

Off Airport Landing of P28R N29RM near KMDQ on 8 Sep 2022

Statement by: Leslie Allen Daniel; [REDACTED] on 9 Sep 2022

On 8 Sep 2022, I checked out N29RM to continue my checkout on complex aircraft with CFI Nick Jenkins whom I had flown with many times before. Nothing of note on preflight, runup, takeoff from KHUA or maneuvers in the North East Practice Area (NEPA).

After completing some slow flight, steep turns, stalls, etc in the NEPA, we headed toward KMDQ for a touch and go to practice landings in N29RM. We were about 7-8 miles NW from KMDQ and I called Huntsville Approach and requested a frequency change to conduct the touch and go at KMDQ. I verified weather at KMDQ had not changed significantly since my pre-flight planning, which it hadn't, so we planned on landing RWY 36. I shifted to Right fuel tank which is what I had done runup on but had finished taxi, takeoff, and flight to this point on Left tank. Before shifting, I noted that Right tank had about same amount of fuel as Left.

I began descending out of 3,000 ft msl for 1,800 ft msl (TPA) as I headed to a point about 3 nm NE of KMDQ in preparation for turning to 225 to enter the right downwind RWY 36 at about a 45 degree angle. I made position/intention calls on 123.0 and did not see or hear any other aircraft in the area. I reduced speed upon entering right downwind for RWY 36 and went through prelanding checklist. I errantly skipped over lowering landing gear and CFI asked if I had forgotten anything just before the time I was ready to turn base. I noted that I had not lowered landing gear and immediately did that and verified gear down as I turned to base. Once stable on base I looked and saw that I was on glide slope and prepared to turn final while making radio call.

Once on final, the aircraft seemed stable and on glideslope according to PAPI. I was adjusting slightly left to align with centerline and saw that I was still on glideslope and put in last notch of flaps to slow to 90 mph. As the plane slowed, I noticed that the third light on PAPI was starting to turn red so I went to add some power in as my speed was right at 90 mph. I then checked the RWY numbers to see if they were moving up or down in field of view. I added small amount of power and noticed rough running engine. I looked at control levers to make sure I had adjusted proper control and saw that mixture and prop were full forward and throttle was where I had just put it. I said out loud that it did not seem right and CFI agreed. I said we are not landing here or aborting landing or something to that effect and intended to abort the landing and add full power. At that time CFI said "I have the plane" or something to that effect and pushed the throttle forward and checked all levers were full forward. The engine quit either just before or just after he pushed throttle forward. I said that I would shift tanks as CFI verified and said Fuel Pump switch was in ON position. I shifted from Right to Left tank with no change in engine noise or thrust. We then both realized that we likely going to end up landing in the location of a ditch, a fence and an upslope embankment at the south end of RWY 36 which was not the best option. CFI commenced S-turns in order to land shorter as I looked for any hazards to landing in the field. As I mentally went through the engine out and power off landing checklist, there was insufficient time to conduct other fuel starvation troubleshooting actions before touchdown. We both noted that we were about to touch down in the field in a good location and CFI maintained aircraft stability to the ground about 1 second later. I estimate that rough running to touchdown was 20 seconds or less.

After touchdown, we looked around and made sure each other was okay without severe bleeding, pain, etc. We heard ELT in our headsets. CFI turned off all switches including master and ignition. I shifted fuel

tanks to off. There was no smoke nor smell of fuel. We then used cell phones to call 911, KMDQ, Redstone Arsenal Flying Activity, 1800 WX Brief, etc and gathered our flight bags and exited the aircraft.

While I did not get final Hobbs time, I estimate that total flight time was 45-60 minutes.

Due to stress and rapidity with which this all occurred, the above is cited as my best recollection at the time of writing and is certainly subject to mental error.