



National Transportation Safety Board
Office of Aviation Safety, Central Region

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Denver, Colorado 80239
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September 19, 2017

Subject: Piper PA-28-140, N5584U, Accident, Ray Community Airport,
Ray Township, Michigan, on May 27, 2017
Conversation with Mr. Larry McKillop, Operations Inspector,
Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), East Michigan
Flight Standards District Office, Belleville, Michigan

Mr. McKillop said that the pilot of the airplane, Mr. Lynn W. Curtis, was told by a former flight instructor who was flying with him not to fly the airplane solo; that he was not ready. The pilot, however, took off solo in the airplane from the Ray Community Airport (57D) and 20 minutes later returned and entered the traffic pattern. There were several witnesses to the accident. Mr. Curtis made several attempts to land but each time he was high and too fast on final.

On his last attempt, the pilot touched down on the runway half way down. The airplane bounced and floated another quarter way down the runway. The airplane then impacted hard on its nose gear, breaking the nose wheel pant off. The airplane went back in the air and off the end of the runway bouncing off a gravel road, going through a field, striking several small trees and finally stopping when it struck a tractor.

The airplane was not equipped with shoulder harnesses so the pilot banged his face off the instrument panel. He also dislocated his hip in the accident.

The FAA went out to look at the airplane. It had come to rest about 500 feet from the end of runway 9. The airplane sustained substantial damage to both wings, the engine, propeller, the engine cowling, and forward fuselage. The nose landing gear was broken aft and the left main landing gear was bent inboard. Flight control continuity was good. The engine was producing power at the accident. There were no issues with any of the airplane's systems. It was a good airplane up to the accident.

Mr. Curtis is about 73 years old. He has a private pilot certificate with single-engine land rating. He had been out of flying for about 11 years and then bought an airplane, a Cherokee 140. He received over 8 hours of instruction and successfully completed a flight review in September of 2016. A month later, he crashed that airplane collapsing the nose gear. It was not reported. Six months later, he bought this airplane. He'd taken a highly experienced former flight instructor

with him on two flights as a safety pilot. The former CFI specifically told him not to go solo in the airplane until he got some more experience. He was not competent.

Taken by:



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