

From: Brandon Nappen [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 10, 2022 2:43 PM
To: Kuhns, Scott J (FAA) [REDACTED]
Subject: 5/9/22 DA42 Off-Airport Landing

Hi Scott,

I have outlined below what I can recall from yesterday's experience that we discussed over the phone. Please feel free to call or email if you have any questions.

To provide some background before discussing the flight, I have seven years of flying experience and I have been a Certified Flight Instructor for over two years. I am currently certified as an Airplane Single Engine Land pilot, and I am pursuing my Multi-Engine Commercial Add-on. To eliminate any confusion, I was strictly a student in the Multi-Engine DA42. I am only certified to fly and teach in Single Engine Land Airplanes, hence the reason why I was a student and not PIC. I was not checked-out in the aircraft as I was in the process of training for my exam with a Designated Pilot Examiner (DPE). Only after the completion of the exam with the DPE could I have been checked-out in the airplane and considered PIC. As of now, I have 1,208 total flight hours and 8.8 of which are in the Multi-Engine DA42.

Moving onto the flight, our day began with a ground lesson in which we discussed performance, weight & balance, weather/NOTAMS, emergency procedures, and other miscellaneous details. After completion of our ground lesson, we performed a thorough preflight with the checklist in hand. Checklists are used religiously at the flight school and I follow them word for word. Upon completion of our preflight we entered the airplane, started the engines, and taxied out to the runway to complete our run-up. The winds were coming out of the East and favored runway 07 at Queen City (KXLL). First on the agenda was a simulated engine failure on the take-off role which was completed safely and successfully. After returning for take-off again, we departed from runway 07 and made a left turn-out to the West to enter the Western Practice Area for maneuvers near the East Texas (ETX) VOR. We contacted Allentown (KABE) approach on departure for flight following and traffic advisories, and were granted a block altitude of 4500-6500 feet. At that block altitude we completed maneuvers that were to be expected on the exam with the DPE including slow-flight, stalls, and steep turns. From there ATC had us descend to maintain traffic separation as we moved onto simulating and practicing emergency procedures further north of ETX and KABE.

The exam with the DPE for the Multi-Commercial Add-on specifies that a student must demonstrate that they can safely fly and respond to an engine failure in flight. To practice this in preparation for the exam, we simulated a failure and shut down the right engine strictly as outlined in the checklist. After completing the shut-down and securing the engine, we then proceeded to restart the engine again as outlined in the checklist. It was at this moment that we noticed an abnormality in the right engine. The right engine propeller was spinning at 1970 RPM's rather than its normal speed of 2500 RPM's. My

instructor and I first suspected that we were experiencing a partial power loss in the right engine. We ran through the emergency checklists and monitored the engine instruments to identify, verify, and remedy the issue we were experiencing. From there we moved onto the checklist for a total engine failure in the right engine. By this point we were roughly 2500-3000 feet Mean Sea Level and descending at roughly 500 feet per minute. We were flying towards the West and made a left turn back towards the East to attempt a landing at the airport in Lehighton. The aircraft was difficult to control and my instructor and I became task-saturated between maintaining positive control of the aircraft, running through checklists, communicating with ATC, and navigating towards the nearest airport. We then declared an emergency with Allentown Approach and stated that we will be making an off-airport landing with three souls on board.

With a rapid altitude loss and task saturation, we identified that a forced landing was the only and best option at this point. We focused our attention to ensure we landed the plane as safely as we could while maintaining positive control of the aircraft. We successfully maintained proper airspeed and landed in a field with our gear and flaps deployed. While rolling out in the field, our nose or nose gear was caught and caused the airplane to flip upside down. After flipping upside down and coming to a complete stop, we shut down the airplane and evacuated to maintain a safe distance away from the plane. All souls on board suffered only minor injuries and were subsequently taken to the hospital out of an abundance of caution.

I am not sure what exactly caused the issue with our right engine, but I believe that there was a mechanical issue that resulted in an emergency. Our time to respond was limited and we did everything in our power to safely and effectively respond to the situation. While we can discuss hypotheticals of what could have happened or what could have been done differently, I believe the action we took was the most appropriate for the situation as it allowed all of us on board to walk away safely and relatively unharmed. Given the unusual and high-stress circumstances of the situation, we remained calm and professionally responded to the emergency with the help of a thorough preflight briefing, strict checklist usage, and superior training and piloting to ensure a safe conclusion of the flight.

If you have any further questions, you can contact me via email or phone.

Sincerely,

Brandon Nappen

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Brandon Nappen.

From: David Kunkle [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 7:51 AM
To: Kuhns, Scott J (FAA) [REDACTED]; David Kunkle [REDACTED]
Subject: statement N988JA

On 5/9/22 we were conducting a training flight in a DA42 northwest of Allentown Pa.. ATC required us to maintain below 5000 for traffic. We conducted a simulated engine securing drill. We followed the checklist and successfully secured the right engine. During the process we lost a few hundred feet.

Using the checklist we initiated restart procedures. The restart procedure took some time to complete. We slowly increased manifold pressure in order to keep shock cooling to a minimum. As we slowly advanced the throttle it became apparent the engine was not producing power, only windmilling.

We tried to get the engine functioning but without success. We were now descending and abeam the ridge tops, and believed our only option was an off field landing. We selected a field and executed our landing. Touchdown was smooth and under control. We slid into a ditch by the side of a crossing road and the aircraft inverted. We shutdown the fuel and master and exited the aircraft.

Michael Creighton

Statement

5/19/22

Recollection of events from the accident in N988JA on 5/9/2022

On 5/9/22 I was invited to observe a multi-engine instruction lesson as a passenger. I was starting my multi-engine training and the ME instructor, Dave Kunkle, thought it would be a good idea for me to come along and observe to get an idea of what ME flying is about and become familiar with the flow of how things work. We did a couple of hours of ground lessons going over aerodynamics, systems, single-engine operations, and weight & balance.

After pre-flight, start-up, and taxi, they did an abort take-off drill. The next take-off was uneventful. We climbed to 5000 feet and above and they did a variety of air work drills, such as steep turns, slow flight, stalls, and engine out scenarios. For the drag demo, they feathered and shut off the right engine.

Upon restart, the prop was turning, and I believed the engine was on and running. After a few minutes of no communication on the cockpit, Dave Kunkle said "there is a problem, but I don't know what it is." This caught my attention because I believed it was a mock emergency drill scenario and I was observing the routine. I remember looking at the instrument panel and the right engine was at 1950 rpm but both fuel and oil pressure in the green range. The left engine had a noticeable higher rpm, but I do not remember what the rpm numbers were. I also do not remember where the throttle, prop, and mixture controls positions were. Dave Kunkle then said, "where's the nearest airport?" I had my foreflight on and my sectional chart in view and I responded with "7.5 miles east at 11 o'clock." They turned the aircraft in that direction, and I would periodically direct them to the airport. Jake Arner Memorial Airport (22N) was the closest airport and sits behind a ridge, when you drop to a certain altitude it can be obscured by the ridge.

I also noticed there was a lack of communication between the two pilots and there seemed to be confusion on roles and responsibilities. I did not hear any checklist items being reviewed and verified. I also noticed that the right engine prop was still spinning.

At around 1500 feet Dave Kunkle took control of the aircraft and declared an emergency. A field was selected, and the plane was positioned to land. We hit the field wheels up and traveled a few hundred feet it seemed. We crossed a road into another field. The plane hit a ditch and the nose dipped down and slammed into the ground which was freshly plowed dirt. The plane decelerated abruptly, and the back end lifted off the ground, went vertical, flipped upside down and slammed into the ground.

I did not lose consciousness. I was able to undo my safety belt and dropped to the roof of the plane. I noted the other two pilot were still upside down. Everyone was talking and we verified that we were alright. I tried to open the rear passenger latch, but it was jammed, and I was not able to kick out the glass. The front two pilots were able to undue their safety harnesses. I did not see or hear what actions were taken in the cockpit after the crash. The other two pilots were able to break the glass and exit the aircraft.

I remained stuck in the back for the time being. Once I assessed that there was no immediate danger, I was able to take my time getting out. I was able to crawl underneath the tops of the front seats and exit the broken window the other two pilots exited out of. No serious injuries were apparent on me, and I was transported to Lehigh Valley Hospital Cedar Crest Emergency Room for further evaluation. I was discharged the same day.

Michael Creighton
Registered Nurse/Paramedic
Health, Safety, and Environmental

Mack Trucks

[REDACTED]

Macungie, PA 18062

USA

Phone: [REDACTED]

Mobile/SMS: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]