



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

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Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

August 23, 2017

Subject: FAA Inspectors Report Factual Summary

Accident at Gaines Airport, Gaines NY. NTSB # ERA17LA292 - LOCAL #2017EA23A0004

IIC Robert Lacourse, GA Airworthiness

ASI Paul Pryor, GA Operations

Weather was clear and calm.

PIC took off in a westbound direction and had a normal takeoff until 3 feet in the air. The airplane pulled hard left. The PIC tried to correct, but that failed to correct the left turn. The airplane went down approximately 80 yards into the woods. The PIC sustained injury to his right elbow. PIC walked out, LEA responded. The aircraft owner witnessed the event.

Aircraft – Pietenpol: Experimental Owner Built, born in Canada, imported to USA 1999-2000. Builder/engine/built date on data plate does not match aircraft records. “Experimental” not on aircraft. Length of Fuselage, (Firewall to aft bulkhead) is 174 inches (Long Fuselage, Empty weight of aircraft is 755. (Rt = 360, Lt = 360, T = 35). Engine is a non-data tag Continental 0-200.

8/24/2017 - Accident investigation of Experimental Aircraft N888MG. Single pilot, slight injury only. Arrived on scene at 0900 met with local LEA. Documented the condition of the aircraft through photos. Received permission from the aircraft owner, Mr. Steven North, (via telephone), to proceed with inspection of the aircraft. The pilot, Earl Luce described the incident to Operations inspector, Pryor, and myself, (via telephone). The pilot stated the aircraft felt as if full left aileron and rudder input were made contrary to his full right rudder and aileron flight control inputs. This helped narrow our initial inspection toward the flight controls. The PIC verified he had full engine control. The aircraft was located approximately 250 feet into the woods, south of runway 09/27. The aircraft departed runway 27 and veered to the left and ended up facing easterly in the upright position in a nose low resting spot. Position of aircraft was @ +043.29504°N / -078.21499°W 390 feet, its approach was from approximately 140°. It was noted that several trees were impacted during initial impact and during the fall of the aircraft into the woods. The leading edge of the left wing appeared to have impact marks the

entire width of the wing from the trees in the area. The landing gear was sprayed out, broken in the middle. The right outer aileron and leading edge were damaged from the ground and tree impact. A small tree two inch in diameter, punched through the aileron, showing a straight vertical motion of the wing over tree.

The right horizontal stabilizer was folded in an upright position; however, the rest of the tail section sustained minor impact damage. The attach point of the horizontal/vertical stabilizer was strong and appeared to not have been loose or damaged. The left trailing of the rudder had an unknown paint scrape on it. The FAA removed access panels from the aircraft, and fabric was cut to verify flight control cable connections. The connections were sound and each respected cable was over their pulleys. There was slack in the controls cables, but the left wing was broken. An FAA inspector, and the IIC pulled at each end to verify a solid connection, this checked good. Full continuity of the yaw controls was verified through to the rudder. The ailerons, and elevator were unable to be verified due to trees being wedged into them, and the left wing broken at 90 degrees. After removal inspection found the ailerons were correctly routed and there was no binding through control stick range. The tailwheel cables were slack approximately 2 inches, more on the right side, vs the left.

The elevator trim tab is controlled via a control cable. This cable has an outer shield over it at the point of just prior to the rear fuselage exit location. It was noted this shield slides on the cable and moves the trim tab without the cable moving. This effect would move the horizontal trim tab without moving the adjustment lever in the cockpit, thus placing the trim tab in an unknown/set position.

The aircraft appeared to have approximately half a tank of fuel and the fuel tank did not appear to be compromised. The oil level was verified and it appeared to have ~4 qts of oil in the engine. Examination of the engine compartment did not reveal any noticeable discrepancies or mechanical failures. The wooden prop had rotational damage.

The runway was inspected for any debris from the aircraft. Approximately one third down the runway, (from take-off end of runway), a piece of foam was found. It was confirmed to be part of the aircraft. This foam was used to cushion the pilot's seats. On the piece of foam found on the runway, there were three pressure point indications on one side. The same foam was found in the aircraft and in the owner's hanger.

8/29/2017 – Removal day (1100 – 1430)

It was noted the rudder was full left and it was hard to get any right rudder. (Note: the pilot stated the aircraft turned "really quick" at the end of the runway, quicker than ever before, (he turned left). There is additional evidence to this account as the right tail wheel spring was loose and the attachment S hook appeared to have been elongated. Also there was evidence of the right spring inner bandings were bent. When the tail wheel was forced to the left this bend aligned with the pivot point of the tail wheel housing.

The inspection continued at the owner's hanger. The aircraft was placed with the wings. The fuel was drained for an inspection. There was fuel in the wing tank and the nose tank. The fuel, (AVGas), was clear and had no evidence of water,

There is unknown damage to center section bulkhead separating each cockpit.

All primary flight controls were checked for binding; All checked good. The control stick would come to an aft position, but could be overcome and pulled further back. The front cockpit had what appeared to be stops, but due to their current state, they were not functional.

Transport Canada notes on the aircraft: C-FCMG is first registered in 1986. The builder is listed as Ken & Stan Holstein and the build year is listed as 1970. The engine is listed as Continental, but that is the only detail provided. Paperwork was not in aircraft. The data plate does not match the data, i.e. engine size, builder, and dated built. Engine inspection: (Engine Size does not match what is on the Data Plate) data plate shows A 65, aircraft has a 0-200. Automotive plug wires were used on the engine.