

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
OAS-Eastern Region Aviation

Date: December 13, 2022

Subject: ERA22LA287, Record of Conversation/Interview

Contact: FAA Inspector Thomas G. McCormick

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector Thomas G. McCormick was contacted by phone on July 6, 2022 at 1010 EDT. He was called at [REDACTED] Ext. [REDACTED] and left a voice mail message. He returned the call the same day at 1018 EDT from [REDACTED]

He provided a phone number for the pilot's wife (Sue) of [REDACTED]

He indicated that the airplane was based at the Canandaigua Airport (IUA), Canandaigua, New York. The accident site was located at 42.917389° north latitude and -77.345600° west longitude¹. The airplane was removed from the field and taken to the pilot's hangar at IUA. As part of his examination he noted minor damage consisting of the nose landing gear broke off and the right main landing gear was folded back. He noted fuel seeping from the right wingtip. The airplane fuel tanks were near full (3/4) capacity with automotive fuel. The fuel selector was in the "off" position.

The pilot was life flighted to Strong Memorial Hospital, Rochester, New York. He believed the pilot had sustained internal injuries, a collapsed lung, as well as broken bones.

The accident pilot held a private pilot certificate with airplane single engine land and single engine sea ratings.

He indicated that there was no Flight Aware for the accident site but will check to see if there was any ADS-B data.

¹ Using Google earth, the accident site location was 0.52 nautical mile and 350° from the departure end of runway 31 at IUA.

The call end time was not recorded.

The digest was reviewed with him during the call and he agreed with the content.

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Subject: ERA22LA287, Record of Conversation/Interview

Contact: Robert Mincer, Airport Manager of Canandaigua Airport,
Canandaigua, New York

Mr. Robert Mincer contacted NTSB on July 6, 2022 at 1111 EDT. The phone number was not recalled. He provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED]

He personally saw the accident airplane taxiing for departure to the approach end of runway 31, and noted that the airplane departed from runway 31. At the time of the accident the wind was from the north.

He indicated that the pilot was doing repairs and replaced the right main landing gear. The pilot flies locally and performs pattern work flying 10 to 15 minutes.

As a result of the crash, they were looking for him and heard emergency vehicles.

The insurance adjuster was Dan Armstrong. With respect to METARS he can provide. He indicated that the common traffic advisory frequency (CTAF) was recorded by LiveATC.net. An individual who works at the fixed base operator (FBO) can be reached at [REDACTED]¹.

The digest was reviewed with him during the call and he agreed with the content.

¹ Refer to NTSB Record of Conversation with the individual.

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Contact: Robert Mincer, Airport Manager of Canandaigua Airport,
Canandaigua, New York

Mr. Robert Mincer was contacted by NTSB on July 7, 2022 at an unknown time.

He indicated that he did not hear anything more on LiveATC.net¹.

With respect to the accident airplane, there was a lot of fuel leaking at the outboard end of a wing and also the entire cockpit had an odor of fuel. He provided the pilot's cell phone of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] He indicated that the pilot is meticulous and the most recent work to the accident airplane was the replacement of the right main landing gear. He indicated that the accident pilot tinkers on the airplane but he (Mr. Mincer) has not seen the cowling off in weeks.

A person named Brandon Snyder knows what time the accident airplane departed.

He indicated that a friend of his who is a pilot asked the accident pilot what happened and he said he did not know.

The digest was reviewed with him during the call and he agreed with the content.

¹ The LiveATC net recording and an e-mail that contained NTSB prepared elapsed time and comments associated with the accident airplane was e-mailed to the FAA inspector and Mr. Mincer on July 6, 2022 at 1425 EDT.

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Date: December 13, 2022
Subject: ERA22LA287, Record of Conversation/Interview
Contact: Sue Mantell, Wife of Accident Pilot

Mrs. Sue Mantell was contacted by phone on July 13, 2022 at 0913 EDT. She was called at her home phone of [REDACTED]

She was contacted to get the status of her husband who was 81 years old, and whether he had said anything about the accident. She indicated that he said he doesn't remember the accident. He sustained a "real bad" impact with his head. He sustained broken leg bones, and had an 8 hour surgery to stop bleeding in his stomach. Bone fragments from his broken ribs punctured his stomach but they were able to get the fragments out. He also sustained a broken shoulder. He was out of the intensive care unit.

He did indicate that he thought the field was flat, but it wasn't. The airplane hit a bump in the field that was hidden by the wheat crop. Her husband had a sense to shut off the fuel selector valve after the accident.

With respect to an attempt to jog his memory, she showed him pictures of the airplane in the field, but he did not recall anything.

Her husband was transported by helicopter to the hospital. He husband has a pilot logbook and the maintenance records.

She was asked the following questions –

Where was he flying to?
Just around locally. It was like a test flight after working on the airplane.

NTSB Questions Continued –

Was it his 1st flight that day?

She did not think so. He flew it earlier. She suggested I talk with Robert Mincer who is the airport manager.

The call ended at 0928 EDT.

The digest was reviewed with her during the call and she agreed with the content. The FINAL digest was e-mailed to Robert Mincer on December 14, 2022.

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Date: December 13, 2022

Subject: ERA22LA287, Record of Conversation/Interview

Contact: FAA Inspector Thomas G. McCormick

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector Thomas G. McCormick contacted NTSB by phone on July 13, 2022 at 0934 EDT. He called from [REDACTED]

He was asked if he noted fuel stains in the engine compartment?
No.

He was asked if he could perform a 100-Hour inspection of the engine. He indicated that the clamp that secured the hose acted like it was tightly secured but the hose was loose. The maintenance records were not in the hangar. The airplane was equipped with an engine monitor and portable GPS. He will retain both for shipping to the NTSB Vehicle Recorder Division. The airplane was equipped with an autopilot for roll only. Both propeller blades were fractured but not at the exact same length. He clarified the fuel line that was loose was the line from the filter assembly to the engine-driven fuel pump.

He was asked if there was any water found?
He can check the wing tank sump drains¹.

The digest was reviewed with him during the call and he agreed with the content.

¹ According to IMG_2224 and IMG_2225 taken on July 14, 2022 at 1141 EDT, the fuel sample did not contain any contamination.

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Date: December 13, 2022
Subject: ERA22LA287, Record of Conversation/Interview
Contact: Brandon Snyder, Witness

Mr. Brandon Snyder was contacted by phone on July 13, 2022 at 1158 EDT. He was called at [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] He provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED]

He indicated that he was in the fixed base operator (FBO) at Canandaigua Airport (IUA), Canandaigua, New York, and saw the accident pilot pull his airplane (N51TM) from the hangar. He subsequently listed to LiveATC.net and derived the following information:

1348 – the accident pilot announced he was taxiing
1355 – the accident pilot announced he was departing

He was asked the following questions –

Did you hear an engine run-up?

I did not. Based on the times, there could have been time to perform a run-up because there was no other traffic at the time. The typical taxi time from the pilot's hangar to the runway was about 1 to 2 minutes. At the time of the accident runway 31 was in-use¹.

Did you see the takeoff?

I did not. At the time he was dealing with the airport manager. He was notified by Mr. Mincer (airport manager) at 1417 EDT that the airplane had crashed.

Are there any other witnesses?

He was not sure who was in the maintenance facility at that time of day.

¹ Runway 13/31 has left traffic.

The interview end time was not recorded.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on December 13, 2022. He replied on December 14, 2022, at 1014 EST with, “Tim, No changes necessary to interview notes. All information provided is correct. Brandon....” The FINAL digest was e-mailed to him on December 14, 2022.



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Date: December 14, 2022
Subject: ERA22LA287, Record of Conversation/Interview
Contact: Nicholas Otterback, Arion Aircraft

On December 14, 2022, at 1052 EST, a phone call was made to Arion Aircraft. The call was made to obtain technical information and was made to [REDACTED] My name and phone number was left and I was told to expect a call from Nicholas Otterback. On the same day at 1102 EST, an e-mail was sent directly to Mr. Otterback with 3 pictures asking for clarification and technical assistance¹. On the same day at 1211 EST, Mr. Nicholas Otterback returned the call, calling from [REDACTED]

At the beginning of the phone call Mr. Otterback was advised that the NTSB is a federal agency mandated by Congress to investigate aircraft accidents, and NTSB has no authority to take any action against any individual. He was also informed that the purpose of an NTSB investigation is for safety only, and any person NTSB talks with has the right to representation; he agreed to the interview without representation.

He was asked the following questions –

Was he aware of the accident I was inquiring about?

Prior to a call he received on 12/13/2022 from an individual interested in buying the airplane he had not. He had been sent a couple pictures, which included showing the damaged propeller blades. In his opinion the damage to both propeller blades was consistent with the engine operating at impact. He gave a scenario where there have been cases with collapse of the nose landing gear during the landing roll. In those scenarios, only 1 propeller blade would be damaged.

¹ Photographs IMG_2200, 2206 and 2207 were provided for him to review.

At this stage of the conversation he was advised of the circumstances of the accident and of the FAA finding of the loose flexible fuel hose at the outlet fitting of the gascolator. The fuel line goes to the engine-driven fuel pump.

NTSB Questions Continued –

If the flexible fuel hose was loose at the outlet fitting of the gascolator could that introduce air into the fuel supply?

Absolutely.

What symptoms for the engine would air in the fuel cause?

It would result in reduced power because the proper amount of fuel based on the position of the throttle would not be delivered to the engine. The engine requires 10 to 12 gallons-per-hour at full power during takeoff, but with air in the system the engine would not get the full amount of fuel.

Would you be willing to test an exemplar airplane for a loose fuel hose at the outlet of the gascolator and could that be safely done?

He would be willing to perform the test and felt it could be safely done because the gascolator is on the bottom right side of the firewall on the engine compartment side. A test plan would need to be developed, though it would be simple. The testing could be done the week of December 19th.

He indicated that for airplanes that come to his facility for an annual inspection, his mechanics check for old flexible hoses by pulling on them to see if they separate from the fitting. It is common for older hoses to become hard and can easily come off the fitting even though a clamp would be in place. Jabiru recommends replacing flexible hoses every 5 years.

He was advised that the testing would be with NTSB oversight via either Facetime, Teams, or Zoom. He agreed to that.

Action NTSB:

1. Prepare test plan and e-mail to Mr. Otterback for review and comment².

The phone call ended at 1237 EST.

The digest was reviewed with him during the call and he agreed with the content. The FINAL digest was e-mailed to him on January 18, 2023.

² Although the test plan was prepared, it was decided by NTSB not to carry thru due to the many variables involved and also in the interest of safety.