

Earl Fields

Recap of the events on July 23, 2021

Flying 5ML locally with William Elms prior to scheduling a flight to KLAM.

Preflight, run-up, take off all normal. Plane operated within normal parameters while flying.

Departure from XS53 (peaster01) I set coarse and altitude for XBP but encountered low clouds and I made the choice to divert to MWL to avoid the low clouds. I descended and visually located MWL airport and made my first call 10 miles out and again 3 miles from the downwind. I entered the downwind, base, and final with all calls to Mineral wells traffic.

After I was on final, I made power setting to low power setting for approach. I visualized landing and picked out proposed touch down spot and confirmed with the papi's that I was on my mark. At that time I made the decision to make a power change to extend my touch down spot. Pushing the throttle in at this time made no change in power. I stated to the passenger that "I have nothing" I then repeated "I have no power". I immediately touched the manifold pressure gauge, then the fuel pressure gauge to visually see if the engine was indicating making power. Both gauges indicated that the motor was in fact still running. I saw that the prop was still spinning and that the landing light was on as I made my way back across the panel to the throttle. I did make sure that the key was on before I again pushed the throttle to the fire wall hoping for a power change. Nothing again. The motor was running at an idle but not responding to any throttle change at all.

After surveying the situation my passenger asked, "are we going to make it" with my response being "not the runway". I surveyed every option possible with limited time to execute the best possible plan. Directly in front of me I had trees which was not an option. My passenger stated and pointed to a field located across the street which I immediately declined. I pointed to the field located off the forward portion of the right wing and I clearly stated, "we are going right there". I made the decision on my own to land in the field where the plane came to rest. I made this decision after reviewing all my options. My options were very clear. I had trees, houses, fences, roads, which made my decision very clear that I had only one option to safely land the aircraft with minimal damage. I flew the plane to the field with

limited power. I choose to negotiate around the trees and touch down as soon as possible to hopefully keep the aircraft from coming in contact with a fence. I stated very loudly and in a stern voice to my passenger "brace" I flared the aircraft hard and sat down on the mains. I felt the nosewheel touch down and quickly I felt it collapse and then the plane slid to rest approximately 40 feet later. My passenger had opened the door and was exiting the airplane quickly after the plane came to rest. He exited the plane and called back to me to get out. I told him to go as I stayed to turn off anything open. I shut the fuel valve off, I turned the key off and dropped the keys on the floor. I turned the battery toggle off and then exited the aircraft.

After I began receiving medical attention approximately 40 feet away, I expressed to the local FD that the fuel was shut off and the battery was turned to the off position. Two local FD members assessed the aircraft by manually checking the aircraft. I was not present with the FD members but I was reported that the aircraft was in fact secured and the fuel and battery was off.

After on scene, the FAA had the following discussion with the pilot:

- 2 Fire department men entered a/c to retrieve glasses & gear.
- Mr. Fields stated he was on Rt. tank when loss of power occurred. He also turned off fuel & removed keys from switch.
- Mr. Fields believed F.D. placed keys back in switch & turned off fuel. (Accidentally placed switch to Left tank)
- 4 lbs of fuel pressure at last check.
- Idle manifold pressure at last check.
- "Bump" in engine was transfer of fuel tanks; left to right
- Pilot's sunglasses were stolen from plane after accident