

Inspectors Statement: Perry Ochsner
NTSB#: CEN19LA226
Accident Aircraft: N61SC
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On July 17, 2019 at 09:54 am CDT I was notified by office manager, Mr. Nick Eull of the Fargo Flight Stands District Office (FSDO), of an aircraft accident in the vicinity of the Detroit Lakes, MN airport, (KDTL). The aircraft accident happened on the evening of July 16, 2019. I have been assigned to investigate this accident.

The accident aircraft was identified as a U.S. registered aircraft N61SC, SN: 572. The model of this aircraft is a Super Acro Sport certificated in the Experimental/Amateur built category. Certification dated June 05, 1977.

On July 17, 2019, I contacted Mr. Ted Kiebke, owner of N61SC and pilot in command, (PIC) at the time of the accident. At the time of my call, Mr. Kiebke was in the hospital. Mr. Kiebke had been kept at the hospital for observation due to a past heart condition. Mr. Kiebke indicated the doctor was concerned about his heart due to the stress of the accident. Mr. Kiebke indicated he is currently taking high blood pressure medication, blood thinners and steroids. He was released at about 13:00 CST July 17th.

I arranged a face to face meeting with Mr. Kiebke the afternoon of July 17th. Before the meeting I spent some time in the cornfield investigating the accident site. I found the site with the assistance of the local sheriff. The accident site could not be seen from the road. My observations were as follows:

- The aircraft was inverted in a cornfield approximately .25 miles northwest of the airport. The corn was about 6.5 feet tall. Approximately 50 feet of the corn was flat from impact of the aircraft. The field was soft black dirt.
- There was evidence of fuel around the fuel tank. The fire crew had put down an absorbent material around the fuel spill. PIC indicated about 9 gallons on board.
- A three blade composite propeller was installed on the aircraft. One propeller blade had been broken by ground contact. The second blade was damaged by possible ground strike or corn stalks. That damaged was very light and did not appear to be rotational damage. The third blade was undamaged. The propeller gave no indication that it was under power on impact.
- Flight control continuity was satisfactory.
- Throttle cable movement was satisfactory.
- The engine cowling was severely damaged along with the engine mount and exhaust. Damage to the firewall could not be determined.
- Right wing fly-wires were very loose. It appeared there was possible spar damage to the right wing.
- Vertical tail was badly damaged.
- Airworthiness documents were missing from the aircraft. PIC indicated they may have fallen out when the aircraft went inverted. A search of the area revealed no documents.

I left the aircraft and met Mr. Kiebke at the Detroit Lakes airport at 14:00 CST. His left eye and forehead were bruised from exiting the aircraft. His left leg had been lacerated during the exit as well. Mr. Kiebke required 14 sutures to repair the laceration. He was in good spirits. His attitude was cooperative.

The weather was clear and winds were light at the time of the accident. Mr. Kiebke was out on a pleasure flight but also making sure the aircraft was running right for an upcoming trip to Oshkosh, WI. While on his way back to land at KDTL, the engine suddenly lost power and the aircraft was unable to maintain altitude. Knowing he could not make the airport, he chose an emergency landing in the field. Mr. Kiebke impacted the corn at about 40 to 50 mph. The combination of corn stocks and soft dirt caused the aircraft to flip over. Mr. Kiebke evacuated the aircraft and was only slightly injured. It is undetermined what caused this loss of power. Mr. Kiebke indicated it could be something in the linkage to the engine or a fuel system issue.

This aircraft had a recent engine change by the PIC / owner. The original engine was a Lycoming O-360 aircraft engine. Mr. Kiebke removed the Lycoming engine and installed a Mercury 260 horsepower (HP) outboard marine engine. It was decided that the 260 HP engine was too heavy and too powerful for the airframe. The 260 HP engine was then removed. Mr. Kiebke decided to install a Mercury 200 HP outboard marine engine. This engine was water-cooled via a fabricated radiator and heat exchange system. The engine installation / modification had not yet been approved by the FAA. It has been determined this major modification makes the operating limitations and airworthiness certificate invalid.

I had called Mr. Kiebke previous to the interview to specify that I would need to see the aircraft maintenance records, current weight & balance data and registration. I told him I would be needing his pilot credentials along with his current pilot log book. He responded with, "I will have all of that ready for you". Mr. was not able to produce any of the requested documents at our interview.

This investigation will remain active.

Perry W. Ochsner
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