



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Todd Gunther
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: September 19, 2011
Person Contacted: Max Folsom – Flight Instructor
NTSB Accident Number: ERA11FA493

Narrative:

Mr. Folsom stated that he taught Mr. Finnegan to fly.

He had no problems with the airplane as far as he knew. The airplane had its last annual in March.

Mr. Finnegan rented a hangar to keep the airplane in. He would use Mr. Folsom's fuel card to fuel up the airplane and would always "gas up" on Fridays. He would always "sump and stick" the airplane's fuel tanks.

Mr. Folsom would fly with Mr. Finnegan about ten times a year and he was currently teaching him to fly a float plane. He had only completed about 3 hours of float training when the accident occurred. He was teaching him in a 172 on floats that had a 180 horsepower engine in it.

His "ball was a little off sometimes" and Mr. Folsom noticed that during steep turns he would sometimes be about a "1/2 ball out".

He was also kind of rusty on his VOR navigation as he had a handheld GPS that he would use all the time.

He would spend most of the weekends at the airport with Mr. Folsom. He did the majority of his own maintenance work and Mr. Folsom would do his annual inspections.



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Date: September 19, 2011
Person Contacted: Mark Muzzy - Witness
NTSB Accident Number: ERA11FA493

Narrative:

Mr. Muzzy advised that on the morning of the accident he observed the airplane flying down Eagle Creek Road. It then made a left all the way around, pulled up, made a climbing left turn all the way around, then another left turn, there was a high pitched sound and then the sound stopped.



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Date: September 19, 2011
Person Contacted: Linda Cleaves – Witness
NTSB Accident Number: ERA11FA493

Narrative:

Mrs. Cleaves stated that they are very close to the airport and she heard the airplane takeoff. She had never seen an airplane flying that low before. He was "kind of doing aerobatics". About 0800 she heard him "come around" (make a circle). He circled around and came back then circled around and came back down again. He was close to her house right above the trees. She opened the window and she could hear the engine running and then a "boom". He was not very high up and did not have far to drop. She then called 911.



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Date: September 21, 2011
Person Contacted: Rodney Cleaves – Witness
NTSB Accident Number: ERA11FA493

Narrative:

Mr. Cleaves stated that Because of where he lives he hears airplanes all day long. On the day of the accident the airplane flew around his house making circles. He "came down, and buzzed the trees".

He came by the house traveling from North to South. He "kept the nose up" and slowed down. He then came at the house and went over it. He then came around again. The airplane then "headed down" from "horizontal to vertical". He was only two tree lengths in the air. He could hear the engine running.

He thought to himself that "he is not going to get out of this one". Then the airplane went behind the trees and he heard the "crash".



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Date: September 19, 2011
Person Contacted: John Hall – Witness
NTSB Accident Number: ERA11FA493

Narrative:

Mr. Hall stated that he and Mr. Finnegan were friends. He saw him Friday night and told him that he had bought a piece of land. Mr. Finnegan told him that he would fly over and see him in the morning.

The morning that the "crash" happened it was a "beautiful day and absolutely gorgeous". When he flew over that morning he flew over him the first time and Mr. Hall could see him waving at him. He went around again, and then on his 3rd pass Mr. Hall saw him "slow way down". The engine got quieter, "he picked the nose up" and the nose was "high" and then "the nose dropped". The airplane then "went right straight into the ground" and he heard a loud "bang".

Before he "hit", he was low, only a couple of hundred feet above the trees. All of the turns were to the left.



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Date: September 19, 2011
Person Contacted: Nathan Hall – Witness
NTSB Accident Number: ERA11FA493

Narrative:

Mr. Nathan Hall stated that he had just showed up at the property his family had purchased and was just getting out of his truck when Mr. Finnegan made his first circle. He flew by, did a circle to the left, and was waving. He came back then did a second circle. The third time he came back and did the circle, "the nose went straight down", and just before the treetops the airplane did a "180" to the left, then "hit". There was a "really loud bang". He estimated that the airplane was about 500 feet above the ground when it did the circles.