



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Douglass Brazy
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

November 11, 2016

Subject: ERA17FA038, N327SH, Quad City Challenger II, accident date 11/9/16, Crescent City, Florida. Interview with Eugenio Sanchez, a coworker and friend of student Pilot Tom Stevens.

Mr. Sanchez was at the accident site and provided the following information:

The airplane was registered to a company named Juguetes, LLC. The student pilot worked for that company. The student pilot purchased the airplane about 3 weeks prior to the accident. He kept the airplane in a hangar at a private (charted) airport, Skinners Wholesale Nursery airport (16FD), located less than a mile from the accident site, and that is where the airplane departed from. The accident flight was an instructional flight, the student pilot had been flying with the instructor 1-2 times per week recently. They flew together in the accident airplane at least twice before the accident flight. The student pilot had previously flown a paraglider. He was not a licensed pilot, nor did he intend to be. He considered flying a hobby, and he enjoyed flying over the nearby lake.

The pilot had worked on the airplane Monday 11/7/16, repairing it after a hard landing the week before. The landing gear was "splayed out" after the landing and a cable that ran between the landing gear legs had broken, the pilot replaced that cable. He had been an airplane mechanic when he was in the Navy.

Subject: ERA17FA038, N327SH, Quad City Challenger II, accident date 11/9/16, Crescent City, Florida. Interview with Willie Johnson, who witnessed the accident.

Mr. Johnson provided the following information:

At the time of the accident, Mr. Johnson was seated on a bench in his front yard, located about 1,000 feet from where the main wreckage came to rest. He observed the airplane flying in a southerly direction toward him, over the trees above his next-door neighbor's property which was a fernery. He heard the engine noise decrease as if to idle speed, then the airplane descended, like it was "gliding". Then, it suddenly pitched upward, the engine noise increased, "it was very loud like full power" as if the airplane was trying to go up, and the wing suddenly fell off and the airplane went straight down into the trees. There was a loud sound as the wing came off. Not a "boom or pop", but very loud. The wing kept travelling south and landed in Mr. Johnson's front yard.

Subject: ERA17FA038, N327SH, Quad City Challenger II, accident date 11/9/16, Crescent City, Florida. Interview with Roger Lusk, who witnessed the accident.

Mr. Lusk provided the following information:

He was outdoors in the fernery, about 0.1 mile from the accident site. He saw the airplane flying “way above the trees” and heard the engine running. He saw the parachute trailing behind the airplane, but it was not open. The airplane was descending straight down into the trees. He saw no fire, heard no explosion, and saw nothing fall from the airplane.

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