



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: June 2, 2015
Person Contacted: Kenneth McCrady
NTSB Accident Number: ERA15FA109

Narrative:

Mr. McCrady was contacted by phone on January 22, 2015, at 2120 EST. He was called at [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] He provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED]

He indicated he was coming back from Tampa, and was driving south on Polk Parkway at 65 miles-per-hour with the windows up near mile marker 1. That location was later determined to be located at 28 degrees 01.356 minutes North latitude and 082 degrees 02.406 minutes West longitude, or approximately 1,512 feet and 072 degrees from the accident site location.

He reported that he noticed a light colored airplane, "heading to do a stunt", or in a nose-down attitude. At about 400 to 600 feet, he saw something about the size of the front wheel separate from the front of the airplane, or the airplane could have hit a bird; he could not describe the color of the item that he saw separating from the airplane. He did not observe the ground impact because trees obscured his view, and noticed smoke. He pulled off the road and called 911 to report what he had seen. He indicated the weather conditions at the time consisted of sunny conditions, no clouds, and breezy. He confirmed the airplane was not spinning when he saw it, and he did not see any smoke trailing the airplane. The airplane crashed west of his position, and he could not hear any sounds from the engines. He thought the airplane would pull-up.

The digest was reviewed with him during the call and he agreed with the content.



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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Eastern Region

Date: June 2, 2015
Person Contacted: Leon Clarke
NTSB Accident Number: ERA15FA109

Narrative:

Mr. Clarke was contacted by phone on January 22, 2015, at 2132 EST. He was called at [REDACTED]. He indicated he does not have an e-mail address, and his home address is [REDACTED] Lakeland, Florida. That location when plotted is located at 28 degrees 02.889 minutes North latitude, and 082 degrees 01.5875 minutes West longitude, or approximately 1.84 nautical miles and 31.64 degrees from the accident site. That location is also North of I-4.

He reported he is not a pilot, and on the date and time of the accident was outside his residence. He indicated the sound first got his attention. He noted an airplane flying in a southerly direction from the North over I-4. It was going to his left. He heard an airplane flying and heard a pop or backfire sound twice. He looked and first saw the airplane flying level flying at an estimated altitude of 10,000 feet. The 2nd sound was extra loud and the engine then quit. After the second sound the airplane nose dived to the ground and he heard the explosion and saw large black smoke. He estimated that he saw the airplane for 10-15 seconds, and he saw puffs of smoke during the popping sounds. The smoke was gray to black in color, and he confirmed the airplane nose dived within a couple seconds after the 2nd pop sound. He reported the airplane descended steeply. He confirmed that the airplane was nose down when he saw the smoke. He was asked if he saw the landing gear and he indicated he did not.

The digest was reviewed with him during the call and he agreed with the content.



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: October 10, 2015
Person Contacted: See Narrative below
NTSB Accident Number: ERA15FA109

Narrative:

An interview was conducted at Tailwheels Etc., Inc., on January 24, 2015, at 1409 EST; the following individuals were present:

Ms. Elizabeth Amundsen, John Amundsen, and Jonathan Amundsen of Tailwheels Etc., Inc., and Ron Maynard of Piper Aircraft.

When asked about the typical floor where an aircraft could be detected on radar it was reported to be 500 feet. They also indicated the practice area is North of LAL.

The certified flight instructor (CFI) was their Assistant Chief Flight Instructor, and he had been with them for 5 years. All reported he loved doing multi-engine flying. Jonathan had talked with the CFI in general, and Elizabeth Amundsen asked the CFI about the pilot-rated student and he replied with words to the affect that Mr. Universe was doing good. Jonathan reported the CFI made a comment to him that he hoped the pilot-rated student would not freeze up on the controls so he would not be able to overpower him. They also indicated that if the CFI had any concerns, he would have told John Amundsen, and that did not happen.

They relayed that the pilot-rated student did not have/purchase a package deal for the multi-engine add-on rating, which usually takes 8 to 10 hours. They were asked to provide a syllabus and they indicated there was none; however, the accident flight was the 7th, and during that flight it was typical to do an engine shutdown with feathering of the propeller. The pilot-rated student had not previously flown with them before. He likely would keep a briefcase on the aft seat. The pilot-rated students checkride was scheduled for January 24, 2015, with Chuck Brown.

With respect to the registered owner (55XRAY, Inc.) that is Tailwheels Etc., Inc. In their fleet of airplanes they had/have 5 Cessna 150's, 4 Cessna 172's, 2 Piper PA-28R-180's, 1 Piper PA-28-

161, the accident airplane, and 1 Beech BE-77, in addition to their taildragger fleet. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) principal operations inspector assigned to them is Larry Enlow, of the Orlando FAA Flight Standards District Office. They hold a Part 141 flight school, under designator TN4S.

The provided the following regarding the airplane:

The typical fuel burn is 16.0 gallons per hour. It had a “very small” nose baggage compartment and also an aft baggage compartments; the doors of both were located on the right side. The aft baggage compartment likely contained empty oil bottles. The airplane had a Miller nose conversion, and was equipped with 4 seats; the gross weight is 3,500 pounds. The airplane was only equipped with lapbelts, It was also equipped with wingtips, a square rudder, a 3rd window kit, inboard nacelle fairing which lowered the Velocity minimum control air speed from 85 to 78 miles-per-hour, and a sloped windshield and nose. A Garmin 430 was also installed. It was not equipped with dual instruments, and a fixed aileron trim tab was installed. It was equipped with a LED landing light, and a GE4509 bulb for the taxi light. It was equipped with a Southwind 940 heater, that had not been used in years. The blue line radial is at 95 miles-per-hour.

They indicated the typical engine shutdown for training would be the right engine, and the typical flight profile would be to depart LAL, fly in a northerly direction while climbing, and then return. When flying between 3,000 and 4,000 feet over the top of LAL, the right engine would be shutdown and the right propeller would be feathered. The way they simulated an engine failure was by moving the right mixture control to idle cutoff, to the point the engine would begin to quit. The CFI would then set up 0 thrust by adding 12-23 inches manifold pressure and 2,200 rpm. They indicated there might be a “pop” sound when/if an engine throttle is quickly reduced.

The airplane’s fuel system consists of 72 gallon total capacity in the main fuel tanks, and also 2 auxiliary fuel tanks with a total capacity of 36 gallons, and provided the following timeline regarding fuel and the airplane:

January 21, 2015 – While at Zephyrhills Municipal Airport (ZPH), the accident CFI filled the main fuel tanks. The airplane was then flown direct to LAL; the flight duration was 0.7 hour.

Elizabeth Amundsen performed preflight inspection of the airplane at LAL and noted that the main fuel tanks had 0.7 hour fuel from full. She moved the fuel selectors to the auxiliary tank positions and noted both were empty. She and the accident CFI departed from LAL, and did a couple simulated engine failures, clearing turns, steep turns, power-on and power-off stalls, a Vmc demonstration, and she noted the reported Vmc indicated airspeed of 78 miles-per-hour was close during that demonstration. She indicated the CFI would give an engine failure by distracting the student with a view outside, and she noted the right wing “felt heavier”, which she had to correct, but as an Airframe and Powerplant mechanic the amount did not cause her any concern. She flew 0.9 hour, and estimated there was approximately 50.0 gallons in the airplane at the beginning of the accident flight. After landing the airplane was tied down and they planned for the next days’ flight indicating they would climb to 3,500 feet, and would secure the engine and feather the propeller. The engine would then be restarted, and that would be performed while

over the airport in case there was an issue restarting the engine. She also indicated asking the CFI about the pilot-rated student, and he replied Mr. Universe, and that he was really strong.

At the end of the interview personnel of the operator were advised the following were pending:

1) Maintenance Record Statement regarding the lack of maintenance records before 2009, 2) Pictures of the airplane, 3) Submission of NTSB Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident/Incident Report, and 4) Formal signed statements.

The digest was e-mailed to them for review on June 2, 2015, at 1215 EDT. They did not reply to the request for review and comment.