



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Office of Aviation Safety
Washington, D.C. 20594

October 6, 2020

EXAMINATION SUMMARY

ERA20LA183

A. ACCIDENT

Location: Rogersville, Tennessee
Date: May 15, 2020
Time: 1409 EDT
Airplane: Ercoupe 415-CD; N3956H

B. INVESTIGATION PARTICIPANTS

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C. SUMMARY

On May 15, 2020, at 1409 eastern daylight time, an Ercoupe 415-CD airplane, N43956H, was destroyed when it was involved in an accident near Rogersville, Tennessee. The pilot was fatally injured. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) Part 91 personal flight.

The engine and propeller were examined at the facilities of AMF Aviation LLC, Springfield, Tennessee on October 6, 2020.

1.0 Engine Examination

Engine Model: Continental C85-12F

Engine Serial Number: 4378-6-12-C

Observed at the salvage facility, the engine was exposed to fire and heat with associated damage throughout. The top spark plugs were removed for examination. All four plugs exhibited light sooting and normal wear when compared to a Champion Check-A-Plug chart. The Slick magnetos were exposed to fire and heat. They were removed for testing. Due to internal heat damage, neither magneto would produce spark. The ignition harness was damaged from fire and heat and was not tested. The carburetor was broken away from the engine and held in place by control cables. The unit was burned and melted. Partial disassembly revealed that the metal float was intact and the inlet screen was clean and unobstructed. The oil tank remained attached to the engine and contained oil. The tank was crushed into the engine mount.

The engine was turned through by hand using the propeller. Compression and suction were observed on all four cylinders. Camshaft continuity was confirmed. All valve springs were intact and valve action was correct.

2.0 Propeller Examination

Propeller Model: McCauley CM 7148

Propeller Serial Number: 13924

Observed at the salvage facility, the aluminum fixed-pitch propeller remained attached to the engine. There was heat and fire damage to the unit. One blade was relatively undamaged; there were some chordwise scrape marks on the aft surface of the blade. The other blade exhibited “s” bending, chordwise scratching, and leading edge gouges. The outer tip was heat and fire damaged with some loss of material due to melting.