



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: August 3, 2020
Person Contacted: David Duke
NTSB Accident Number: ERA20LA272

Narrative:

Mr. David Duke was contacted by phone on August 2, 2020, at 1630 EDT. He was called at [REDACTED].

At the beginning of the call he was advised that I was the NTSB duty officer for the eastern U.S., and I was notified of the event involving N7750Y. I contacted him to get details that will help NTSB determine the level of investigation. He was also advised the NTSB is a federal agency mandated by Congress to investigate aircraft accidents, and NTSB has no authority to take any action against any individual. He was also informed that the purpose of an NTSB investigation is for safety only, and any person NTSB talks with has the right to representation; he indicated that he had spoken to an attorney and wanted one present. He did provide a pilot certificate number of [REDACTED]. He held an airline transport pilot certificate with airplane multi-engine land rating, along with several type ratings. He also held a commercial pilot certificate with airplane single engine land and sea ratings.

A conference call was set with Mr Duke had his attorney (Mr. Shane Lucado) for August 3, 2020, at 1100 EDT.

Mr. Shane Lucado and Mr. David Duke contacted NTSB by phone on August 3, 2020, at 1059 EDT. The call was made from [REDACTED]. Mr. Lucado provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED] and Mr. Duke provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED]

At the beginning of the interview they were advised that the NTSB is a federal agency mandated by Congress to investigate aircraft accidents, and NTSB has no authority to take any action against any individual. They were also informed that the purpose of an NTSB investigation is for safety only, and any person NTSB talks with has the right to representation; Mr. Duke had Mr. Lucado represent him.

They were informed about the status of the damage and the NTSB would classify the event as an accident based on structural damage.

Mr. Duke was asked about his relationship to the airplane owner and indicated that he was a corporate pilot for 23 years and retired in January 2020. In January 2020, he began flight instructing at Water Wings, located at KEET. He indicated that he had been a flight instructor for 30 years, and prior to becoming an instructor at Water Wings he had not flown a Piper PA-30. Since becoming an instructor at Water Wings, he was checked out in the PA-30.

What aircraft do you teach in at Water Wings?

Piper PA-30. He was checked out in that make and model airplane. He had previously flown Beech 55, 58, and Piper PA-34 airplanes.

What is your total time?

He estimated he had approximately 15,000 total time in airplanes.

What is your total time make and model?

He has about 80 to 100 hours in a Piper PA-30, that was either flown in the accident airplane or another airplane but he could not recall the registration.

What is the student's name?

Mitch Hungerpillar who has a cell phone of [REDACTED].

What was the purpose of the flight?

Training. Mitch was already a certified flight instructor but was adding a multiengine rating to his commercial pilot certificate.

How many flights had you made with him prior?

The accident flight was their 2nd lesson.

Do you have/follow a syllabus and was the flight conducted under Part 141?

He does have/follow a syllabus and was not conducted under part 141.

What was planned/briefed?

They planned to takeoff, followed by steep turns, slow flight, a Vmc demonstration, stall series, RNAV approach to runway 16 at KEET, a simulated single engine approach followed by a simulated go-around. He gave the engine back to the student, and performed a short field landing, then planned to do a simulated short field takeoff, and planned to terminate the flight with a short field landing. They briefed power settings for the maneuvers.

Was a preflight done and by whom?

The preflight was normal. The student used the checklist and did the walk-around. He checked everything and reported it was "normal." The check included a check of the fuel levels and oil quantity in each engine.

What was the fuel load when the flight first departed?

He indicated that all four fuel tanks (mains and auxiliary fuel tanks) were nearly full, adding that when each fuel cap was removed, he could stick a finger inside the opening and fuel was at the opening. He estimated that approximately 76 gallons of fuel were on board at that time.

Tell me the fuel tank configuration?

The capacity of the main fuel tanks are 30 gallons each and the capacity of the auxiliary fuel tanks are 15 gallons each, resulting in a total capacity of 90 gallons.

At this point of the conversation Mr. Lucado indicated that Mr. Duke was a little shaken up after the accident and suggested he slow down.

Was any fuel contamination noted in the check of the fuel tanks?

No

What is his certificate number and what certificates and ratings does he hold?

[REDACTED]. At the ATP level he has AMEL, and at the Commercial level he has ASEL, and ASES ratings. As a certified flight instructor, he has ASE, AME, and IA. He had a 2nd class medical certificate issued 10/15/2019, with a limitation "must have available glasses for near vision."

Who was seated where?

David – Right Seat

Mitch – Left Seat

Where were the fuel selectors during the flight?

On each main fuel tank the entire time.

Were the fuel selectors ever switched?

No.

What was the original departure time?

0900.

What was the planned flight time?

1 hour.

What was the time of the accident?

1010.

Describe what was done for the last takeoff?

They briefed the procedures for a simulated short field takeoff. The student taxied onto runway 16, and applied the brakes then applied full power. Once verifying the oil pressure and fuel pressure were good, the student released the brakes. At 80 miles-per-hour he rotated and moved the landing gear selector to the up position. As he did that "things went south." The airplane yawed to the right and was heading towards a line of trees. He grabbed the control yoke and

applied left aileron input and applied left rudder input but the airplane quit flying and descended to the ground.

For the takeoff were any flaps extended?
Yes, they were at the bottom of the white arc.

What was the airspeed during the event?
The student rotated at 80 miles-per-hour per the Pilot's Operating Handbook and pitched up for 90 miles-per-hour but never attained that airspeed. After pitching up the student cleaned up the airplane.

Did he hear any sounds?
He had his hands full.

What is Blue Line airspeed?
105.

Did he look/notice what the engine gauges were reading when the airplane yawed to the right?
No sir.

Was there any comment from Mitch at that time?
No sir.¹

Did he attempt to feather the propeller?
He did not have time.

What was the position of the landing gear at that time?
Up.

Had he experienced any similar previous problems when flying that airplane?
No.

Did the propeller stop at any point?
He didn't see it.

What were the position of the throttle, propeller, and mixture controls at the time when the airplane yawed to the right?
Full forward.

Did the student have his hands on the throttle, propeller and mixture controls at the time the airplane yawed to the right?
Mitch was flying the airplane and his hands were on the throttle, propeller, and mixture controls.

¹ During a review of the document the attorney indicated he "actually does not remember whether or not Mitch made any comment after the airplane yawed to the right. Likewise, Mr. Duke does not remember if he said anything after the airplane yawed to the right."

Did he change any cockpit configuration?
No.

Does he have any thoughts about what occurred?
Not sure.

What was the rudder trim setting for takeoff?
It was never changed. It was neutral.

What was the aileron trim setting for takeoff?
It was never changed. It was neutral.

Did they have any trouble getting out of the airplane?
No.

Did he or the student seek any medical assistance?
No.

Was the airplane insured?
Not sure.

What is the typical fuel burn?
About 8 gallons-per-hour per side. The airplane has counter-rotating propellers.

Did he smell anything like oil, or anything unusual?
No.

Did he hear any unusual sounds like a metallic?
No. He knew the airplane was yawing to the right.

Did he verbalize taking the controls from the student?
No sir.

Did it feel like he was fighting the controls with the student?
No sir.

Did he notice what the engine tachometers were reading?
No sir.

Was the airplane equipped with an engine monitor?
Yes. He was not sure what type.²

² During a review of the document the attorney indicated, "Mr. Duke is not sure but does not believe there was an engine monitor that would record flight data as he understands your question."

He was informed that the operator would be required to complete the NTSB Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident/Incident Report, and that report would require his and the student to complete sections of it.

Just before concluding the call Mr. Duke was asked to prepare a detailed statement that described the circumstances of the flight. He advised he would.

The call ended at 1147 EDT.

The digest was e-mailed to them for review on August 3, 2020. The attorney replied on August 5, 2020, at 1512 EDT, with comments that were incorporated into the narrative. The corrected digest was e-mailed to the attorney, pilot, and NTSB investigator-in-charge on August 6, 2020.