

Grillo, Marco A (FAA)

From: DHeyburn <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, April 04, 2018 4:34 PM
To: Grillo, Marco A (FAA)
Subject: X50 Piper Cherokee crash

Marco,

Per our earlier phone conversation I am providing a statement in reference to the Piper Cherokee that crashed short of Runway 18 at X50 (Massey Ranch Airpark) last month.

I did not observe the final approach (or subsequent crash) that day. I did however observe a prior approach and landing conducted by the accident aircraft a few minutes before the actual crash. I believe that approach was the one immediately prior to the accident, but am not certain as I left the airport a few minutes before the accident occurred. The approach I did witness actually had caught my attention as the aircraft was very low as it approached the runway.

My viewpoint was looking north, approximately 350' west of the runway 18 centerline abeam the displaced threshold (specifically at my desk in the northeastern most hangar of the west hangar complex). From that perspective, I have a fairly good view of the final approach path.

When I first observed this aircraft, it was much lower than normal on base leg, turning final and still descending. If that path had continued, it appeared that the airplane would impact the trees (in approximately the same area where it eventually crashed). I commented to another pilot/friend sitting at my desk with his back to the north something to the effect of "jeez that guy is low", at which time my friend turned around and we observed the aircraft becoming partially blocked from view below the visible tree line. They applied power about that time and climbed back into view over the trees and made an uneventful landing. Both myself and the other pilot agreed that the results would have been really bad if the engine hadn't accelerated properly. I would not consider any portion of the observed flight path stabilized.

I am an ATP & CFII, as well as an A&P/IA. I have been flying and working out of X50 since 1985, have over 10,000 flight hours and have been performing maintenance there since the early 1990's.

.....end of factual account from my perspective.....

Marco,

I hope this is in the format you requested. If you need any additional information please don't hesitate to ask.

Dave

I can be reached at;

Cell [REDACTED]
Sho [REDACTED]
E-m [REDACTED]