

From: [eyewitnessreport](#)
To: [Baker Daniel](#)
Cc: [Bowling David](#)
Subject: FW: Aerofab Lake LA-4-250, N1400P
Date: Thursday, August 10, 2017 8:22:40 AM

FYI

Melba

From: Raymond, Rick [mailto:]
Sent: Wednesday, August 2, 2017 9:55 AM
To: eyewitnessreport <eyewitnessreport@ntsb.gov>
Subject: Aerofab Lake LA-4-250, N1400P

My wife and I and 2 friends were on lake Winnebago the night of the crash. We witnessed the whole thing from only several hundred yards away. As soon as we observed that the plane was sinking, we rushed out to offer any assistance we could. We witnessed all 3 being pulled from the water. The pictures that you see online were taken by our friend that was on our pontoon. If there is anything we can assist with the investigation please let me know.
Rick (and wife Becca) Raymond

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7-27-2017

MARK UNERTL

HARBOR MASTER

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~~MARK~~

APPROXIMATELY 12:30 IN THE AFTERNOON I HEARD A
A RADIO COMMUNICATION BETWEEN POINT CONTROL
& A LAKE RENAGADE. THE LAKE HAD LANDED IN
A BAY SOUTH OF THE SEA BASE & WAS TAXING
ALONG THE SHORE LINE HEADING NORTH. A SECOND
COMMUNICATION WAS MADE A SHORT TIME LATER.
THE PILOT STATED THAT HE WAS TAKING ON WATER
& HE NEEDED HELP. WE DISPATCHED OUR RESPONSE
BOAT WITHIN 30 SECS FOLLOWED BY OUR RECOVERY
BOAT & TWO SMALLER TOW BOATS SHORTLY AFTER.
I FOLLOWED AFTER THESE BOATS IN MY TOW BOAT.

UPON ARRIVAL I SAW THE LAKE UNDER TOW FROM
THE RESPONSE BOAT WITH TWO TOW BOAT ONE
ON EACH WING TIP. THE LEFT WING WAS LOW
IN THE WATER & HEAVY. THE AIRCRAFT WAS LEVELED
STABILIZED & TOW AWAY FROM SHORE. WE THEN
PULLED THE AIRCRAFT INTO THE SEABASE & TO
DOCK 4. AT THE DOCK THE AIRCRAFT WAS MOVED
TO PUT THE LEFT SPONSON UP ON THE DOCK.

THE OWNER OF THE AIRCRAFT REMOVED A PLUG FROM
THE LEFT SPONSON & DRAINED A LARGE AMOUNT OF
WATER FROM IT. HE REPLACED THE PLUG & I PULLED
THE AIRCRAFT TO A MOORING PLUG. UPON LEAVING
I NOTED A LIST TO THE LEFT WING, BUT WITHIN
WHAT I WOULD CONSIDER NORMAL FOR A LAKE.
ABOUT AN HOUR LATER THE AIRCRAFT WAS BROUGHT
TO RAMP ONE. THE LEFT SPONSON WAS PULLED
UP ON SHORE. THE OWNER OPENED THE DRAIN VALVE
ON THE 7 GALLON ^{LEFT} SPONSON TANK & BEGAN DRAINING
FUEL INTO THE RAMP/WATER AREA. I WENT &

Found a Bucket so he could drain the fuel into a bucket. Approximately 5 gallons were removed from the tank before it ran dry. The owner closed the drain & asked to leave the base. Air Ops Vice Chair talked to him in an effort to discourage him from leaving. The Chair man then talked to the owner & suggested that we go for a boat ride to check water conditions. Myself, the Chairman & the owner went out in a boat to check water conditions. At the time I would say waves were $1\frac{1}{2}$ ' to 2'. The owner/pilot stated that he planned to take off to the north west. The Chairman strongly recommended that he not do so. That would be a down wind take off run. The Chairman then pointed out that the wind was out of the east southeast. The owner/pilot disagreed. The Chairman then pointed out all the aircraft in the mooring field were pointing into the wind SSE. The Chairman then stated that if he ~~he~~ used a down wind take off in these conditions he could hurt somebody. The Chairman asked how many persons would be on board. The owner operator stated 3 adults. A brief discussion took place about how we were all trying to help him. The pilot/owner then said take me back. I drove back to the dock. I then towed the lake back to a plug in the mooring field. The aircraft was now sitting level. While on shore the pilot

TIME STAMP
OF PICTURE

July 27TH

TIME OF DEPARTURE 7:41 PM

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AIRCRAFT. THE AIRCRAFT STARTED & WENT TO FULL POWER WITHIN 2 SEC. I TOOK A PICTURE OF THE AIRCRAFT AS IT LEFT. IT IS TO BE NOTED THAT THE FLAPS OF THE AIRCRAFT WERE IN THE UP POSITION. THE AIRCRAFT BEGAN HEADING TOWARDS THE WESTERN POINT & THEN MADE A ARCING RIGHT TURN TO THE NORTH AFTER CLEARING STREICH POINT THE AIRCRAFT SETTLED INTO A NORTH WEST HEADING TOWARDS THE CITY OF OSHKOSH AT A HIGH RATE OF SPEED. THE AIRCRAFT PITCHED UP & BRIEFLY LEFT THE WATER. THE LEFT WING DROPPED & HIT THE WATER. THE AIRCRAFT THEN WATER LOOPEED TO THE LEFT IN VIOLENT ACTION COMING TO REST POINTING AT ME WITH RIGHT WING UNDER WATER LEFT WING HIGH IN THE AIR, I MADE A RADIO CALL TO THE POINT & PROCEEDED AS FAST AS POSSIBLE TO THE CRASH SITE. UPON ARRIVAL A MAN CAME UP FROM THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE AIRCRAFT & INFLATED A LIFE JACKET. I ENTERED THE WATER & BEGAN ATTEMPTING TO OPEN THE LEFT CABIN DOOR. I WAS ABLE TO OPEN IT & REACHED IN FINDING THE PILOT. I FELT DOWN TO THE SEAT BELT BUT WAS UNABLE TO REMOVE IT. BY THIS TIME OUR RESPONSE BOAT WAS ON SITE. THEY PASSED ME A KNIFE WHICH I USED TO CUT THE ^{IAP} SEAT BELT. I THEN FREED THE PILOT & SWAM HIM TO THE RESPONSE BOAT WHERE THEY LIFTED HIM IN & BEGAN CPR. I THEN RETURNED TO THE AIRCRAFT TO ASSIST THE DIVERS THAT WERE NOW IN THE WATER. A DIVER FREED THE LEGS OF THE WOMEN

/OWNER WAS OFFERED ASSISTANCE IN FINDING
 LODGING FOR THE NIGHT. WATER CONDITIONS
 IMPROVED AS TIME PASSED. THE PILOT/OWNER
 REQUESTED THAT THE AIRCRAFT BE BROUGHT TO
 A DOCK FOR FUELING. I BROUGHT THE AIRCRAFT
 TO DOCK 2 WHERE IT WAS FUELED. ~~NO~~ NO FUEL
 WAS PUT INTO SPONSON TANKS. DURING FUELING
 IT WAS NOTED THE THE AIRCRAFT WAS MISSING
 A INSPECTION COVER JUST OUT BOARD OF THE LEFT
 SPONSON & JUST AFT OF THE LEADING EDGE ON
 THE BOTTOM OF THE WING. OUR VICE CHAIR
 OF AIR OPS INFORMED THE PILOT/OWNER THAT
 THE AIRCRAFT WAS UNAIRWORTHY WITH OUT THE COVER,
 I WAS ASKED TO ~~TO~~ TOW THE AIRCRAFT TO DOCK 4.
 AT DOCK 4 A ~~PLAC~~ SMALL SHEET OF ALUMINUM WAS
 PLACED OVER THE OPEN INSPECTION HOLE & DUCT TAPED
 INTO POSITION. THE PILOT OWNER THEN CHECKED
 OUT OF THE OFFICE & RECEIVED A FINAL BRIEFING
 FROM THE VICE CHAIR OF AIR OPS. HE AGAIN RECOMMENDED
 NOT LEAVING. I WAS INFORMED THAT THE AIRCRAFT
 WAS CHECKED OUT & WAS FREE TO GO. I TOWED
 THE AIRCRAFT ~~STRAIGHT~~ ^{INTO THE} ~~OF THE~~ CUT. AS WE ENTERED
 THE CUT THE PILOT STATED HE WAS STARTING. I SAID
 NO & HELD UP ONE FINGER IN A MOTION TO SAY WAIT
 ONE MINUTE. AS I SLOWED THE PILOT AGAIN SAID
 I'M GOING TO START. AGAIN I SAID NO! I'M STILL
 HOOKED UP TO YOU! I THEN REMOVED THE TWO
 ROPE LINES THAT WERE ATTACHED TO CLEATS ON THE
 NOSE IN PLAIN SITE OF THE PILOTS. AFTER REMOVING
 THE ROPES I MOVED MY BOAT TO ~~000~~ JUST
 OFF THE LEFT WING OF THE AIRCRAFT &
 GAVE THE PILOT A THUMBS UP TO START THE

IN THE BACK SEAT. HE THEN WENT BACK IN
TO CUT THE SEAT BELT OFF HER WHILE I
HELD HER LEGS. WHEN SHE BECAME FREE
I PULLED HER FREE & SWAM HER TO THE
RESPONSE BOAT WHERE SHE WAS LIFTED INTO
THE BOAT & CPR WAS BEGUN. NEITHER PERSON
WAS BLEEDING. THE DASH COVER APPEARED
TO BE LOOSE ON THE PILOTS SIDE. AFTER ONE
LAST CHECK OF THE COPILOT WE DETERMINED
IT WAS EMPTY ALL ~~REMAINING~~ PEOPLE WERE TAKEN
OUT OF THE WATER. I COMMUNICATED TO THE
SHIRTS BOAT THAT WE WERE LEAVING & THE
SITE WAS THERE'S TO SECURE.

MARK UNERTL

HARBOR MASTER

CO-CHAIR

OSHKOSH SEABASE

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Baker Daniel](#); [REDACTED]
Subject: OSH seaplane accident
Date: Friday, August 4, 2017 10:46:05 AM

At approximately 1230 the Seaplane base point controller received a call from the aircraft that they were taxiing in towards the Seaplane base and having difficulty steering because the airplane was taking on water in its left sponson causing the aircraft to only be able to do left-hand circles during water taxi. The aircraft had landed approximately 3 miles south of the Seaplane base in heavy swells and taxied that distance back towards the base with water splashing over the left-wing and sponson seal.

The Seaplane base volunteers responded immediately and expeditiously dispatched five boats and 10 volunteers to their aircraft location. I arrived on scene with the airplane drifting toward shore approximately 30 feet from the rocky shoreline. I took the bow line off my boat and cleated the bow of the airplane and instructed the boat driver to put it in reverse preventing the aircraft from crashing into the rocks. One of our towboats had to drive next to the right wing and have the passenger hold down the wing to prevent the left-wing from dipping into the lake because of the apparent extra weight of water in the sponson. We subsequently towed the airplane into the Seaplane base and brought it into a dock. After unloading the aircraft it was taken out to a mooring plug.

It was reported that at approximately 1430 the owner asked to be taken out to his airplane for some reason? While he was in his aircraft tied to a mooring plug he decided to start the engine and taxi and spin in circles because he was still tied to the mooring plug. When the volunteer boat crew stopped him and asked what he was trying to do. He was very argumentative with the boat driver and said, "you can't prevent me from leaving with my aircraft." The volunteer proceeded to explain he simply wanted to help and that he wasn't going to be able to leave unless he untied from the buoy. He then was towed to the ramp where he wanted to drain his sponson and asked if we had a water pump. When asked why he wanted a water pump - a volunteer asked if he had water in the hull of the aircraft and if that is why he wanted a pump. The pilot/owner said no. He then proceeded to drain approximately 5 gallons of water out of the sponson. After draining the water the pilot then opened the petcock and drained approximately 4 gallons of fuel from the left sponson. At this time it was discovered there was a missing inspection cover on the underside of the left wing outside the sponson.

After having three pilot briefers (one a previous Lake amphib owner) try and convince the pilot to stay because of the water conditions, I was called to talk to the pilot. I then proceeded to explain why we had concerns about the departure because of the wind direction and rough wave conditions. After much conversation I convinced the pilot to take a boat ride to show him the wave conditions in the outer bay. Upon driving on the northern section of the bay it seemed that he understood the wave conditions were too big? We then drove him to the southern portion of our bay where he again indicated that the wave conditions were unacceptable. He then said, "I'll just take off parallel to the swells." At that point I asked can you tell me how are you going to do that? He said I'll take off in a northwesterly direction. I indicated my EXTREME displeasure and confusion as to why he would point in that direction when it clearly would be a downwind take off in large wave conditions. I said, "you will NEVER get airborne with a Lake, with full fuel, three passengers, heavy wave conditions and downwind - NEVER!" He then asked me where the winds were coming from and I indicated in the opposite direction - I showed him once we entered the lagoon at the Seaplane base. I explained that every airplane is pointing into the wind showing wind direction. The winds were out of the Southeast. Once we got back to the dock he indicated that he was going to load his passengers and depart. At this point I referred to our Air operations volunteer and said we need to try and stop him from leaving. We then had him talk with another Lake Amphib pilot to discuss the conditions and try and convince him of the high waves.

The owner/pilot was reminded that he had a missing inspection cover on the outside of the left sponson. He then asked if there was a mechanic that could help him and I introduced him to a mechanic/IA that subsequently recommended for him to make a field repair using a piece of aluminum and duct tape. The owner/pilot proceeded to go into his toolbox inside the airplane and pulled out a scrap piece of aluminum and used some duct tape to make his temporary field repair. After the repair was made he was towed out into the lake and released. At approximately 1945, after engine start he immediately applied full power for take off with no engine warm up. He started the direction of his take off with a 90° crosswind and halfway through his take off run he changed direction to head

northwest with a direct tailwind. It was observed and confirmed with Photos the planes flaps were up. It was observed towards the end of the takeoff run that he entered high wave conditions causing a porpoise. After the third porpoise I observed an extreme pitch up attitude bringing the airplane into the air approximately the height of the length of the wing (30-40'). The left-wing stalled and impacted the lake surface causing the aircraft to make an abrupt 180° turn. Full power was observed during the entire time until the engine was submerged underwater.

The point operator/volunteer sounded the emergency signal to start the safety/emergency procedures. Several Seaplane base volunteers responded as good Samaritans to assist the pilots and passenger. The co-pilot/instructor was found conscious and was assisted into the auxiliary Coast Guard boat. The left front seat was occupied by the owner/pilot and he was underwater and unconscious. The rear passenger was underwater and she was unconscious. Good Samaritans/volunteers jumped in the water to assist and removed both the pilot and passenger. Several EMTs out on boats performed CPR and used defibrillators in hopes of regaining a pulse. Both of the pilot and passenger were transported to the Seaplane base docks with being unresponsive and had no pulse.

My personal experience has over 31 years flying experience and over 25,000 hours many of which are in various seaplane types. It's my personal observations that the following contributed to the chain of events leading to this tragic accident. These are speculative in nature and may or may not be complete depending on other possible facts.

1. The landing was made in rough seas with nearly a 3 mile taxi to the Seaplane base. It was discovered that an inspection cover was missing which I believe contributed to the left sponson taking on an excess amount of water.
2. At one point the aircraft was brought to our ramp to drain the sponson of approximately 5 gallons of water and 4 gallons of fuel.
3. The owner/pilot was difficult to communicate with and did not accept any advice from many experienced pilots/seaplane pilots/Seaplane base volunteers. I reiterated several times, we were there to help him.
4. The owner/pilot asked be taken out to his aircraft and proceeded to start his engine and spin in circles as a result of still being tied to the mooring plug.
5. At one point the owner/Pilot requested for a water pump. He was asked does he have water in the fuselage with his response indicating no. But, it was questioned by many why he was asking for a water pump since the sponson can be drained by individual drains using gravity. If in fact, (unconfirmed) he had water in the fuselage, upon rotation any amount of water shift would have adverse affects on CG causing a pitch up moment.
6. I've spoken with many lake renegade pilots that indicated it would be difficult or impossible to get airborne with no flaps. Flaps were observed and confirmed to be up during take off.
7. The aircraft was loaded with full fuel and three occupants, with little observed baggage. I suspect the aircraft load was near or exceeding gross weight limits.
8. Takeoff with an initial 90 crosswind and eventual downwind takeoff added to the insufficient lift to sustain flight.
9. The passenger was observed as crying not wanting to go on the flight, further indicating a refusal to take advice from others.
10. The co-pilot/instructor seemed to be intimidated by the owner/pilot and was observed as saying, "it doesn't look that bad to me."
11. I do not believe the field repair to cover the inspection hole was a causal factor in the crash. The wing and sponson were observed as "normal attitude" during the takeoff with the wing and sponson above the waterline.

Mark Wrasse
Seaplane Base Chairman



From: [REDACTED]
To: [Baker Daniel](#)
Subject: Re: Lake Renegade
Date: Sunday, August 13, 2017 1:54:49 PM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)

Not at all.

After arriving at the seaplane base (around 8:30pm), I looked around and saw the Lake Renegade being loaded, I only saw the two men get in, seemed to be in a hurry, and the plane was towed out to the lake. I went to order food, heard the plane's engine for awhile during its takeoff roll, then saw people rush to boats. While I did not see the actual accident take place first hand, my second hand information was that their wing had hit a swell. Several boats came back in and two of the occupants were being provided CPR. I went to see the crash sight and it looked to me (I have my seaplane rating so speaking from experience) a long takeoff role. They had divers go out about 15 minutes later.

I wish I could provide more information but this is the account of what I witnessed.

On Friday, August 11, 2017, Baker Daniel [REDACTED] > wrote:

Thank you Olivia. I have received all the files. Since you were a witness to the loading and departure of the airplane, would you mind putting together a written statement documenting what you saw?

Dan Baker

Deputy Chief

Office of Aviation Safety, Central Region

National Transportation Safety Board

4760 Oakland Street, Suite 500

Denver, Colorado 80239

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, August 11, 2017 7:48 AM
To: Baker Daniel [REDACTED] >
Subject: Lake Renegade