

Wentz Peter

From: Andrew Blight [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, June 21, 2019 11:58 AM
To: Wentz Peter
Subject: RE: Endicott Airplane Accident

Hi Pete,

As best I can recall the flutter I witnessed took place last summer, around this time, so maybe June or July? Russ flew a left hand pattern for runway 21 at KCZG. Sitting at my desk I look out windows that face east, south east. So I have a good view of the base leg and final for 21. On this day Russ flew a tight close pattern I suspect to get the airplane back on the runway quickly. He made a skidding very flat continuous turn from downwind to final. The rudders seemed to be deflecting stop to stop and the tail of the airplane was wagging back and forth quite noticeably. The frequency at which the control surfaces moved was alarming so I drove over to the airport to check on him. When I arrived he was putting the airplane away in the hangar. He told me he knew how to fix it and apparently he did, I have watched the airplane fly many times since with no such flutter.

On the day of the crash Russ was flying a left hand pattern for runway 3. I watch him fly his first circuit and the airplane sounded normal, he flew a typical traffic pattern and altitudes. He climbed out normally following a Piper Cherokee. On his second take off that morning I witnessed him climb out normally again, as he climbed through approximately 300 feet, just past the threshold of runway 21, the engine made a loud "pop", a single pop similar to a back fire. Russ remained in a slightly nose high attitude as he began a left turn. He initiated the turn almost immediately following the "pop". I assumed at that moment Russ was trying to turn back for the runway. The turn looked to be begin at a normal rate and bank angle but quickly steepened and became tighter. When the bank angle got very high (60 or 70 degrees) and the nose began to fall through I stood up and ran for the side door of our building. It appeared the airplane would land close to our parking lot or in the road out front. As I exited the building the crash happened and I did hear the impact. I could not see the impact. I was the second person to get to the airplane. I gentleman who said he was a trained EMT was trying to get a pulse and speak with Russ as I arrived. I reached inside and looked for the master switch to turn off the electrical system. Fuel was leaking out and puddling under the wings and the cabin. I could not locate the master switch but did find a 5 amp circuit breaker labeled "master" so I pulled that. I also turned the mags off and removed the key. It was bent over before I turned it to off and removed it. I placed the bent key on the roof of the cabin. Soon after the first Endicott Police Officer arrived and then the Fire Department.

If I can be of any more help I certainly will.

Thanks

Andy
[REDACTED] cell
[REDACTED] office

From: Wentz Peter [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, June 21, 2019 10:29 AM
To: Andrew Blight [REDACTED] >
Subject: Endicott Airplane Accident

Andrew,

Thank you for supplying me with a statement of the accident events.

Pete

Pete Wentz
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