



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: December 3, 2020
Person Contacted: John “Jack” E. Demyan
NTSB Accident Number: ERA21LA058

Narrative:

Mr. John “Jack” E. Demyan contacted NTSB by phone on December 2, 2020, at 1453 EST. He called from [REDACTED] His e-mail address was [REDACTED]

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 indicated that he has owned the airplane for about 10 to 16 years.¹ It was based at Martin State Airport (MTN), Baltimore, Maryland, and was hangered. He has had maintenance performed at Delaware Coastal Airport (GED), Georgetown, Delaware. The purpose of flying into GED was to have an annual inspection performed. Because he needed to fly into GED he called a friend who owned an airplane that was at Lancaster Airport (LNS), Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and asked him if he could fly into GED to meet him after he landed to fly him back to MTN. The friend agreed.

He provided the following for November 27, 2020-
He called (302) 855-1052 at 1833 EST which was the phone number for the GED automated surface observation report (ASOS).

He provided the following timeline for November 28, 2020-

¹ According to Federal Aviation Administration records, the Bill of Sale to Stormycat, Inc. was September 24, 1999.

Before departing MTN en route to LNS, he checked the GED METAR using his cell phone using a weather app.² He flew his airplane with his friend on-board from MTN to LNS. After landing he secured his airplane and added 100 low lead fuel. He had no problem with the airplane during the flight, which was about 1 hour. He dropped his friend off.

Before departing LNS he again checked the GED METAR using his cell phone using a weather app. The last report he had reported the wind from 340° at 7 knots. He departed LNS before his friend who was flying a Piper PA-31-350 (Navajo) en route to GED. He subsequently departed LNS and flew over D64, then towards GED. While the flight was “in range” en route to GED, he obtained the GED automated surface observing system (ASOS) via the aircraft’s radio on frequency 118.37 MHz and the report indicated the wind was variable.

When the flight was 5 miles from GED he announced his position on the common traffic advisory frequency (CTAF/UNICOM) and that he would be entering at a 45° onto the downwind for runway 4. He entered the downwind leg, base, and final legs of the airport traffic pattern for runway 4. He looked at the wind “T” and although he could not see precisely what it depicted for the direction, it generally agreed with the ASOS report of being from 340°.³

On final approach to runway 4, the approach seemed “ok” at 1st, then suddenly the airplane was pushed to the right of extended runway centerline. He corrected with left aileron and rudder input but that had no effect. He noted a “good sink rate” and tried to maneuver back to the left, by raising the right wing which was lowered. He applied 3/4 travel of left rudder input but the airplane, “wasn’t getting anywhere.” The wind pushed the left wing up, and it felt like the airplane was flying backwards. He then added full power adding “the engine came up immediately upon application of full power” but that did not help the situation. Because the airplane was not aligned and was wanting to go to the right, he thought about turning downwind but added that the sink rate got me, and the airplane impacted the ground hard. The hard landing knocked the main landing gear off. He, “never experienced anything quite so powerful in the air” and, “I have never had a problem with that engine.”

He indicated that the flight duration was 1 hour 15 to 1 hour 20 minutes.

He was asked the following questions:

Were any wind gusts reported by the ASOS?

He did not recall. He knew from the day before when he talked with Flight Service that gusts to 11 knots were expected in the afternoon at GED. And the 7 knots that were reported on the ASOS or gusts of 11 knots that were forecast were “quite doable.” He indicated that during the approach he felt the wind shift. After the accident he saw an individual named Rob Cook and he asked him if he saw the accident. He responded that he had, and he (Rob) indicated that just about the moment the airplane landed, the wind shifted from a quartering headwind to a tailwind.

² The app also provided the Terminal Area Forecast (TAF).

³ In an e-mail on December 3, 2020, he provided a diagram depicting how he perceived the wind “T” to be pointing when he observed it in flight during the downwind leg. It is attached to this document.

Questions Continued:

Why did he not use runway 28?

Because the wind was reported to be variable, that told him that the wind direction was not a constant, would likely vary and that the best available indication of wind direction was the wind T. As indicated on the sketch, the wind appeared to indicate runway 4 as the best choice (as it appeared to him on the downwind leg). He added that the last definitive report was from 340° and the last aircraft (although faster and heavier) used runway 4, which was 150 ft wide. With that width he could take advantage of it, land near the downwind edge and could use the width to his advantage. He planned to touch down on the edge and aim for the opposite corner. Thirty to forty minutes after the accident he noted people were landing on runway 22.

What was the time of the accident?

Between 1140 and 1145 EST.

Was there anything wrong with the airplane that caused the accident?

“No, nothing. The airplane was in fine condition.” After the accident he did note the wind was from the west-southwest, and it didn’t seem as strong as it was while airborne. “He was taken aback by the wind shift.”

Was there any frontal passage?

I don’t know.

What is the phone number for Rob Cook?

Cell [REDACTED] and Home [REDACTED]

Do you have any questions for me?

No. He added the wind “T” was about 1/2 way down the runway and was difficult to discern at such an oblique vertical angle on base and final. He does have a limitation to wear glasses and was wearing them.

The call ended at 1522 EST.

On December 3, 2020, a list of clarifying questions were sent to the pilot by e-mail. He replied the same day by two separate e-mails and the answers were incorporated into the narrative.

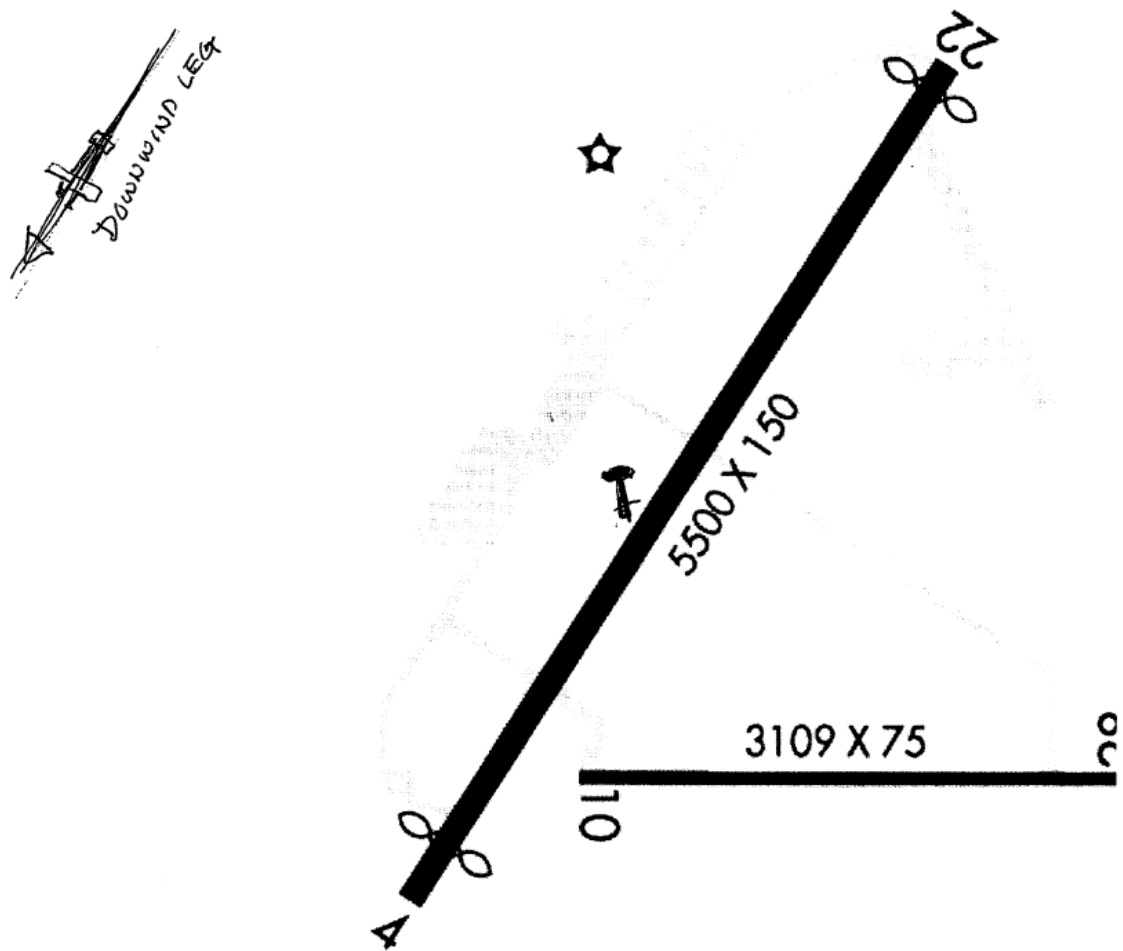


Figure 1: Annotated Airport Diagram titled, "Pilot's View of Wind-T from downwind leg.pdf" Provided by Pilot by E-mail December 3, 2020.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on December 3, 2020. He replied the same day at 1716 EST with comments that were incorporated into the narrative. The corrected digest was e-mailed to him on December 7, 2020.



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: December 4, 2020
Person Contacted: Robert W. Cook
NTSB Accident Number: ERA21LA058

Narrative:

Mr. Robert W. Cook was contacted by phone on December 4, 2020 at 1024 EST. He was called at [REDACTED] He provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED]

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 a pilot certificate number of [REDACTED] and indicated that he flew his Piper PA-31-325 ([REDACTED]) into Delaware Coastal Airport (GED) on November 28, 2020, arriving about 1130 EST, which was before the accident pilot landed. On his approach to runway 4, he was not given the wind by a person on the common traffic advisory frequency (CTAF), but did obtain the wind from the automated surface observing system (ASOS) at GED. He recalled the wind was from 330° at 6 knots, with some gusts, though he did not recall the gust velocity or whether the gust was reported on the ASOS. Once he was on the ground, he did feel the wind gusts and noted the wind shifted.

With respect to his observation of the accident of N7596B (accident airplane), he was sitting on the cabin entry door with the airplane secured and was watching the approach to runway 4, which was the active runway in use. He noted that when the pilot was flaring to land, the wind shifted 200° and went from a quartering headwind to a left quartering tailwind with gusts. He noted the left-wing raise, and noted the pilot tried to level the wings. He then added power to abort the landing to turn right, and while the accident aircraft did have flying speed when he turned away from the runway, the wind became a full tailwind, at which point the relative wind

over the wing diminished resulting in a loss of lift. The right wing impacted the ground, and the airplane came to rest upright.

He added that the wind shift began after he (Mr. Cook) landed, and the wind was from 280° to 300° at 6 to 8 knots with steady gusts to 12 knots.

He was asked if there was a frontal passage that occurred to cause the winds and he indicated he thought a front had passed through the night before.

The call ended at 1036 EST.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on December 4, 2020. He replied the same day at 1653 EST with comments that were incorporated into the narrative. The corrected digest was e-mailed to him December 4, 2020. He sent an e-mail on December 7, 2020, at 1217 EST, indicating, "Mr. Monville, I just caught a mistake, the quartering tailwind was from the left, not the right. I am sure this was a typo. I would appreciate a correction of the account. Regards Rob Cook." The digest was corrected which was e-mailed to him on December 23, 2020.