

National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Research and Engineering

Washington, DC 20594



CEN22FA019

MEDICAL

Specialist's Factual Report

August 22, 2022

A. ACCIDENT

Location: Marengo, Wisconsin
Date: 10/23/21
Time: 14:40 CDT
Airplane: American Champion Aircraft 8KCAB; N843AC

B. MEDICAL GROUP

No group was formed for the medical evaluation of this accident.

C. DETAILS OF THE INVESTIGATION

Purpose

This investigation was performed to evaluate the pilot for medical conditions, the use of medications/illicit drugs, and the presence of toxins.

Methods

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) medical certification file and the pilot's autopsy and toxicology reports were reviewed. Other relevant medical and regulatory issues were reviewed.

D. FACTUAL INFORMATION

1.0 Pilot

1.1 FAA Medical Certification File

According to the FAA medical certification file, at the time of the accident, the 29-year-old male pilot held a first class medical certificate without limitation. At the time of the most recent exam (11/2/20), the commercial pilot was 69 inches tall and weighed 174 pounds. He reported having 300 total flight hours. He reported taking no medications and having no medical conditions. No significant medical concerns were identified.

1.2 Autopsy

According to the Dane County Medical Examiner, McFarland, Wisconsin autopsy report, the cause of death in the pilot was blunt force trauma injuries and the manner of death was accident. From histology sections of the myocardium, the medical examiner reported the pilot had acute myocarditis of probable viral etiology; his postmortem nasopharyngeal swab sample was positive for SARS-CoV-2 RNA (the

virus that causes COVID-19 disease).¹ No other significant natural disease was identified.

1.3 Toxicology

Toxicology testing performed for the medical examiner's office was positive for caffeine in the pilot's pleural blood. Toxicology testing performed by the FAA Forensic Sciences laboratory toxicology² was negative for ethanol in pleural blood and tested-for drugs in urine.

E. SUMMARY OF MEDICAL FACTS

The 29-year-old male pilot held a first class medical certificate without limitation. He reported taking no medications and having no medical conditions. According to the autopsy, the cause of the pilot's death was blunt force trauma injuries and the manner of death was accident. The medical examiner reported that the pilot had acute myocarditis and coronavirus (COVID-19) infection. Other than caffeine in pleural blood, toxicological testing did not detect any ethanol or tested-for-drugs in the pilot's pleural blood or urine.

Submitted by:

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Medical Officer, RE-1

¹ COVID-19 is an acronym for "coronavirus disease 2019" an illness caused by the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2).

² The FAA Forensic Sciences Laboratory has the capability to test for more than 1,300 substances including toxins, common prescription and over-the-counter medications, and illicit drugs. <https://jag.cami.jccbi.gov/toxicology/>