



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Samantha Link
Aviation Accident Investigator
Central Region

Date: May 28, 2022
Person Contacted: Mr. Ethan Hillmer (Pilot's previous flight instructor)
NTSB Accident Number: CEN22FA214

Narrative:

During a telephone conversation with Mr. Hillmer he reported the following:

- He started flight instructing the pilot in the summer of 2021. The pilot flew a couple flights a week, however, those flights became inconsistent after he went to college.
- Since the pilot was not flying consistently enough, Mr. Hillmer was not comfortable soloing him. "He needed to do pattern work."
- During the pilot's time at the Waukesha Airport, the pilot flew with a couple other instructors, and they also saw hazardous attitudes:
 - Sometimes the pilot thought he knew more than the instructors and he would question Mr. Hillmer a lot.
 - The pilot would often show signs of "pushiness."
- The last time Mr. Hillmer flew with the pilot was January 2022.
 - He told the pilot he wasn't ready to solo. But the pilot would say "but I have this much time"
 - When the pilot left for another instructor, "he just didn't have the hang of landings yet."
- At one point the pilot informed Mr. Hillmer "I think you're a perfectionist, you're holding me back."
 - Mr. Hillmer told the pilot that he needed to fly more consistently before he could solo.
- Mr. Hillmer mentioned was hesitant to sign the pilot off because he thought the pilot wasn't ready for solo flight.

- The pilot knew the ground knowledge very well; he was very smart. He was also excellent at straight and level flight and conducting maneuvers. But he needed a lot of takeoff and landing practice.
- Mr. Hillmer noted that the pilot had some issues with staying focused.
 - He was very quick to things and was kind of rushed with checklists and such. Mr. Hillmer worked a lot on slowing him down.
 - Near the beginning of training, the pilot would sometimes get distracted while on short final. Something of interest (bird or car) would catch his attention. Mr. Hillmer would have to bring him back to stay on track. This was definitely an issue early in his training; however, he did get better as time went on.
 - Sometimes, he noted that the pilot would set a goal, and he would get “hyper focused” on achieving that specific goal. He would sometimes miss the bigger picture.
- When asked about why some of the early entries in the pilot’s logbook were out of order, Mr. Hillmer replied:
 - The pilot’s logbook is a little out of order at the beginning because a different instructor started with him. There was some confusion with dates, and once it was all sorted out there was a slight backlog.
- Mr. Hillmer did not know the pilot’s new instructor. While it is the same company, they do not often meet with instructors from the other locations.
 - There are three branches to Spring City Aviation: Waukesha, Timmerman, and Burlington.

END.

Submitted by: Samantha Link