



The National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Aviation Safety
Central Region
Memorandum for the Record
FAA Inspector Accident Site
Information
CEN15LA235
Ravenna, Michigan
May 1, 2015

FAA inspector John Miller, GRR FSDO, reported the following information.

The aircraft wreckage was resting in a deep ditch on the north side of Sherman Road near the intersection of Wunsch Road, Moorland Township, near Ravenna, Michigan. The Gyrocopter had impacted electric wires that crossed Sherman Road, consequently breaking the two wires. The power pole on the north side of the road was broken off and unattached to the base. The pilot's headgear showed melting of the face shield due to heat. Smoke soot was evident inside of the shield and around the face relief of the helmet, indicating severe arcing occurred. The helmet was found in the west ditch of Wunsch Road near the south side of Sherman Road, about 40 feet from the wreckage.

The aircraft rotor mast was broken off at about seat height. The rotor blades were coned upward, indicating low rpm high loading of the rotor disc. The trailing edges of the blades exhibited buckling between fasteners. One rotor blade had scuff marks on the bottom side. The other blade had buckling failure in the aft direction indicating a head on blow. One of the propeller blades of the pusher prop had separated from a strike and was located about 50 yards beyond the wreckage. The broken blade leading edge exhibited leading edge marks that matched the pattern of the broken power line wires. The panel and forward wind fairing was damaged from a strike of a post on the north side of the ditch. The nose landing gear attach showed a set in the boss consistent with a forward impact of the nose gear. The windscreen was detached from the fairing. The main gear showed little if any damage.

The Volkswagen engine appeared to be mostly intact. The crank would rotate but was limited due to the adjacent damage. Gasoline was present in the fuel filter. Some gas was dripping out of the carburetor.

The broken ends of the power lines showed some broom straw, some cut failures, and some right angle bending near the wire failure. The wires consisted of five aluminum wires wrapped about a steel core.

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