

9/15/2024

To: Brian Rutt, Air Safety Investigator, NTSB

From: Patrick Brown, Bismarck ND

Re: Incident Statement involving aircraft N705JP on 09/01/2024

I was the passenger in the co-pilot seat of the twin Diamond, tail number N705JP. The aircraft was flown by Dr John Reynolds at the time. I had just completed my work shift at Bismarck Aero Center as a line service technician. Dr Reynolds was heading up make a brief flight to what I understood was to verify his synthetic vision on the G1000 in his plane was working as expected. He agreed for me to join him since it had been many years since I had flown in a small plane. Though I have a private pilot single engine rating, I am not current with FAA regulations to fly. I was going to enjoy the time in the air. If I could help him with keeping an eye out for traffic I was ok with doing that.

Dr Reynolds performed his preflight and I do recall he had mentioned that he was looking at flying into Mandan Airport (Y19). He had flown to Mandan on numerous occasions and I understood he was very familiar with the airport. After his review of the weather, he noted Mandan was lite and variable for wind but he was expecting possible wind shear and stated he might come in about 5-10 knots more than normal to accommodate.

We departed the Bismarck airport using runway 13 and was issued a squawk code from tower for flight following towards Mandan. Take off was uneventful. Dr Reynolds did activate the autopilot when at altitude. Bismarck departure had us turn west towards Mandan to perform an approach to Mandan. Bismarck departure had us squawk VFR, I recall Dr. Reynolds transmit on the Mandan frequency as to our intentions to any traffic that we were inbound for a landing on runway 31. He then announced to Mandan traffic when we were about 5 miles out that we were on the glideslope. That was the only time I took a glance at his instruments. The synthetic vision appeared to be working as expected and we were on the glideslope at approximately 110 knots. That was the only and last time I took notice of the speed. At that time another aircraft (unknown type and tail number) called to inquire where we were at as they wanted to depart Mandan. Dr Reynolds confirmed we were about 5 miles out. The aircraft then departed. I noticed the traffic after the aircraft was in the air. I am unclear when Dr Reynolds noticed the aircraft but he did acknowledge he saw them. The aircraft passed us above and to the left of us going in the opposite direction. I am not sure of the exact distance but I would guess about 500 – 800 feet separation.

The approached into Mandan was on center line. I do not know what approach speed we were at and I did not say anything so I did not distract him as I did not see anything out of the ordinary. Dr Reynolds landed the aircraft on center line and so smooth I did not know when we touched down until the nose wheel shimmied. Another aircraft that was waiting on the taxiway at the end of the runway was heard stating over the radio that it was a nice landing. Since this was the first time in Mandan on the runway side of the airport, I was uncertain how far down the runway the touch down occurred. I do recall it was not on the numbers but appeared to be within the first third of the runway.

The roll out seemed normal but I did not feel much in regards to deceleration as I would have expected. Based on the sound of the engines they appeared to be at idle. We were coming up on the runway end markings and I perceived we were already past a go around option. At the last set of runway threshold markings I could feel more deceleration and we then started turning left. We exited off the runway into the grass just off the left corner of the runway. Before we exited the runway I saw the aircraft that was waiting to depart on the taxiway. When we exited the runway I saw what appeared to be a sign that we were going to hit. This turned out to be the strobe light at the end of the runway. This passed under me. I would guess that we may have been going about 20 mph when we exited the runway. After we took out the light and all seemed functional, Dr Reynolds accelerated to get the aircraft onto the taxi way, which he accomplished. We then taxied to a tie down spot to check the aircraft. On the taxi to parking I did note to Dr Reynolds that it appeared we hit a prop as I was feeling vibration from the right engine. After the aircraft was shut down it was noted one of the three props on the right engine was missing about 6 inches from the tip of the prop. Upon further inspection, we noticed damage to the aircraft. We contacted a mechanic to inform them what happened and where the aircraft was. We then secured the aircraft to a tie down.

The next contact made was to the Mandan airport manager. This was Lindsay Gerhardt. She wanted us to make sure there was no debris on the runway. We then walked to the site to verify there was no debris on the runway, which there was not. Only the strobe light was damaged that was sitting in the grass. A representative for the airport then showed up and picked up the strobe light. When observing the runway at that time, it appears if we would have gone straight off the end of the runway in the middle we would not have damaged anything.

After this Dr Reynolds then called the NTSB to report the incident. This was about 45 min from the time the incident occurred.