

Clinton Festa: Operations Safety Inspector

Federal Aviation Administration
Greensboro Flight Standards District Office

[REDACTED]
Greensboro, North Carolina

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Aircraft Accident Inspector Report

Date of report: 12/08/2020

**Accident aircraft: CE-172S,
N53587, S/N 172S9407**

Single Engine Land Airplane

Location: Sanford, NC

On November 27, 2020 the subject aircraft ran off the left side of runway 3 at KTTA Airport on takeoff roll. There was one occupant of the aircraft, student pilot Robert Anthony Alfieri. He was not injured.

At the time of the accident, the wind conditions reported by the TTA AWOS-3 were approximately 350 degrees at 5 knots, though they had been shifting. The accident occurred at approximately 13:00 local time.

Based on my conversation with Mr. Alfieri, he stated that he began his takeoff roll but shortly prior to rotation, the aircraft veered hard and suddenly to the left. He said he understood left-turning tendencies, and was using right rudder, but this felt like a sudden horizontal lifting force from his right, and did not feel typical for normal left-turning tendencies of a single-engine airplane. The aircraft veered off to the right as Mr. Alfieri avoided allowing it to takeoff, and while applying brakes, the aircraft departed the runway to the left. It went down into the steep ditch near the left side of runway 3 at KTTA, sustaining damage that caused the nosegear to sheer off and firewall damage to occur.

No mechanical irregularities were found that may have contributed to the accident.

The student pilot had over 70 hours of flight time and had been flying that same tail number recently. He went out that day to practice landings in preparation for his Private Pilot checkride. After discussing the event with him and his instructor, I found no lack of knowledge about left-turning tendencies, crosswind correction, or anything else that may have caused this accident other than an abrupt wind shift prior to rotation. The investigation was closed out based on this discussion with the student pilot, who has been taken off of flying status at his local flying club pending retraining from his instructor.

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