



## RECORD OF CONVERSATION

**Joshua Lindberg**  
**Air Safety Investigator**  
**Central Region**

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**Date:** December 13, 2021

**Person Contacted:** Brett Baker, pilot-rated-passenger – [REDACTED]

**NTSB Accident Number:** CEN21LA338

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**Narrative:** In a phone conversation with Mr. Baker, he stated the following:

- He was an air traffic controller for a long time
- He is also a long-time pilot and has owned his own airplanes
- This flight was intended as an instructional flight to re familiarize the passenger with a tailwheel airplane. It had been a long time since he had flown a tailwheel and needed a refresher
- The owner was acting as pilot-in-command
- During the preflight inspection, he noticed there was no carburetor heat knob or cable installed. He asked the owner why there was no carburetor heat and the owner stated that they didn't need it
- He has experienced carburetor icing many times in the past, so he is familiar with the symptoms
- They hand propped the airplane and it took 14 tries to start the engine and the owner was visibly frustrated that it took so long to get it started
- Taxied to the end of the runway, turned around and came back to complete the engine run up
- The owner did not have a checklist, but he described his pre takeoff "flow" to him instead
- Again stated that there was no carburetor heat knob
- After takeoff the airplane barely cleared the trees. The engine was surging hard
- The fuel selector was on, and mixture was full in
- The symptoms seemed like fuel starvation or exhaustion
- He asked the owner if he also felt the engine surging, but the owner did not immediately recognize the surging. After the surging continued, the owner noticed it
- The owner stated that the engine surges like that occasionally so they should just "go through it"
- Engine was initially surging about 300 RPM, then worsened and surged 700-800 RPM

- Every surge they were losing RPM. They couldn't maintain altitude. He kept suggesting that they find a place to make an emergency landing. The owner got tunnel vision with the engine issue and was not focused on landing
- The owner did not turn soon enough and did not initiate the landing soon enough
- After the engine lost power, about 30 seconds passed until they landed
- During the landing, the owner froze up and slammed on the brakes. The passenger felt it with his feet on his pedals
- The airplane nosed over and came to rest in the field
- It was a great 3-point landing, but if the owner had stayed off the brakes, then the airplane probably wouldn't have nosed over
- He dragged the owner out of the airplane to safety
- He went back to the airplane and shut off the fuel valve and retrieved both headsets
- Then waited for the landowner to help with the airplane owner's head injury
- The fuel valve was definitely not in the OFF position during the flight. He turned the fuel valve OFF while securing the airplane after the accident
- The loss of power was 100% caused by carburetor ice. He reiterated the many times he has experienced carburetor ice in the past and is very familiar with the symptoms
- He confirmed that he believed the conditions were right for carburetor ice
- He heard from the insurance adjuster that the airplane's maintenance logbook noted that there was a new carburetor heat cable installed. However, he can confirm there was definitely no carburetor heat cable or knob installed

End of conversation.