

Inspector's Statement

On 3/8/2020 While on visual approach to runway 14 KDTS, BE-V35 Bonanza, N581U lost engine power approximately 1 mile from the runway. Aircraft crashed in the trees behind a private home at [REDACTED] Destin, FL. Pilot, passenger, and family dog not injured at all.

On 3/9/2020 1515 CDT I arrived on scene. I met the homeowner, Micki [REDACTED] Pilot Jason Dougherty was also present. Micki was not home when the plane crash occurred. She was out walking her dog and was a few blocks away. She heard the crash and by the time she got home, the pilot and passenger with a dog appeared to be climbing out of the airplane by ladder, provided by a neighbor. Aircraft was wedged in a tree at a 45 degree angle nose and left wing down with left wing tip and left front cowling touching the ground.

Aircraft heading: 065°

Accident site: 030° 24' 33" North
86° 28' 53" West

There was no indication of a post crash fire. I noted a very faint smell of fuel when I approached the left wing. Homeowner and pilot said they could smell fuel after it happened. Pilot had removed the battery just after accident. All three gear were extended, flaps were not. One prop blade of three was curled in. Other two blades had no witness marks. Trees to west and southwest showed limb damage consistent with the pilot's account of the crash. Discussed recovery logistics with Michael O'Shea of Florida Air Recovery by telephone. Anticipated recovery crew arrival 3/10/2020 at 11:00 am. Interviewed Jason Dougherty and reviewed his pilot certificate, medical certificate, pilot logbook and ID. See separate interview

Pilot cert # [REDACTED] DOI 01/03/2010
DOB: [REDACTED] Male 45 years old
Medical cert: 3rd class DOI: 12/17/2019

Flight review: 12/21/2019 by CFI Ken Fry [REDACTED]
Complex endorsement 4/13/2016

Total time: 586

Make Model last 12 months: 100, last 12 months was only in the Bonanza

Make Model total: 245

Last 90 days total: 20 also all Bonanza time

On 3/10/2020 1225 CDT I arrived on scene. Took some more exterior pictures. Did not smell any more fuel. Hunter and Matt from Floria Air Recovery were present with the homeowner, Micki discussing the logistics of moving the airplane. Pilot Jason Dougherty was also present. Hunter and Matt lowered the tail of the airplane to the ground by crane. I inspected the interior and took photos of the panel and front seat area. I attempted to drain fuel from left wing sump and it was dry. Tank had been compromised during crash. Matt attempted to drain fuel from the right side and stated it was dry. Matt was able to drain a few ounces of fuel from the gascolator. It appeared clean, clear and tinted blue. Matt removed the electronic engine monitor

Panel notes:

Tach time: 5656

Gear handle down
Flaps up
Trim at 6-7 notches UP
Fuel selector left tank
Mixture rich
Throttle full forward
Prop full forward
Master: off
Key: not in ignition, ignition and mags off

Battery removed
Controls jammed but ailerons did move slightly when yoke turned. Rudders and elevator also moved very slightly.

Matt and Hunter of Florida Air Recovery proceeded to remove the right wing and then the left wing. Aircraft was loaded onto a flat bed trailer.

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Nina A. McBride
Aviation Safety Inspector, OPS
AL/NW Florida FSDO, AFG-600-BHM- 09

Inspector's Statement

On 3/8/2020 at approximately 10:07 CDT, while on visual approach to runway 14 KDTS, BE-V35 Bonanza, N581U lost engine power approximately 1 mile from the runway. Aircraft crashed in the trees behind a private home at [REDACTED] FL. Pilot, passenger, and family dog not injured at all.

On 3/9/2020 1515 CDT I arrived on scene. I met with Pilot Jason Dale Dougherty. Mr. Dougherty did not appear hurt in any way, did not have any bruises, and stated that he was not sore from the accident. He was wearing a shoulder harness at the time of the accident. He was also wearing as Bose noise-cancelling headset as was his passenger, son Caleb.

Mr. Dougherty presented his pilot certificate, medical certificate, a current Kansas Driver's license, and pilot logbook.

Phone number: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Pilot cert [REDACTED] DOI 01/03/2010

DOB: [REDACTED] Male 45 years old

Medical cert: 3rd class DOI: 12/17/2019

Flight review: 12/21/2019 by CFI Ken Fry CFI # [REDACTED] phone number [REDACTED]

Complex endorsement: 4/13/2016 also CFI Ken Fry

Total time: 586

Make Model total: 245

Make Model last 12 months: 100, all time in last 12 months was only in the Bonanza

Last 90 days total: 20 also all Bonanza time

He had removed the Airworthiness certificate and aircraft Registration. He showed them to me and the registration expiration is 10/31/2022. Airworthiness certificate looked normal and showed Serial # D-8376.

Mr. Dougherty proceeded to state the following to me:

Mr. Dougherty departed Garden City, KS on 3/7/2020 with his son, Caleb and family dog in the late afternoon and flew to Fort Smith, AR where they spent the night. The airplane was fueled with 39 gallons in Fort Smith, AR which provided him with full fuel tanks upon departure on 3/8/2020 at approximately 7:05 am.

The flight from Fort Smith to Destin was conducted on an IFR clearance and took approximately 3 hours. Mr. Dougherty climbed to 9,000 feet proceeded directly to Destin. Since the weather was VFR, he was able to pick up the Destin airport visually and was cleared for a visual approach to runway 14, KDTS. Approximately 1 mile from the airport, he was doing about 80 knots with 17" manifold pressure, full flaps and gear down. He suddenly noticed that power and engine sound just went away and the engine quit. The prop was windmilling. There was no indication of sputtering, surging, or slow power loss. When the engine suddenly stopped producing power, the nose fell. Mr. Dougherty checked that the mixture was in, the throttle went full forward, the mags were on. He remembers that he may have tried to switch tanks but cannot remember which tank he had been on and which he switched to. He did not remember to turn boost pump on because he was now on short final and saw he was only doing 60 knots. He lowered the nose and tried raising the flaps which just made him sink. He tried to clear the trees but hit the top instead and doesn't remember much after that. The airplane came to rest in a 45° nose and left

wing down position with just the left wing tip and left side cowling touching the ground. No one was hurt and they were able to climb out via the main cabin entry door and onto a ladder provided by a local resident.

He also stated:

It was about a 3 hour flight from Fort Smith to Destin. The engine monitor was indicating 16 gallons per hour fuel burn at 9000 feet. Airplane holds 77 gallons of usable fuel and they departed Fort Smith with full fuel.

He did a GUMPS check on about 5 mile final. Gear down, flaps full down, mixture rich, everything seemed normal,

He used a reminder on his Garmin 750 to change fuel tanks every half hour and remembers doing this on the flight but cannot say which tank he was on when the engine quit. I think he also said he has an alarm on his watch or phone as well to remind him to switch tanks.

He believes the engine was overhauled about 500 hours ago but does not know if it was a factory overhaul or not. He does remember that they had some magneto work done last week and an overhauled magneto was installed. (See photos of engine and left and right magnetos photos.)

The mechanic who works on the plane is: Ed, Head Mechanic at Saker Aviation in Garden City, KS [REDACTED]

I then spoke to passenger Caleb Dougherty on the telephone. He had little to add. He was wearing a headset and was not paying much attention to anything during the flight. As they were coming into land, he felt the plane slow way down and noticed the engine was not running any more. His dad told him to hang on, they were headed for the trees. He did not remember noticing any gauges or instruments. He just felt the airplane slow way down and that the engine was not running anymore.

Jason Dougherty then told me that he had had a similar experience in this airplane in the fall of 2019. He was on short final to Garden City. Engine quit about ½ mile from runway but he was able to land on the runway. He was able to roll to a taxiway. He was able to restart the engine and taxi to the ramp. He had a mechanic do an inspection. No issue was found. He has flown often since with no issues.

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