



MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Aaron McCarter
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

Date: 09/15/2021 @ 1130
Person Contacted: Student Pilot/Owner: Roy Griffin
NTSB Accident Number: ERA21LA344

RE: Telephone call with the student pilot/owner (Griffin) to gather additional information and discuss circumstances of the accident.

Narrative:

The night before, they fueled up the airplane in Spartanburg (SPA) with 17 gallons in each of the tip tanks, and up to the main fuel tank tabs, which was about 17 gallons as well. He thinks each of the mains holds 25 gallons when full.

On the day of the flight, they flew from SPA to Morganton, NC (MPN) and performed 2 touch-and-goes before returning to SPA. On the way back to SPA, they did some maneuvers. He thinks the total time of the flight was about 2 to 2.3 hours. When they departed, they started with the fuel selector on the right tank, then switched to the left enroute, leaving the fuel in the tip tanks.

When they approached SPA from the NW, about 2 miles out as they were preparing to make a left turn to join the midfield for a crosswind entry, the engine suddenly lost power. The rpms dropped from about 2,300 to 1,500 rpm and the propeller was windmilling. There were no associated engine sounds that accompanied the loss of power; it was a smooth reduction in power.

He expressed an expletive, then the flight instructor stated, "My Plane" and took the controls. They were about 800 feet above ground level and were descending. They ran the emergency checklist, mixture full rich, carb heat on, master on, fuel pump on. He does not recall if they switched the fuel tanks; "it was busy" He did not see the engine instruments as they were blocked from his view; they were located on the right side behind the control yoke.

When briefly discussing carburetor icing possibilities, he did not see any visible moisture in the atmosphere and the temperature was over 82 degrees Fahrenheit, plus he acknowledged that they were at a high power setting and had not yet entered the pattern from their enroute portion.

[END]



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Aaron McCarter
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

Date: 09/15/2021 @ 0900
Person Contacted: Flight Instructor: Margo Anderson
NTSB Accident Number: ERA21LA344

RE: Telephone call with the instructor (Anderson) to gather additional information and discuss circumstances of the accident.

Narrative:

The enroute portion of the flight was uneventful. It wasn't until approach near Spartanburg; SPA (after returning from Morganton, NC; MRN) that the engine rpm started to drop from about 2,300 rpm to 1,500 rpm that they had an issue. The rpms dropped over a period of about 3-4 seconds. At first they thought it was the friction lever on the throttle that may have become loose.

There was no associated engine "cough or bang" and no sputter that corresponded with the decrease in engine power. It was smooth drop off in power until the propeller was just windmilling. "It felt like the throttle was pulled back to idle."

They were about 2 miles away from the airport (SPA) getting ready to enter the downwind about 800 feet above ground level and 1,600 ft mean sea level when it occurred.

She and the student ran the emergency checklist and ensured the mixture was full rich, fuel pump was on, and master was on, but they were coming down fast and she had the "fly the plane." She does not recall the engine indicators and the readings during this time. She was confident in their fuel supply; they departed with about 58 gallons total. The tips were also topped off.

During the enroute portion of the flight, she recalls they were flying about 4,500 during the flight down to MRN and 3,500 back to SPA; and they had the engine leaned appropriately. They were burning about 12 to 13 gallons per hour.

Discussed the accident investigation process and when the preliminary and factual report would be completed.

[END]