

Fox Todd

From: Mayo, Tracy (FAA) [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, September 20, 2020 10:11 AM
To: Fox Todd
Subject: FW: 09/18 N43020 accident

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From: Nathan Otto [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, September 19, 2020 5:55 PM
To: Mayo, Tracy (FAA) [REDACTED]
Subject: 09/18 N43020 accident

Mr. Mayo,

Nathan Otto here. We just spoke on the phone regarding my incident last night in the Piper Cherokee at Phyllis Field; identifier 6IL2.

As we discussed, I attempted to land on runway 07 at night without runway lighting. I had landed at the field earlier in the day on the 18th when it was still light out with intent to land there later at night. I had asked a friend who has a jeep with floodlights to light up the runway but failed to mention that I wanted to land heading East and I would like his lights facing that way, so he was on the approach end of runway 25 with his lights facing West (wind was light but favoring runway 07 and the strip is approximately 3300 feet long); additionally my phone was dead so I could not request he move. I was having trouble seeing in front of me but thought that I could 'follow the light' to put myself in-line with the runway. My reasoning for not wanting to land on runway 25 at the time aside from a slight tailwind was that I knew there were trees on the approach end of runway 25 and I did not know their exact height so I did not want to contend with obstacles.

I ended up landing to the right of the runway offset by about 10 feet from the right end of the runway. Upon the final moment before touchdown I do recall recognizing that the grass seemed longer than I had recalled but I did not process that I could be off of the runway and continued with landing. A few moments after landing and on the rollout, the right wingtip hit a very small tree about 3 inches in diameter and smashed in the wing near the wingtip landing light. Additionally, the right wing became separated from the fuselage at the root of the wing. I have included pictures below.

In retrospect I would have been safer to attempt to land on runway 25 in this scenario but clearly the best decision would have been not to attempt a landing at all. I do recall thinking it was tough to see and should have recognized that as a time to think better of attempting to land and to head back to 3CK where the airplane lives, but I believe I fell victim to the hazardous attitude of "I can do it". Instead of practicing risk analysis I developed tunnel vision of trying to finish the 'task at hand' so to speak.

I am deeply remorseful for my actions and have great concern regarding my tarnished reputation and record following this accident trying to make a career in aviation.

I have already contacted the ROC on the 18th and satisfied the Immediate Notification required by 49 CFR 830.5 to the best of my knowledge. Do I need to complete the NTSB Form 6120.1 and if so who do I send it to? I received a call prior to yours from the FAA regional ops center asking to call them back so that I can get connected to someone from the Chicago FSDO to discuss what happened. Now that you and I are connected do I still need to give them a call back? The number he gave me was [REDACTED].



Respectfully,
Nathan Otto