

Daven Horne

CFI/II/MEI:

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Personal Statement

My student Javier Mehrara and I arrived at the aircraft (1817E) around 08:00L. After doing a thorough pre-flight inspection we tried to start the aircraft up and the engine began shaking violently. I also noticed that the alternator was not charging the battery. It seemed as if the belt wasn't attached to the alternator anymore due to the noises we were hearing and based on the fact I couldn't get the system's volts to change with different RPM settings. We elected to shut the aircraft down and I went ahead and inspected the alternator belt, and everything appeared as normal. We restarted the engine to see if the condition persisted and upon start-up everything was "in the green." I kept a close eye on all systems during the runup and noticed no abnormalities. We departed KBJC to the North at about 08:40L and climbed to 8500. We chose to do maneuvers over Panama reservoir. After completing several maneuvers, I then gave my student a simulated engine fire, they ran the appropriate checklists, and we entered a simulated emergency descent 2 miles to the east of Panama and descended down to an altitude of about 7000 feet. We then transitioned into a simulated emergency landing and my student chose a field to the north of parkland airport 7CO0. We took the emergency descent down to about 700 ft agl. Upon reaching 700 ft AGL, I prompted my student to recover by initiating a go around. When my student went to full power the engine started shaking violently and RPMS started to drop. I took control of the aircraft and noticed the oil pressure gauge started fluctuating as well. In response to the engine rpm dropping, I tried to troubleshoot as best as I could. I went full rich, cycled the power, checked fuel selectors, and adjusted the mixture, but this did not fix the issue and rpms continued to drop. We were at about 2000 rpms at this time even though we were at full power. It was at this time I decided that we were going maneuver to land at parkland airport 7CO0. I set up to land on the runway, but we were just too high and way too fast. Based on the houses around us and the uncertainty of being able to clear them, I chose a field just to the north of the airport. Our RPMS were down to about 1900 rpms (still at full power). At this point I committed to landing in the field away from innocent people and declared the emergency on guard. We touched down in the field and it was uneventful, I held the nose wheel off as long as I could, and it appeared we were safe. However, the field was sloping and the top of it did not reveal there was a culvert or riverbed at the bottom of it. I used the brakes as effectively as I could, but we could not slow down in time prior to reaching the ditch. The plane went nose first in the ditch, I turned on the elt, ensured my student got out of the aircraft, and made a call to the practice area (123.175) for them to send additional help. All checklists were complied with during this flight. After takeoff, cruise, and all maneuver flows. Based on the given circumstances and the uncertainty of how long we had with the engine, the field was our only sure bet. A bystander in a truck arrived on the scene and was already on the phone with 911. I immediately called ATP to relay the incident and cooperated with LEO's on scene.

Regards,
Daven H.