



## RECORD OF CONVERSATION

**Timothy N. Sorensen**  
**Aviation Accident Investigator**  
**Central Region**

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**Date: November 27, 2017**  
**Person Contacted: Gene Greenfield, Witness**  
**NTSB Accident Number: CEN18LA039 – Dickinson, North Dakota**

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### Narrative:

Mr. Greenfield reported that he witnessed the accident sequence. When he pulled into the Cruz Energy truck yard, he observed the airplane with the engine running at idle. He commented that the area was not an airport and was uneven due to repeated truck traffic. The yard slopped upward about 6 feet from east to west over the length of the yard. He noted that is familiar with airplanes and with Piper Cubs in particular, but he is not a pilot.

The airplane was positioned toward the west and appeared ready for takeoff. The winds were from the west (about 280-285 degrees) at 25 knots, gusting to 35 knots. The takeoff roll started about 80 feet from a line of concrete parking barriers located near the east side of the yard. The airplane encountered a transition in the yard about 125 feet from the beginning of the takeoff run, which caused the airplane to skip momentarily and then settle back onto its main landing gear. At that time the tail of the airplane remained off the ground. He noted that normally that when a Cub is taking off, the tailwheel comes off the ground about 75 feet or so into the roll.

The airplane became airborne near the east end of a maintenance shop building located in the yard. This was about 400 feet from the beginning of the takeoff run. When the airplane had traveled about two-thirds of the length of the shop, approximately 100 feet, the right wing dipped to 35 or 40 degrees of bank. The airplane was about 5 or 6 feet off the ground at this time. The pilot corrected slightly, but the airplane remained in a 20-degree right bank. At that point, the airplane started a more abrupt climb, at which time the airplane “snap rolled” to the right and impacted a truck trailer inverted. Mr. Greenfield described the airplane attitude as “significantly nose up” and estimated the pitch angle as about 15-degrees angle of attack. The right-wing tip was about 6 feet off the ground when the airplane started the roll.

Mr. Greenfield reported that the engine sounded as if it came to full power at the start of the takeoff run and it did not vary during the takeoff. He did not perceive and issues with respect to the engine. He commented that the tail of the airplane seemed to take longer to come off of the ground than usual.