

From: K Gabel <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, March 10, 2021 2:07 PM
To: Orpin, Daniel (FAA) <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: N568P info

I will send you copies of the logs and also some pictures I took of the Scene and Aircraft.

Baron B55 - N568P Incident on 3-10-2021 at 2:30-3:15 am

I was at the hospital admitting a patient at about 12:30am. I left around 1:30am and decided to go to the airport and make sure my plane was ready to go for the morning. If the weather is good I will fly my baron to Quinter or Norton where I do my outreach clinics. I have been building hours and trying to work on obtaining my instrument rating. I share the hanger with another plane and many times have to move their plane to get mine out. I did indeed need to move their plane. I did a walk-around inside the hanger. I then pulled my plane out and then put their plane back. I had checked the wing fuel gauges but they are below the level considered to be accurate. I turned on the main power and the fuel gauges had above $\frac{1}{4}$ tank on the left and even higher on the right. Though this is about 20 gallons, more than enough to fly legally, it isn't enough for me to be comfortable. I wanted to put some more fuel in to bring up the tanks to 50 gallons per side to give myself enough room if anything needed extra time. Sudden change in weather or, as has happened before, cows on the runway could cause me to turn around and the extra fuel is always appreciated. I chose to start up the plane and taxi it to the pump area to add the fuel.

My family is planning on going to Branson next Wednesday, but I only had 2 night landings in the last 90 days. I figured it wouldn't be much more time to do a quick take off and landing. This would make it more efficient, especially as late as it was. I then proceeded to taxi out on Taxi A to RWY 17. The wind was out of 220 at 10 kts. At no time did I feel anything different. I did my run-up without any issues. I followed my checklist and made sure I didn't miss anything. Unfortunately the towbar is not on my list. (We have an abbreviated checklist), I gave power for takeoff and proceeded down the runway. Just as I'm lifting the nose-wheel I feel the left rudder slam to the floor and the right rudder I can not push in. At first I thought it was gusting winds but by the time I had figured it might be the landing gear, I was off the ground and flying left of the runway. I could not push down enough on the rudder to allow me to safely return to center and stop the plane. I chose to continue the climb to pattern altitude. On this climb I noticed the towbar still on the nosewheel from the reflection of the small mirror on the left engine. I knew at this point I would not have a smooth landing and would possibly need help. I leveled off at 4000ft MSL and used my cell phone to call Mark Ostmeyer (the Airport Manager and a CFI). I informed him of my situation and that I needed his help. I was unsure how bad the towbar would complicate my landing, but I wanted to be prepared for the worst. He asked me how much fuel I had on board and if I could fly around safely for 20-30 min. I informed him I believe I did. He recommended to get the Firemen to bring a truck out just in case. I didn't argue and told him I appreciated his help.

I then called my wife, and informed her of my situation. I told her I didn't know how bad the landing was going to be but to pray and that I would call her when I was safe. I continued to fly around for at least 30 minutes. Mark had arrived by now and was talking to me over the radio. He asked how much fuel at this point. I told him that the right tank looked lower than the left and that sometimes our gauges stick, but it wasn't unsticking. I was beginning to worry that I might have to use the cross-feed fuel selection. I had reviewed this procedure in my pre-flight. I looked down to confirm the fuel selectors were indeed both pointing on (toward the nose of the plane). They were in the correct position. As I came around for my last go-around at 4000ft, I turned on my video camera on my phone and began recording what had happened to document this. During this time, the engine slows down and I can see the right engine manifold pressure drops to 15 and the RPM drops to 1500 as well. I look at the fuel and the right engine shows low and the left now shows over $\frac{1}{2}$ full. I again check the fuel selectors. They are straight ahead as they should be. I do not notice the change in the rudder as the left rudder is already fully pushed in. I then turn on the cross-feed and activate the low boost-pump. This doesn't change the right engine, even though I can see the fuel gauge start to come up on the right. Throughout all of this I continue to say out loud and to myself, "Fly the plane!!" and "Check your airspeed!!" Both were hammered into me during my training. I noticed the airspeed was getting slower, just below the blue-line. I then looked at the altitude before pitching down and noticed it was no 250-300ft AGL. I tried to turn into the wind around 220 to gain some airspeed and thus try to maintain or gain altitude, but I quickly learned that the plane had too much drag between the landing gear, the towbar and the yaw/configuration of the plane. I was talking to Mark as this was happening and he was telling me that the wind was slow enough to land any direction. I was over the houses southwest of the airport and decided to turn to the right as I didn't want to land into the housing. I was at about 100 feet just west of the airport terminal and knew that I could not get around to land on 17 again. I chose to aim toward the field just east of the airport which was flat and empty. I didn't have any lighting at all so I didn't know exactly how far off the ground I was. As I approached the edge of the taxiway, the stall warning came on and the left engine and wing rolled up to almost 90 degrees. Fearing a spin I pitched the nose down and turned the aileron the opposite direction. I do not know how, but the plane responded. I was sure I was going to spin down into the runway. This happened one more time but not as much, as I was able to correct it before it happened. The towbar made it very difficult to maintain the right wing up. I did my best to maintain the plane as level as possible until it hit the ground. The nosewheel collapsed and the nose went into the ground. I landed facing about 150 and ended facing about 230. I hit my chin on the yoke but did not lose consciousness. I turned off the main power. After assessing there was no fire, I turned it back on to provide lights for the rescue crew to find me. I was able to get out of the plane on my own and could walk. I asked to be taken to the ER for evaluation. I had a laceration to my chin and a couple bruises. Thankfully that is all.

I told the police at the scene what had happened as well as the Kansas Highway Patrol officer, trooper Beran. I received a call from the FAA, Danny, who said he was the supervisor and I would be contacted by their investigator later today. He emailed me a list of items to collect for him.