

Written Statement for Accident of N6989P
on May 29th 2020

I met Jesse Dyer at McKeller-Sipes airport (KMKL) in mid to late December 2019. We talked about the avionics I wanted to install and when we could schedule the work. I was still using my plane frequently at that time, and would need it for the next few months to go take care of my mother in Illinois who has advanced Alzheimer's disease. Jesse and I both agree that it would be best to schedule the avionics install for mid March 2020. In mid February I brought the avionics out to Jesse so he could prep them for the install in N6989P while I continued flying the plane. The list of avionics I delivered to him that he ultimately installed included: PMA8000BT audio panel, Garmin GNX375, Aspen EFD1000 E5, JPI EDM 900 engine monitor, Stratus USB charging port, and a panel mount for my Garmin handheld Aera 660 EFB.

On March 13th I delivered N6989P to Jesse Dyer at McKeller-Sipes airport. Shortly there after the airport informed him that they would be closing the community hangar, where he planned to work on N6989P, for two weeks due to the restrictions placed in response to the Coronavirus. After the two weeks passed they extended the the closing of the hangar for another two weeks. Jesse and I then spoke on the phone and decided it would be best to move N6989P to Humboldt, TN M53 where he could begin the avionics work. On April 20th I departed KMKL in N6989P to M53 where Jesse met me to receive N6989P for the work to be preformed. We spoke about an estimated time line of four to five weeks to complete the work. Jesse kept me regularly informed while he was installing the avionics in N6989P and was sure any questions I had were met. During the install I decided to have some of the old antennas replaced as well. On May 28th Jesse informed me that he had finished the avionics install, had done a ground run of the engine, calibrated all the avionics, and all were satisfactory, and N6989P was ready for pick up. I told him I could be out at M53 the morning of May 29th. He agreed to meet me there the morning of the 29th and said he had all the paperwork for the work and install at his office at the airport.

I arrived to M53 around 9:30am and Jesse greeted me as I was getting out of my truck. We walked to the airplane and he handed me the keys to unlock the cabin door. We both sat in the airplane as he pointed out and explained all the work he had done to it. I then examined the work that had been preformed during my preflight inspection and found it to appear installed correctly and functioning properly. The aircraft had been fueled by Jesse the day before from the fuel tanks at M53. I conducted my preflight using the Airplane Flight Manual and found no unusual findings. I verified the airplane had 60 gallons (full) of fuel in it and the engine oil was at 6 quarts showing on the dip stick. I checked the local notams for M53, obtained the weather from KMKL AWOS, as well as through my EFB with Foreflight. I then boarded N6989P and Jesse did as well. I was sitting in the left seat as PIC and he was my passenger in the right front seat. He wanted to fly with me for the first flight to verify all the avionics functioned properly in flight, as they did for him on the ground during his post maintenance run up and checks. I followed the AFM checklist for the start procedure. The engine started easily, just as it

always had every flight prior. After the pretaxi checks were completed I taxied N6989P to runway 22. While taxiing I verified all the flight and engine instruments were indicating normally. Holding short of runway 22 I performed the engine run up for pre takeoff according to the AFM checklist. All engine parameters were indicating normally. The engine sounded and ran smooth. I then performed the pre takeoff checklist. I briefed my passenger, Jesse, that we would fly the pattern for runway 22. I then made a radio call on the unicom frequency that I was departing runway 22, and visually cleared the approach and departure end of the runway for traffic. As I positioned the aircraft on the center line of runway 22 I smoothly advanced the power to full, verifying that the engine instruments indicated normal. As the aircraft gained speed I verified the airspeed was working and gaining speed. Once I reached the rotation speed of 75mph I smoothly raised the nose and began a climb accelerating to a climb speed of 100mph. I called out that the usable runway was gone, and was about to move my hand from the throttle to the gear leaver, when the engine shuttered and had a sudden reduction in RPM and power. I then lowered the nose to maintain best glide speed. Due to no usable runway remaining I planned for a landing off the end of the runway. The engine then regained RPM and caused the nose to pitch up. I maintained a climb speed of 80mph and cleared the power lines that ran perpendicular to the departure end of the runway. As the aircraft cleared the power lines the engine backfired, shuttered and lost power. At this point I was at an altitude of approximately 200 feet AGL. I again lowered the nose to maintain best glide speed and maneuvered the aircraft to execute a forced landing at the Humboldt golf and country club just ahead and to my left. I told my passenger to brace for a hard landing. I navigated the aircraft to the best path possible on the golf course. We touched down firmly and then went airborne again after the main landing gear crossed a concrete pathway through the golf course. We then touched down firmly again. I applied maximum breaking and aerodynamic breaking while trying to steer the aircraft away from the obstacles. The aircraft struck a one rail wooden fence and then the right wing struck the brick corner pillar of a metal fence surrounding a swimming pool. This impact then yawed the aircraft hard to the right causing the left wing to strike another brick pillar, as well as the nose of the aircraft being forced into the metal fence bringing the aircraft to a stop. Once the aircraft came to a stop, I verified all electrical switches were off, I turned the fuel selector valve off, magnetos off and mixture control to idle/ cutoff. I asked my passenger if he was ok, to which he replied, he thought so. I smelled a heavy odor of fuel as I unlocked and opened the cabin door and we exited the aircraft. Once outside the aircraft I noticed that the left fuel cell was leaking fuel and told the bystanders to stay back and call 911. I then had Jesse lay down on the ground so I could assess him for injuries (I am a certified emergency nurse by full time profession). He said he was shook up but ok. EMS, the fire department, and law enforcement were on scene in a matter of minutes. They informed me that they had notified the FAA and NTSB. While awaiting their arrival, I ensured all people remained clear of the aircraft until Bradley Gottschalk from the FAA arrived on scene to investigate.

As a Certificated Flight Instructor it is my sincere hope, that when the cause of the accident is determined, I will be able to use this unfortunate event as a teaching tool for my students and fellow pilots. I am a tremendous believer in continuing education in aviation. Had I not been proficient in teaching emergency procedures, this might have become a fatal accident. My goal moving forward from this is to become an FAA Safety team member, in effort to be more effective in protecting the safety in General Aviation.

Respectfully,



6/4/2020

Seth Lockard