

Damian Galbraith
Aviation Accident Investigator
OAS

Date: April 25, 2024

Subject: CEN24FA164, Burnet County Sheriff's Office Witness Summary

Contact: Dana Martin, Witness, [REDACTED]

On April 23, 2024, the Burnet County Sheriff's Office provided the Investigator In-Charge (IIC), a witness statement from Ms. Dana Martin regarding the accident involving airplane N550NL at Spicewood Airport (88R), Spicewood, Texas. At the time of the accident, Ms. Martin was at her residence located across from runway 17 at the airport.

Ms. Martin reported hearing an airplane and subsequently stepping onto her porch, where she observed the accident airplane approaching runway 17. the first approach to land was "fast" and the airplane "ballooned." There was a wind gust at the time, and the pilot initiated a go-around. On the second approach, the nose landing gear nearly struck the runway before the airplane banked to the left. She heard the engine increase in power, and the airplane began to climb "straight up," yawed to the left, and then went "straight down."

Ms. Martin reported that she placed a 911 call at approximately 1826 central daylight time.

END

Samuel Keys

TX DL [REDACTED] [REDACTED] San Marcos, TX 78666

DOB [REDACTED]

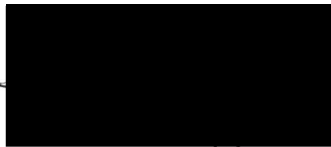
Age 32

Social Security # [REDACTED]

On Monday, April 22nd, 2024, I witnessed the crash of N550NL at Spicewood Airport in Spicewood, Texas. I am a commercially-rated pilot with ~1440 hours of flight time and am employed as a pilot by Aero Photo, a company based at the Spicewood airport. At the time the accident occurred I was flying N737DP, a Cessna 172 owned by my employer.

I was approaching the Spicewood airport from the east and intending to land; I made this known on frequency 122.8 (the Common Traffic Advisory Frequency for Spicewood airport) with standard radio calls stating my aircraft type, abbreviated callsign, position in relation to the airport, and altitude. Prior to making my first radio call, I had observed on Foreflight (a situational awareness enhancing app commonly used by pilots) that an aircraft, callsign N550NL, was approaching the area from the west at a high rate of speed; based on the aircraft's altitude and position, I expected the aircraft would be landing at Spicewood and that it would be doing so prior to my arrival based on it's speed. The pilot of N550NL then made a radio call stating his intentions to land; I do not remember if this was before or after I made my initial call. As I approached the airport I made additional radio calls stating the aforementioned type/callsign/updated position/altitude and I observed N550NL enter the airport traffic pattern and approach runway 17 to land. I then observed the plane begin a rapid and steep climb away from the runway and a sharp, low-altitude turn to the east and the pilot stated on the radio that he was 'going around' (discontinuing the attempt to land, and climbing away from the runway). He did not state a reason for the go-around. Normally when an aircraft 'goes around' in visual flight conditions, the standard procedure is to continue straight-ahead as if on an extension of the runway while climbing to at least 700' above the ground, then execute a series of 90 degree turns to eventually line back up with the runway. The climb will typically continue to a standard pattern altitude of 1000' above the ground prior to beginning a new descent to the runway. I observed N550NL to do none of these things and his sharp turn to the east appeared to put him on a straight-line course toward my position at the time. I stated on the radio that it looked like he was already turning to the downwind leg of the traffic pattern (meaning the portion of the traffic pattern when the aircraft is flying parallel to the runway in the opposite direction of

intended landing) and that I would make a right-hand 360 degree turn to allow him to go ahead of me and create sufficient spacing between us. The pilot of N550NL then asked me what my position was which I again stated, as well as reiterating that I was making a 360 degree turn to ensure we had plenty of space between us. My opinion at the time (as well as now) was that his maneuvering had cut me off from my entry to the traffic pattern and created a collision hazard which I then de-conflicted. As I was beginning my turn to the right, I noticed that N550NL appeared to level-off at a lower altitude than expected (rather than 1000' above the ground). When I completed my 360 degree turn I entered the downwind leg of the traffic pattern (flying parallel to the runway) and began configuring my aircraft for landing. I observed N550NL to be close to the runway and expected it to be landing shortly. I flew a longer-than-usual downwind leg in an effort to ensure adequate time for N550NL to slow to a stop, turn around, and exit the runway. I then made a 90 degree turn toward the runway; because of the wing-on-top design of the Cessna 172 I was flying, my view of the runway and its immediate surroundings was obscured while in that turn. When I rolled wings-level out of the turn, I observed a large fire burning just east of the runway. I made several radio calls asking if the aircraft was on the runway with no response. I determined the fire was from the crash of N550NL which was then affirmed on the radio, presumably from someone on the ground. I climbed away from the airport into an orbit over the area, then notified Austin Air Traffic Control that a plane had crashed at the Spicewood airport and that a Notice To Air Missions needed to be issued to warn other aircraft that the airport was closed.



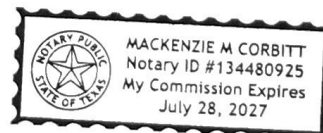
State of Texas, County of Hays

Subscribed and sworn to before me this

23rd day of April, 2024 by

Samuel Keys

[Redacted], Notary Public





Damian Galbraith
Aviation Accident Investigator
OAS

Date: May 20, 2024

Subject: CEN24FA164, Certified Flight Instructor (CFI) Statement

Contact: Tyler Spidell, CFI, [REDACTED]

On May 20, 2024, the investigator-in-charge (IIC) conducted a telephone interview with Mr. Tyler Spidell, a certified flight instructor who had previously provided flight instruction to the accident pilot, Mr. Wesley Perkins. Mr. Spidell stated that Mr. Perkins satisfactorily completed a biannual flight review on June 10, 2023, and that he flew to the required standards at that time. Mr. Spidell further stated that, in his opinion, the accident airplane was not a good fit for Mr. Perkins, noting that without the use of the autopilot, Mr. Perkins experienced difficulty maintaining the airplane on course.

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