



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

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Eastern Region

Date: August 11, 2022
Person: David Talbert – Pilot/Owner
NTSB Accident Number: ERA21LA338 Crittenden, KY
Subject: Just Highlander – N101KL

Narrative:

Mr. Talbert was the pilot/owner of the accident airplane. He provided a written statement and was later interviewed by telephone. The following is a summary of the interview.

The fuel site tubes are clear and unmarked. They are 10 inches long. 13-gallon tanks, tubes are not calibrated. Mr. Talbert said he did not stick the tanks, and the shape of the tanks would not allow that. The tanks were not full. The manufacturer gives you no guidance on how to determine fuel quantities below full tanks.

Rotax 912 ULS gives estimate in normal cruise. "I believe 4.5 gallons per hour. I usually plan for 5 gph."

To which field were you landing? "030" The pilot stated the airplane was established on left base for landing on a field oriented 030 when at 300ft, he amended his decision and decided to land on the same field to the south.

Why did you amend your landing site?

"No specific reason. The north/south runway, and went full power, climbing left turn."

When did you add power for the amended landing?

"I like to be at 300 ft. on base, I believe we came down lower than that, decided, 'we're going to go around' and went full power."

How long did the engine run at full power?

“The engine response was smooth to full power, with no hesitation. And the airplane climbed at a normal rate while turning left. I don’t know at what altitude, but about midfield the engine completely and suddenly stopped producing power. It quit running. I would say we were 300 ft in the climb when the engine stopped running.”

“At that point, I said a few choice words, pushed the nose down, started the glide, and tried to land on the remaining 030 runway, but I was too high, continued my left turn, to land on the grass to the left of the 35 runway. I continued in the left bank and tried to land in the grassy area to the left, overshot that, and aimed for the area between the road and my driveway. It’s a bit uphill and thought it would stop us quicker. Just because of the timing, and the touchdown, I believe one wheel touched first and spun the aircraft. I think we stopped 80-90 feet beyond the impact point.”

The pilot was asked how in a left bank, the right main landing gear touched down first?

“During flight or glide, I was in a level flight and then once I realized I was not going to touchdown on option two, I leveled the airplane, and the right landing gear touched down first, as the terrain was significantly higher on the right.”

Who witnessed the accident?

“My son was out in the area. I believe he was jogging on that main road, and I believe he witnessed the event. He did not provide a statement to anyone.”

Who dialed 911?

“My wife dialed 911. She was also outside, knew we were coming back in, but didn’t see it.”

Who responded?

The pilot explained that first responders did not respond. He said, “At the time of the accident, she dialed 911, then told the 911 operator that everyone was okay, so no one responded.”

When did you last service the airplane with fuel?

“I don’t know. I have been flying it quite frequently, every day.”

Did you top it off? How do you keep track of your fuel services?

“The method I use is a visual site gauge in the wing. That’s how I determine how much fuel I have and do my flight planning.”

How do you service the airplane?

“I have a pickup truck with a 24-gallon auxiliary tank, and I fill it with 93 octane automotive gasoline which is what Rotax recommends.”

How much flight experience do you have in the Highlander?

“I have 20-25 hours in the airplane, I have read the Dynon manual, and that’s my experience.”

Mr. Talbert was very cooperative, and offered some of his thoughts and actions afterward that he thought would help him understand this event. According to Mr. Talbert,

“After the crash there was fuel in the sight glass. I was trying figure this out for myself, so I started making calls, and started talking to Rotax reps, and the purpose of the electric fuel pump. I have not been instructed to use the electric fuel pump and I was then told by Leaf Aviation (Leading Edge Air Foils) (Brett), certified Rotax tech center that at a minimum of 2.2 psi, you should use the electric boost pump. I learned about this after the accident.

When asked about carburetor heat, he said, “In the installer’s guide, installation of carburetor heat is not a requirement.”

When asked, in summary, what he thought might have occurred, Mr. Talbert said,

“The entry was atypical. I’ve only landed there with someone else. The right fuel tank would feed faster than the left. It is possible that the continuous left turn, and the lower fuel quantity in the right tank... the fuel pickup is on the inboard part of the fuel tank and might have unported.”