



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: October 2, 2020
Person Contacted: David M. Stoetzer
NTSB Accident Number: ERA20LA338

Narrative:

Mr. David Stoetzer was contacted by phone on October 1, 2020 at 1148 EDT. He was called at [REDACTED] and left a voice mail message. He returned the call the same day at 1534 EDT from the same phone number. It was agreed that he would call the next day about 1230 EDT. He called on October 2, 2020, at 1258 EDT, from the same phone number.

At the beginning of the interview he was 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. 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 agreed to the interview without representation.

He provided an address of [REDACTED] Lansdale, PA [REDACTED]. He has about 5,800 hours total flight time, and about 205 hours in make and model. He has owned the airplane since November 2015.

He was asked the following clarifying questions before being asked to describe the accident flight.

What was the purpose of the flight?
Sightseeing/recreational.

Who was the pilot-in-command (PIC)?
He was.

What seat did he occupy?
Right Seat.

Was he comfortable flying the airplane from the right seat?

Yes. The majority of my flight time is instructional (4,800 hours) in the right seat so I tend to be more comfortable flying on that side.

Explain in detail the accident flight from the moment you arrived at the airport for the flight to the accident?

The flight was routine, When the flight was 10 miles from the airport inbound for landing he checked the weather and was given the wind from either 300° or 310° in single digit velocity or gusts to the low teens, that favored runway 28. He made a normal traffic pattern entry to runway 28 and the approach to the runway was normal but he did encounter light turbulence during final approach. The flight encountered a little bit of windshear on short final with a slight gain/loss of indicated airspeed. He was not worried though due to his experience operating from that airport that was not unusual where it occurred. He said it was normal due to the location of trees and structures to have updrafts and turbulence. On reducing power transitioning from the approach to flare round-out, the airplane ballooned, gaining 8 to 10 ft in altitude. He indicated that too was not unusual based on his past experience at that airport. He added a little power and flew above the runway about 20% along the length. With a wind from the right, the main landing gear wheels contacted the runway and at that moment the wind shifted from a quartering headwind to a quartering tailwind. With left rudder and brake applied, the airplane went to the right which he could not correct. The airplane ground looped and spun to the right and exited the runway. As the airplane departed the runway with the throttle closed, he pulled the mixture control, and turned the fuel selector and master switch off. The airplane came to rest in an easterly heading which was opposite the landing direction.

Was he injured?

No.

Describe the restraint he was wearing?

The airplane was equipped with shoulder harness and lapbelt. Two straps for the shoulder harness (SH) are attached by a single connection at the ceiling, then go to a single point buckle that attaches to the lapbelt. He was wearing the seatbelt and SH.

Where was the wind from during the approach?

The wind was last reported on the automated surface observing system (ASOS) as being from 310° at 8 knots with gusts to 15 knots.

Was the wind experienced during the approach the same as the wind actually encountered during the flight?

Yes. It wasn't until touchdown that he felt the wind shift direction or velocity. It went from a quartering headwind to a quartering tailwind.

Had he encountered any previous issue at the airport with the reported wind versus the actual encountered wind?

Yes. He kept the accident airplane at Heritage Field Airport (PTW), Pottstown, Pennsylvania, but he works/flyes as a flight instructor at Wings Field Airport (LOM), Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. At both airports based on the location of the wind sensor, he had experienced a

difference between the reported wind and the actual wind encountered. On the accident flight, the reported wind seemed accurate as to what he encountered until he touched down. After the accident he researched the wind data for PTW and noted the wind became variable at 6 or 8 knots with gusts to 15 knots. In hindsight it appeared he arrived at PTW just ahead of when the wind direction changed.

What crosswind technique did he maintain during the approach?

He likes to crab on final then before landing kicks out of the crab and utilizes a wing low method for touchdown. When the airplane ballooned, he maintained the crab then went to a wing-low crosswind correction.

Did he set the pitch attitude when the airplane ballooned?

Yes. Reset pitch to stabilize and added a bit of power to fly a little further down the runway.

Describe the landing?

He planned and did a three-point landing.

At touchdown was the airplane at or close to stall airspeed?

He did not recall hearing the stall warning horn. He flew the approach and landing with partial flaps extended (20°), instead of full flaps. He was close to stall speed but was not stalled at runway contact. The wind shift occurred immediately at ground contact, but he was not looking at the airspeed indicator.

Who was flying the airplane at the time of the accident?

He was for the whole flight.

What were the weather conditions at the time?

He recalled scattered clouds well above them. He didn't recall any significant ceiling or clouds. The forecast was for light wind in the morning, increasing in velocity after 1300 or 1400. His plan was to fly early and come back early before the wind increase.

Was there anything mechanically wrong with the airplane that caused the loss of directional control?

No. There was nothing mechanically wrong with the airplane and it was in good working condition.

Is there anything else I need to know about the flight?

No, I don't think so.

Was he current to carry passengers?

Yes.

What is the insurance adjuster name and contact (phone and e-mail address)?

Mark Conover. [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

It was explained to him that in talking with the passenger (Ms. Glaser) yesterday she asked how sheet metal damage classified as an accident. She was advised during the call that I just had received pictures from the FAA and that I would review them. I did review the pictures and buckling damage was noted near the left wing lift strut attach point at the fuselage and just aft of the left main landing gear attach point. He was also informed that extensive buckling was noted on the lower fuselage skin between the main landing gears and that was consistent with structural damage. He indicated that he was meeting with his mechanic today and I asked for any repair estimate that was generated.

Do you have any questions for NTSB?

No.

The call ended at 1338 EDT.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on October 2, 2020. He replied on October 6, 2020, at 1209 EDT with comments that were incorporated into the narrative. The corrected digest was e-mailed to him on October 6, 2020.



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: October 1, 2020
Person Contacted: Heather M. Glaser
NTSB Accident Number: ERA20LA338

Narrative:

Ms. Heather Glaser was contacted by phone on October 1, 2020, at 1356 EDT, and left a voice mail message. She was called at [REDACTED] She returned the call the same day at 1455 EDT, from the same phone number. She provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED]

At the beginning of the phone call she was 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. She 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; she agreed to the interview without representation.

She verified the address in the FAA system is current. She is co-owner of the airplane and has about 300 to 350 hours total time, with about 200 hours in that airplane. She has been a co-owner for about 5 years.¹

She was asked the following questions –

What was the purpose of the flight?
It was a pleasure flight.

At any point of the flight was she the pilot-in-command (PIC)?
No. Let me think about that. He did the takeoff and landing. No.

¹ Both names are listed on the FAA Aircraft Registration Application dated November 14, 2015.

Explain in detail the flight beginning with your arrival at the airport to the accident. When she arrived at the Heritage Field Airport (PTW), Pottstown, Pennsylvania, David (Mr. Stoetzer) was already there and had preflighted the airplane. He then had the airplane fueled, and had previously checked the weather. The wind was forecast to be gusting later that day so he decided to fly earlier. After takeoff from PTW the flight returned and when about 10 miles away he obtained the automated surface observation system (ASOS) weather and noted that the wind favored runway 28 with some crosswind component. He turned onto final approach and flew straight to the runway. The airplane began sinking and he added throttle, but the airplane then descended. Once on the ground the airplane veered to the right.

She indicated that there was some difference between the wind direction and speed reported on the downwind leg compared with the actual wind encountered at touchdown. As the airplane was approaching the intersection of the first taxiway to the right when it began to go to the right she thought that might have been the pilot doing that, but she then sensed it was not controlled by him or that was not his intention. When the main landing gear wheel went into the grass the airplane yawed.

Where was the wind from?

The weather reported a headwind with a slight wind from the right. She thinks that on touchdown, the wind changed into a tailwind with a slight crosswind component from the right. The wind condition encountered was different than what was disseminated when the flight was on the downwind leg.

How long has she been flying the airplane?

5 years.

In that time had there been any previous issue related to the wind dissemination?

No. Because of the airplane they were very cautious.

Was the pilot current to carry passengers?

Yes.

What type of touchdown was performed?

She did not know.

What seat was she in?

Left seat.

What restraint was in the airplane and she wearing?

It was equipped with seatbelt and shoulder harness and she was wearing both. The shoulder harness had an inertia reel. The lapbelt was "fitted."

Was she injured?

No.

Did the airplane have flaps and were they extended?

Yes and she thinks they were extended either 30° or 40°.

Was there anything mechanically wrong with the airplane that caused the loss of control?

No.

Was the airplane insured?

Yes. Mr. Stoetzer called the insurance company. They are meeting with the mechanic tomorrow.

Do they intend to have the airplane repaired?

Yes.

Was the horizontal stabilizer damaged?

Yes

Do you have any questions for NTSB?

No.

How long has she been co-owner of the airplane?

About 5 years.

In that span has there been any issues related to the brakes, tailwheel or flight controls?

They just had the right brake repaired about 2 to 3 months ago.

Describe the extent of the right brake repair?

Ask Mr. Stoetzer. The right brake was repaired but there was damage to the left side of the airplane.

At touchdown did the airplane veer to the right?

Yes. As soon as they were on the ground the airplane veered to the right.

Describe his crosswind technique?

She was not sure, ask him.

What taxiway did the airplane turn towards?

The first when landing runway 28.

Describe where the airplane came to rest?

Between the runway and taxiway in the grass.

Confirm the airplane went off the right side of the runway?

Yes.

Did she take any pictures of the airplane after coming to rest?

No.

The call ended at 1520 EDT.

The digest was e-mailed to her for review on October 1, 2020. She replied on October 4, 2020, at 0743 EDT with comments that were incorporated into the narrative. The corrected digest was e-mailed to her on October 5, 2020.