTED] City Canton State MI
5. Telephone [REDACTED] Occupation Flight Instructor
6. Where were you at the time of the incident On the Western Michigan University's
South ramp 100 yards away (east of) A3

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

A student and I were preflighting on the WMU South ramp. During preflight, I heard a dramatic power change which caught my attention. I saw the aircraft in question traveling NE near the 23R/5L & 13/31 intersection roughly 100 feet in the air. Shortly thereafter, the aircraft pitched up slightly and banked roughly 50-60° right. During the banking moment the aircraft lost altitude and impacted the ground right wing first still established in a bank. Roughly 1-2 seconds after impact, the wreckage caught fire. I called 911 and reported that there has been an accident at the Battle Creek Kellogg airport. The dispatcher took my name and ended the call. Emergency crews arrived on scene minute(s) later and extinguished the fire.

[REDACTED]
(Signature)

(If more space is required, continue on reverse)

STATEMENT OF WITNESS

Date 8-28-2015

1. Place of incident KBTL Date 8-27-2015 Hour 2020
2. Aircraft No. N36PL Color White/Gold Other description WMU Logo
3. What is your name Austin Peterson Age 22
4. Address [REDACTED] City Battle Creek State MI
5. Telephone No. [REDACTED] Occupation Flight Instructor - WMU
6. Where were you at the time of the incident Taking off RWY 23R behind accident aircraft

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

We were taxiing out to rwy 23R as the accident aircraft was taxiing to the runway. The aircraft was given instructions to taxi to 23R and takeoff from B. The aircraft must've lost where they were, they crossed rwy 31 at charlie without clearance in which tower brought it to the accident aircraft's attention. The aircraft was instructed to continue on C and takeoff from E. By this time we were beginning our taxi from A1 to takeoff from 23R at A. We got to the hold short line as the accident aircraft was instructed to takeoff. They began their takeoff roll in which tower instructed us to takeoff from A. As we began our takeoff roll the other instructor in the aircraft said "Is that an aircraft over there going into the fence or is that a truck?" to which I replied "No, that must be a truck," at this point I am looking towards the departure end of the runway for the preceding aircraft. After that point the other instructor grabs the throttle and immediately closes it and says, "No dude, that's an aircraft over there. They are going to crash!" I finally catch sight of the aircraft who is maybe 50-100 feet over the runway and is in a sharp bank (approximately a 45-55 degree bank) and is sharply realigning themselves in a 180 degree turn with runway 5L now. We were immediately instructed to cancel takeoff roll and vacate the runway. We turned around 180 degrees and fire-walled the throttle to head for A taxiway. We cleared 23R and continued to A1 to hold there. Tower at this point was trying to gain contact with the accident aircraft again telling them "you can land any runway, you are cleared to land any runway!" to which the accident aircraft for the first time responded, "we will take this one here," after the aircraft got a little past the VOR and halfway down, over the centerline of 5L the accident aircraft, then sharply banked well over 70-80 degrees of bank. At this point the aircraft was only 50 feet above the ground. We could easily see the underside of the entire aircraft in their bank. The aircraft appeared to pull back about 45 degrees through the turn then by this point the aircraft was not but 20-30 feet above the ground and then after one second from the apparent pull-back the aircraft dug into the ground with the right wing (engine two side) first the aircraft in now close to a 90 degree bank. The aircraft then cartwheeled around to lay rest on the ground, after about 2-5 seconds the aircraft went up in flames very quickly. By this point we returned to the WMU ramp to secure our aircraft.

(Signature) [REDACTED]

(If more space is required, continue on reverse)

Hatch Craig

Subject: FW: Another eye witness of crash at Battle Creek Airport

I talked with Cody..... his points were.

Saw the airplane,, it was unique,, so he liked to watch it,,, had seen it in there a couple time before.

On takeoff, it seemed like there was no stability. He searched the web and found the term pilot induced oscillation. The airplane seemed to rock back and forth, and slammed on to the runway. It slammed really hard on the nose wheel, then back onto the rear, he said he saw sparks (figured this would be the propeller): He then got Liz's attention.

He said it looked like a paper airplane in the wind, after getting airborne. It thought it was moderately stable on the return back to the runway.

Then he saw it go nose down, he did not see the impact, but did see the fire.

He also saw him enter the airplane, (I asked if he noticed how the canopy was hinged), he said the pilot entered it from the right side, and that the canopy was hinged on the left side. (a little foggy about that,,, but confidence about it). He said he did not notice the position of the canopy on takeoff.

He added that while parked on the ramp,, the "flaps" (I believe he was referring to the ailerons) would move up and down, in the wind,, and that another airplane parked next to did not do that.

Craig Hatch

(mailing address only)
4760 Oakland St., Suite 500
Denver, Colorado 80239

M-F 7:00 to 3:30 Central

Office [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Fax (571) 366-9662

From: Liz McBride [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, September 02, 2015 11:08 AM
To: Hatch Craig
Subject: Another eye witness of crash at Battle Creek Airport

Good afternoon Craig,

I spoke with the young man who works for the cleaning company at Duncan Aviation last night. He watched the experimental plane taxi out, attempt take off and eventually crash from a second floor window.

I believe his statement will answer some questions for you: he said that at one point the planes rear hit the runway so hard there were sparks. He was unsure if they had come from the propeller or the wheels. This occurred right before the aircraft turned around and then crashed.

His name is Cody Slater.
His cell [REDACTED]

He said you can call him anytime after noon as he works third shift.

I hope this information can help give some definitive answers to the family of the deceased.

Sincerely

Elizabeth (Liz) McBride
Duncan Aviation Employee
[REDACTED]

Sent from my Verizon Wireless 4G LTE smartphone