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Date: October 28, 2024

Subject: CEN25LA029

Contact: John Fasano, pilot of N257ST

On October 27, 2024, N257ST, a CarbonCub CCX-2000 kit built airplane was destroyed when it was involved in an accident near Ogallala, NE. In a telephone interview with the pilot of N257ST, John Fasano, he made the following observations about the accident flight:

He had previously flown from Centennial Airport (KAPA), Centennial, Colorado, and had flown to the Spencer Municipal Airport (KSPW), Spencer, IA with his father-in-law to pick up another airplane. Mr. Fasano departed KSPW in the CarbonCub and landed at several small airstrips to practice tailwheel landings before landing for the night at the Jim Kelly Field (KLXN), Lexington, NE. The day of the accident the pilot landed at Searle Field Airport (KOGA), Ogallala, NE, to stretch his legs and add 8 gallons of fuel to the airplane.

Prior to takeoff the pilot recalled that he had performed a flight control check. The lined up to depart from runway 26 and noted a slight crosswind from the left. Shortly after takeoff, about 30 ft to 50 ft above ground level, the pilot felt the elevator control go "totally loose". He did a quick check of the controls and did not have any elevator control authority. To lower the nose, the pilot reduced engine power and again checked the flight controls and still had no elevator control authority. The airplane nosed down and the pilot briefly attempted to control the pitch with engine power, but opted to commit for a crash landing. Close to the ground, he pulled the control stick back in an attempt to flare. The airplane collided with the runway in a nose low attitude and skidded to a stop. A post-impact fire started and the pilot was able to egress from the airplane.

After the fire was secured, the pilot did a visual inspection of the airplane and noted that the elevator control cables were no longer secured to the control arm. The pilot did not disturb the wreckage.

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