



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Michael Garver
Investigative Assistant
Eastern Region

Date: July 5, 2011
Person Contacted: Paul Sward – Pilot of Accident Airplane
NTSB Accident Number: ERA11CA365

Narrative:

During a telephone conversation, Mr. Sward stated the following:

- Rented the aircraft from Three Wings Flight Club.
- The airport was his normal base.
- The purpose of the flight was to regain night flight currency
- The accident airplane was a Piper PA-32 and most of his hours were in a Piper PA-28.
- The flight had been delayed for a few weeks by weather.
- He was out of night currency by two weeks
- The original plan was to perform three patterns and three full stop landings.
- Both main fuel tanks were full.
- The left tip fuel tank was also full.
- The right tip fuel tank was empty.
- It was a warm humid evening.
- The pilot's wife was onboard.
- The pilot elected to idle the engine for a longer period of time than normal to allow the defroster to defog the windows.
- There was slight haze in the vicinity of the airport.
- The pilot performed a run-up which completed with normal and expected results.
- Take-off was normal.
- He was assigned a left traffic pattern
- Climb-out was normal.

- Fuel pump was left on for the duration of the flight
- He does not recall making the midfield call out to air traffic control.
- Upon turn to base he trimmed the aircraft for 90 miles per hour.
- He backed off of the throttle for decent.
- Base leg began with flaps at first notch.
- Once turned to final he adjusted the trim “two hand-fulls” nose down for 80 mph.
- Once reaching 80 mph, flaps were extended to the “third notch.”
- In the initial portion of his approach the pilot stated that the VASI indicated he was too high (two white lights).
- The pilot stated that he pushed the mixture in but kept the throttle at its setting from the beginning of final.
- He saw a red light go underneath the aircraft on the left side shortly before the accident occurred.
- He felt that up until impact that he was within the threshold area.
- Stated that the way the blast-fence was illuminated had made it indistinguishable from runway threshold lighting or not visible at all.
- There was control continuity.
- No pre-existing mechanical problems with the aircraft were evident when he pre-flighted the aircraft.
- Run up before takeoff was normal.