

April 19, 2021

Ricky Flores

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

RE: Landing Incident, 4/16/21, KOPN

At the time of the incident, I was attempting to ferry a 1999, Experimental "Bushwacker" tailwheel aircraft, from KVDI to KSNY, for its new owner Terry Hilderbrand, a low time student pilot, with no tailwheel experience. Our plan was to make 200-mile legs, with at least one overnight stay, along the way. While on our first leg, we experienced a much higher fuel flow than expected, so I decided to make a precautionary landing at KOPN to investigate.

The AWOS at KOPN reported calm winds during our pattern entry. The approach and round out was normal, however, immediately upon touchdown, at idle power, in a 3 point attitude, the aircraft became uncontrollable and veered to our left. Upon leaving the runway, the right horizontal stabilizer hit an airport sign, damaging the back (blank) side of the sign slightly and the horizontal stabilizer significantly.

To the best of my understanding, the "Bushwacker" is a modified Piper Colt, which has been given more horsepower (160hp) and, of course, has been converted to a conventional, or tailwheel, configuration. The gear and rigging looked normal during my preflight inspection, however, the aircraft's landing characteristics proved otherwise. Since the aircraft did not ground loop, or weather vane and, instead veered uncontrollably, I feel there are perhaps some rigging issues, or tailwheel mechanical issues.

For reference, I am a high time tailwheel pilot, owner and instructor, with not only recent tailwheel flying time, but a reasonable amount of time in Piper Pacer aircraft (technically PA22s converted back to PA20s).

Please feel free to reach out to me at any time, if more information is needed. I am happy to comply with the best of my ability.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Spencer B. Mamber

CFIIA [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Centennial, CO 80112