



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Jim Silliman
Air Safety Investigator
Central Region

Date: 1/17/17

Person Contacted: Mr. Al Smith

NTSB Accident Number: CEN15FA075

Narrative:

Mr. Smith reported that he lived to the south and west of the accident site. He stated that he was outside his house and in the back when he heard an airplane flying aerobatics. He said that he heard 2 to 3 passes where he could hear the engine "cycling under load" as they do in airshows. He went to the other side of the house where he could observe the airplane. He said he observed an airplane do a Hammerhead climb and then it entered a slow spiraling descent straight down. He did not hear the engine noise while the airplane was in the descent. He was certain it was spiraling down (not in a flat spin), but he was less certain if it was in a right spiral or left spiral. He said he saw the airplane do about 4 spirals before it went out of sight behind the rising terrain. It did not appear to him that there was any attempt to recover from the descent. He clearly heard the engine during the climb, but did not hear the engine rev up during the descent. He was uncertain about what altitude the airplane was at the top of the hammerhead, it would just be guessing. He said the airplane looked like a poorly thrown football – it was not in a tight spiral but it was "wobbling" during the descent – not like in an airshow.

He said he was uncertain what the exact time was when he saw the airplane. He estimated that it was between 11 am to 12 PM. He said it was very warm at the time and the visibility was "incredibly" clear.

His address is: [REDACTED] Era, TX 76238.



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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Date: 1/30/17

Person Contacted: Mr. Gary Petty

NTSB Accident Number: CEN15FA075

Narrative:

Mr. Petty reported that he purchased the airplane about 10 years ago and only flew it for about 10 hours and then never flew it again. He said he wasn't qualified to fly it and he flew it with a couple of guys who were. He had not flown it solo. He said he didn't like flying in an open cockpit. He flies a Cherokee 180 too.

He stated that there was no nose heaviness and the elevator trim was no problem. No lead weight was used to balance the airplane. The airplane had lots of torque. The takeoff was a 2 – 3 stage takeoff. If you put in full power, you'd be standing on the rudder. The airplane was built for aerobatics. You kept power on when landing at 60 – 70 knots. It had no glide at all.

Tyler Foster purchased the airplane about 3 – 4 months ago. He didn't fly with Tyler. All the airplane logbooks went to Tyler. The last conditional inspection was done about 10 years ago.



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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Central Region

Date: 1/30/17

Person Contacted: Mr. Max Rowland

NTSB Accident Number: CEN15FA075

Narrative:

Mr. Rowland reported that after the Tyler Foster purchased the airplane (in August or September) and had the conditional inspection completed, they flew it to Ironhead, Texas. Tyler flew it to Era, Texas. Although Tyler had lots of taildragger time, he had not flown an open cockpit airplane before. Mr. Rowland was in the front seat on the flight. That was the only time he flew the Skybolt.

He stated that Tyler was a tremendous pilot and he didn't have any problems flying the Skybolt. He stated that Tyler flew it "quite a bit." He thought he had flown it dozens of times.

Mr. Rowland was not sure where the airplane's logbooks were. He had looked at them about a month before they flew. Tyler had a Bill of Sale and Registration when he picked up the airplane.

Mr. Rowland stated the airplane was stable and was not tail heavy. It didn't have an aft CG problem. It "felt good" and didn't have any unusual flying characteristics.

He said that he was a longtime friend of the pilot and they had flown together often.