



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Pilot Statement

Peter Wentz
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

Date: November 23, 2020
Person Contacted: Benjamin Poffenbeger (Pilot)
Contact # [REDACTED]
NTSB Accident Number: ERA21LA048

Narrative:

The following is a summary of a conversation that occurred with the individual named above:

Mr. Poffenbeger stated he preflight the airplane about 8am with no anomalies. He and his girlfriend were involved in a flying club poker run and departed Pensacola Fl at about 9am, He flew to two other airports before landing at Peter Prince Field (2R4). He stated the unicom at 2R4 reported winds of 150/calm, as he turned base to final he heard an update for the winds 150/9knot. He landed without issue, but on the roll out he caught a gust of wind that pushed him to the left, he added right rudder but ran out of runway. As he approached the grass is added brakes and the airplane began to skip sideways, then the left gear collapsed, and the left wing contacted the runway. He shut down the engine and egressed the airplane. He stated that the airplane had no preimpact mechanical malfunctions or failures that would have precluded normal operation. The substantial damage was to the firewall and engine mounts.

The following is a written statement provided by the accident pilot:

N311SV ACCIDENT MILTON AIRPORT (2R4)

Date: 11/14/2020

Time: 1657Z

Pilot: Mr. Benjamin Poffenberger

Passengers: (1) Miss Valerie Wright

A/C Make/Model: Vans RV-4 (built by Van Artsdalen), 2002

Serial No.: 1054

Narrative:

This was the third flight of the day. Participating in local poker run. Started at airplane's base of operations, Pensacola International Airport (KPNS) and landing at Foley Airport (5R4). At Foley, airplane was topped off with fuel (total 30 gallons). Second flight was to Ferguson Airport (82J). Take-off, cruise and landings were normal on these first two flights. No reported weather available at Foley or Ferguson, but in both cases the windsocks indicated winds nearly directly out of the east at 5kts with gusts maybe as much as 10kts. Landing and subsequent take-off at Foley was on runway 36 following established traffic pattern by other airplanes operating there at the time. Landing and take-off at Ferguson runway 18 was used as the winds seemed to be shifting more out of the south.

Departure from Ferguson was 1642Z. Transitioned Pensacola's Class C airspace talking to Pensacola Tower and Approach, cruise 1400' MSL. Landed at Milton Airport (2R4) at 1657Z. At approximately 1654Z (10 miles out to the west) Ferguson automated advisory service over CTAF reported winds calm. Landing setup was for runway 18, expecting winds to actually favor the south approach. Just prior to landing, during the base turn, Ferguson automated advisory service over CTAF reported winds at 150 and 9kts. Landed on runway 18 with normal wheel landing technique with a smooth touch-down and first part of roll-out normal. After a normal amount of tail up roll-out the tail settled and full up elevator was applied. At about the same time the plane's nose started to move to the left and right rudder was introduced. When the nose did not immediately respond, full right rudder was applied. The plane continued tracking to the left and was nearing the edge of the runway; right brake was applied as needed to bring the nose back to the right. This created an overcorrection which was anticipated and hard left rudder and some left brake was brought in but the plane was now skidding (crabbing) across the runway heading slightly to the right of 180° but nose pointing approximately 200°. The left main gear leg buckled under the side load and the left wing tip contacted the runway. The plane then ground-looped around to the left coming to a stop with the nose of the plane pointing approximately 030° and left (east) of the runway centerline. Somewhere in this last segment of the "landing," the composite prop tips contacted the runway and splintered off, but did not stop the engine which was at full idle. When the plane came to a complete stop the engine continued to idle. The engine was stopped by pulling the mixture to idle cut-off and the fuel selector turned to the off position. Before turning of the electrical power a warning radio transmission was made over the CTAF advising Milton Traffic that I had an accident on the runway and would be blocking the runway. There was a response from AMS FBO asking if I would need help and I responded, "yes." Then all electrical switches were

turned off, the canopy opened and my passenger and I exited the airplane. Immediately, a golf cart vehicle showed up from the FBO and within a minute of that other help arrived, one person carrying a hand-held radio who continued to make calls to warn approaching aircraft of the situation.

After we determined there were no injuries, the airplane was secure, and there was no fire or immediate fire hazard, we started discussing a plan to clear the plane from the runway. A local aircraft mechanic said he thought we could get a LUL and lift the plane with straps. I proceeded to remove the top cowl in anticipation of using the engine mount as a suitable place to use to lift the plane coupled with using the roll bar that is just behind the CG of the plane. With the guidance of the aircraft mechanic, we rigged the straps around the engine mounts and the roll-bar and lifted and slowly walked the plane to a safe place off the runway, next to a ramp but set it down off the pavement so if any fuel leaked, it would soak into the ground and not create a higher fire hazard next to other parked aircraft. This movement was completed at approximately 1750Z.

Pictures were taken shortly after this time with the pilot's phone.

The pilot then called the Birmingham FSDO to report the accident. The recording for the main office said the FSDO was closed until Monday but gave a number to call in the case of an accident. The pilot then called this number and reported the accident to the on-duty person who then transferred the pilot to the on-duty Birmingham FSDO person assigned to deal with this type of situation. Pertinent information was provided to Edgar Martha and a short synopsis of what had occurred was relayed. Then contact information was exchanged and a couple of the pictures the pilot took with his phone were text message sent to Mr. Martha per his request.

The pilot received a ride home from a friend at the Milton Airport. The airplane's canopy cover and some auger type tie-downs with straps were taken back to the Milton Airport. At approximately 2200Z the canopy cover was put on the plane and the plane was secured in place with the auger tie-down kit. More pictures were taken with the pilot's phone to document the change made.

End of narrative.

Report produced by: Benjamin Poffenberger

Signed-

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Benjamin Poffenberger.

Date: 11/14/2020

Time: 1930 CST