

National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Aviation Safety

Washington, DC 20594



CEN23FA079

ENGINE EXAMINATION

4/27/2023

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A. ACCIDENT

Location: Kingfisher, Oklahoma
Date: January 16, 2023
Time: 1242 CST

Airplane: Piper PA-32-301T

B. ENGINE EXAMINATION

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C. SUMMARY

On January 16, 2023, about 1242 central standard time, a Piper PA-32-301T, N8266D, was destroyed when it was involved in an accident near Kingfisher, Oklahoma. The pilot and certificated flight instructor were fatally injured. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 91 instructional flight.

According to witnesses, the airplane was seen trailing black smoke before it rolled over and dove into the ground. A witness provided cell phone video confirmed the presence of the black smoke and an explosion after impact.

The accident flight was the first flight after the airplane had undergone maintenance including the installation of a new autopilot system and an annual inspection. The flying club that owned the airplane reported that club members were required to fly with one of the club instructors to become acquainted with the operation of the new autopilot system. The accident flight was such a flight.

The airplane impacted a firm level field with little vegetation. The initial impact location was a crater that contained the airplane's propeller. The rotation axis of the propeller was near vertical, indicating that the airplane impacted the ground in a near vertical attitude. All components of the airplane were in the immediate vicinity of the accident site.

The main portion of the fuselage, wings, and tail surfaces came to rest about 100 ft. north of the initial impact point. The wings were damaged from impact but continuous from tip to tip except for the center spar section which was melted and consumed by fire. The ailerons and flaps remained attached to the wing. The wing leading edge was crushed aft and all four fuel tanks were ruptured. The fuselage forward of the tail surfaces was almost completely consumed by fire. The aft fuselage from the leading edge of the vertical stabilizer and aft was intact with the tail surfaces still attached. The vertical tail surfaces were intact and the horizontal tail surfaces were intact but with impact damage to the right tip. Control continuity was confirmed from all surfaces to the cockpit with all breaks in the control system consistent with impact damage.

D. DETAILS OF THE EXAMINATION

1.0 Engine Examination

The engine had been relocated to a salvage facility where the examination of the engine took place. It was placed on a wooden table and the exhaust system was cut from the engine using a reciprocating saw. The propeller governor was removed, and the rear accessories were removed from the rear accessory case. The accessory case was removed, and the internal accessory drive gears examined. No defects were noted wrt to the accessory drive gears. The engine oil pan was removed, and the inside of the pan had a coating of black oil residue. One of the magneto drive bumpers was found within the oil pan. The engine baffling was removed, and exterior of the engine examined. No preimpact defects were found wrt the engine, oil pan, or accessory case. There were no breaches in any of the engine components that would explain a loss of engine oil. The oil pump was disassembled and the internal surfaces of the pump housing had some scoring, but would not have prevented normal operation.

Submitted by:

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NTSB IIC