

Inspector statement September 14, 2022

Barry Blumquist – Aviation Safety Inspector FSDO EA-39

IIC for accident involving N35243.

Investigating on scene in Ivanhoe, NC on September 7, 2022, I determined the approximate touch down spot, the aircraft left evidence of traversing a flood control ditch, becoming airborne and touching down again, traveling through unharvested corn and hitting a second ditch at approximately a 30 -40 degree angle. This deflected the aircraft to the right, folding back the left main gear. The aircraft appeared to hit nose first in the ditch, coming back to rest in the mud and about 8-10" of water.

There is no sign of engine rotation as the propeller blade leading edges and tips are undamaged. The blades are bent back some and the spinner is dented in with no sign of rotation. I was unable to get to the carburetor due the attitude of the aircraft and being stuck in the mud, I could not get the nose up. The carburetor inlet was barely touching the surface of the water, the body was not submerged. I did get a trickle of clean blue fuel from both wing sumps. After removing the fuel caps, the aircraft had approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of fuel around the fuel indicator floats. (the aircraft came to rest in approximately a 10-20 degree nose down attitude therefore the remaining fuel settled towards the front of the tanks).

The wings appeared undamaged (as were the fuel tanks) and there was no sign of petroleum contamination in the water. (Note that the owner of the field, a farmer, stated that if the aircraft had landed there a few days ago, the occupants could have drowned as the ditch was full of water.) This ditch is approximately 6 feet deep and floods when it rains a significant amount. A thunderstorm was approaching as we left the scene about 6 pm and rained significantly in the area. Therefore, it is possible the aircraft has been flooded since my investigation.

The engine would rotate a few degrees, limited by the propeller contacting the ground. The oil was full and slightly dirty, no sign of debris on the dip stick. The throttle was pushed in, mixture in rich, the fuel selector was on the left tank, and the carburetor heat was off.