



CEN21LA010
CASE FINDINGS

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I was notified of a loss of engine power accident involving N5196S. According to information provided by the FAA, the pilot and passenger were in cruise flight at 4,500 ft. They were en route to XBP and were about 17 nm south of the airport when they experienced “engine problems” followed by a total loss of engine power. The pilot selected the left fuel tank but was unable to restore engine power. A forced landing was performed to a field about 5 nm south of XBP.

I contacted North Texas FAA FSDO Inspector Jim Staggs who responded to the accident site. He stated that when he examined the airplane on-site, no fuel would drain from either fuel tank. He could not detect the scent of fuel or see fuel staining on or in the vicinity of the airplane. The fuel tanks did not appear to be compromised. Both fuel gages read empty when power was applied. No anomalies were discovered with the airplane.

Inspector Staggs interviewed the pilot and passenger, and they told him that when they departed Stevensville, the right fuel gauge read near empty, and the left fuel gauge read approximately half-full. They discussed buying fuel, but the pilot decided they had enough. When further discussing the accident with the pilot, the pilot then was convinced that he ran out of fuel and had not checked the fuel visually or dipped the tanks prior to the flight.

In addition, during recovery of the wreckage, the wings were removed, and the recovery team told the inspector that no fuel was found in either wing.

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