



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Flight Instructor Statement

Lynn Spencer
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

Date: January 24, 2022

Persons Contacted: Craig MacFarland (father) and Landen MacFarland (flight instructor)

Contact # [REDACTED]

NTSB Accident Number: ERA22LA107

Narrative:

The following is a summary of a conversation that occurred with the individual named above:

Mr. Craig MacFarland is the father of the flight instructor, Landen MacFarland. He was contacted by phone on January 24, 2022, at 1007 EST. He was called at [REDACTED] to get an update on Landen. He stated that Landen is doing well. He was released from the hospital and returned home on Thursday, January 20. He has a boot for his fractured ankle and will go in this week to have the staples on his head removed. He still has memory issues, but no headaches. I asked if he felt that Landen was able to speak to me, and he responded yes and put Landen on the phone.

Landen stated that his student (John "Jack" Hamilton) was a pilot from Tennessee and was very nice. Mr. Hamilton had his seaplane rating already, so Landen viewed these as review flights. Mr. Hamilton had not flown in three years. For their first flight of the day, which lasted about 1.5 hours, Mr. Hamilton wanted to fly in the front seat, so Landen flew in the back seat. Landen explained that students solo the seaplane from the back seat for weight and balance reasons. He added that one can see more instruments from the front, and instructors generally sit in the front seats and block most of the instruments.

Although Landen did not remember the accident itself, he recalled a lot about the flights. He stated that Mr. Hamilton was not doing great. He wasn't doing badly, but he wasn't doing great. He tended to fly too slow after and turn sharply on takeoffs. They had lunch after the first flight and the airplane was fueled during lunch. Landen explained that he knew it was fueled because he preflighted the airplane and checked the fuel. For the afternoon flight, Mr. Hamilton decided that he would sit in the back and Landen would sit in the front. On takeoffs, Mr. Hamilton was flying slow, and Landen had to mention that a lot during the day, and Landen had to push the nose down on several occasions. He stated that if he had to guess what caused the accident, it was that Mr. Hamilton had pitched up too high and the airplane had stalled, although he does not recall. "That had been the issue all day."

Landen stated that Mr. Hamilton started off slow but improved the second half of the first flight. After lunch, when Mr. Hamilton moved to the back seat, he didn't know if Mr. Hamilton was inattentive or if the issue was

that he could not see the instruments well, and he recalled thinking after their takeoff and when flying to the next lake, “hmm. . . A little more reckless here.” He stated that he knew it was not intentional recklessness, but rather an inattentiveness on the part of Mr. Hamilton. He estimated that they flew for about an hour before the accident, and Mr. Hamilton’s turns were steeper and his level-offs fast. It was a different feeling from the when Mr. Hamilton was in the front seat. He stated that he is quite sure it had something to do with Mr. Hamilton being in the back.

I asked him the last thing he did recall of the flight, and he stated that the last thing he recalled was thinking “he is more reckless.” He stated that he may have stated that out loud.

I advised him of what a witness who was fishing on the lake witnessed of the flight and Landen stated that if they did a low pass, then Mr. Hamilton had the controls. He described that before landing on a lake, they check over the lake to make sure it is clear and check to see where the wind is coming from. You also pick a Last Visual Reference (LVR), then you set up for your pattern and landing. He explained that the LVR is the point in the landing where everything will be set up for your landing. I explained that after the low pass, the witness stated that the airplane came in again and only one float hit the water and then the airplane climbed up to about 200-300 feet, and Landen said that “that sounds like a go-around or aborted landing.”

I told him that the witness reported a climbing right arc that got steep and just continued to the ground, and he responded, “That this was what he was having problems with all day . . . Making really steep turns and he was too slow on airspeed.” He added that he did not correct it in time.

Landen provided an email address of [REDACTED].

The call ended at 1030 EST.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on January 22, 2022. He replied on January 22, 2022, at 1410 EST with comments that were incorporated into the narrative. The corrected digest was e-mailed to him on January 24, 2022.



NTSB MEMORANDUM OF RECORD

Lynn Spencer
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region, Office of Aviation Safety (AS-ERA)
National Transportation Safety Board

NTSB Accident Number: ERA22LA107
Subject: Correspondence from CFI
Date: 2/18/2022; 6:59:36 PM

The following information was received in an email from the flight instructor on February 18, 2022:

There has been new information about the aircraft's flight path just before the accident that has recently been brought to my attention. The plane turned right immediately after the go-around.

This is not normal procedure. I personally would not have flown like this or had the other pilot fly like this. The only way I could think the plane would turn right so soon is if there was an obstacle in our way. I do remember there being an aborted landing that day due to birds, but do not remember if that was the same landing attempt or not.

I was also made aware that we had one landing prior to the 'low pass' that we had talked about in the Record of Conversation. If that was the case the low pass was most likely a go around from a glassy water landing, due to not being properly set up before the LVR.



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Flight Instructor Statement

Lynn Spencer
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

Date: April 6, 2022

Person Contacted: Landen MacFarland (flight instructor)

Contact # [REDACTED]

NTSB Accident Number: ERA22LA107

Narrative:

The following is a summary of a conversation that occurred with the individual named above:

I inquired about the use of carburetor heat during approaches, and Mr. MacFarland explained that they used carburetor heat on all approaches, and that the carburetor heat would come off during the go-around maneuver as soon as the throttle was added. He stated that this was the normal procedure for all approaches and go-around maneuvers.