

Heidi Kemner
Senior Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

Date: May 27, 2023

Subject: ERA23FA247

Contact: Dara Wallshein
Flight School Owner
Airmax Aviation

In a conversation, Ms. Wallshein stated the following:

The student pilot was close to taking her checkride. The purpose of the flight was to go out and practice for the checkride. The flight school is a Part 61 flight school. The lesson was scheduled to start at 1000, but the student pilot was running late due to a family event, so they began the lesson at 1100.

Ms. Wallshein purchased the airplane for the flight school on May 4, 2023. The airplane was previously owned by a private individual, who passed away about a year ago due to cancer. His wife was selling the airplane. The airplane did not fly much between the last owner and when the airplane was purchased. The previous owners misplaced the maintenance logbooks, so she was given an affidavit indicating when the logbooks were located, they would be shipped to her.

The flight school mechanic did a prebuy inspection a few days before the purchase. He spent about 5 hours of time going through the airplane. Ms. Wallshein bought the airplane through a broker in the area.

When asked if the student had any problems in her flight lessons, Ms. Wallshein stated that she had about 5 hours of flight time with the student. She had a little trouble retaining information, but she was working on getting her certificate. The student had used 3 different instructors since she started flying in November of 2022.

When asked if there was a discrepancy log for the airplane and she stated that it did not.

Since she purchased the airplane on May 4, the airplane had flown about 65 hours.

She also commented that the accident flight was the first flight of the day.

When asked if she knew what runway they were departing from, she stated that they departed from runway 04. Furthermore, she saw that the airplane made a right turn on FlightAware and that the traffic pattern at the airport for all runways was left traffic for airplanes. She added that they would not turn to the crosswind leg of the traffic pattern until about 500 ft above ground level, but on FlightAware she saw that the airplane never made it above 300 ft, indicating it turned below 500 ft agl.

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Date: May 26, 2023

Subject: ERA23FA247 - Witness Interview Transcripts from Sheriff

Contact: Detective Gomez
Palm Beach Sheriff Office

In a bodycam video, Detective Gomez interviewed Jordan Moss. A partial transcript of the video is below. Speaker 1 is Detective Gomez. Speaker 2 is Jordan Moss.

Speaker 1 - All, uh, Mr. Moss, right? Yes. Uh, just state your full name for me please.

Speaker 2 - Jordan Moss.

Speaker 1 - Okay. Cool. Thank you. All right, Mr. Moss, um, just hold up the right hand please. Do you swear affirm a statement? You're about the right is the truth, so we, God, I do. Okay. All right. Mr. Moss, can you just tell me, um, first of all, uh, a little bit about, uh, what you were doing here when you witnessed the, as the plane crash? Yeah,

Speaker 2 - I'm a flight instructor here. Okay. Uh, I had already had a flight previous to this, this morning and I was, uh, out pre-flight with another student getting ready to go fly. Okay. Um, I was on the ramp over there when the, uh, crash happened. Um, and I saw the whole thing from when it was taking off. Okay. Uh, so they started taking off runway four. Um, that was a runway that was in use at the time. Okay. Uh, and they were climbing out and I, I, I don't know why I was watching, but I was watching the entire thing and they started slowly banking and they were kind of steep as they were climbing out. Uh, and then they started increasing their bank and

as, as that was happening, I kind of thought that maybe they lost their engine because it looked like they were trying to turn back to a runway.

Speaker 2 - Okay. Um, and then as I started, like walking towards it, cuz I didn't know if the hell was happening, uh, I could hear their engine still on because it was turning back towards me. Okay. Um, it sounded like the engine was at full throttle. Uh, so as an instructor here, what I'm pretty sure what happened was that the airplane stalled the increaser angle of attack too high. Um, and then they just started, you know, they, it would be a stall spin, so one of the wings stalled faster than the other one and they started just going over off to the side. They started to bank to the right. Uh, and it just kept increasing, increasing. They were runway four here and takes off and they just kept increasing their bank to the right here. Okay. Uh, and it went yeah, just straight into the ground. Straight into

Speaker 1 - The ground. Huh. Okay. Do you know the individuals that were flying?

Speaker 2 - I, I don't know them personally. Um, I know the flight school, I, you know, I hear them talk to that plane all the time. Um, so I, I deal with that plane all the time. I don't know exactly who was in the plane. Okay. Um, I, I don't know how many people, if it was two people, it would be an instructor and a student more than likely. Okay. Uh, if it was just one person, it was probably a student, which I'm hoping that's not the case, that it was just a student that was, you know, whatever. But, uh, uh, obviously I'd rather be one person to two, but, you know, you know what I'm saying? Sure. Uh, yeah, it just, I, I, I deal with them all the time. I know who they are. It's the flight school. That's not my flight school, but it's either flight school over here, so I talk to them all the time.

Speaker 1 - Okay. And, um, what drew your attention to the plane initially when, um, I guess you,

Speaker 2 - Like I said, I don't, I mean, I, I always, when I'm on the ramp, I always kind of just look at who's taking off. Just I, you know, I also to see what runways and used store. I just kind of watched Sure. The airplanes that are taking off as an instructor here. Okay. And then I just kept watching it and they caught my eye because they kept increasing their bank at an extremely low altitude. They were less than a hundred feet and they were at a bank of over at one point over 90 degrees. They were completely sideways. Okay. Um, so, which would indicate, uh, you know, uh, stall spin. Okay. Um, and like I said, I, I thought at first that they just lost their engine, but as you know, what we're supposed to, if we lose our engine at that low of an altitude, just go straight ahead. Sure. Uh, because that's what happens if you lose your engine and you try and turn around, you don't have enough altitude and you're

gonna stall, you don't have enough lift. Okay. So I, I thought they were, you know, but then I heard the engine, so I just figured, you know, they probably stalled the increaser of the attack too high unless maybe they were having engine problems. But I didn't hear any kind of struggles with the engine at all. It sounded like it was at full throttle the entire time.

Speaker 1 - Okay. Okay. Um, and the flight logs or the flight plan will be maintained in the front office? Yeah,

Speaker 2 - The, uh, I believe it's Air Max is the flight school, which is the, like by the main FBO over there, Air Max. Okay. Yeah.

Speaker 1 - And do you know if this is a, a chartered plane or a

Speaker 2 - Rental? No, it's a, it's a, uh, like an instructed plane.

Speaker 1 - Okay. So it belongs to Air Max? Yeah. Okay, sir. Anything else? Uh, Mr. Mos? No,

Speaker 2 - That's, that's about it. Pretty much it. Okay. Yeah, I, well I, you know, I need to talk to, I'm assuming somebody from the FAA too, cuz I know this guy that's the witness is a student and he didn't know what happened. He just saw it, but, okay.

In a bodycam video, Detective Gomez interviewed Monica Neuparth. A partial transcript of the video is below. Speaker 1 is Detective Gomez. Speaker 2 is Monica Neuparth.

Speaker 1 - Okay. All right, Mr. Monica, uh, just so hold your right hand. Do you swear or affirm that the statement you're about to lie is the truth, so I help you God?

Speaker 2 - Yes, it is. Okay, cool.

Speaker 1 - Awesome. All right. Um, so I just, uh, arrived here. I don't even have a case number. Um, I was gonna assist, uh, some other detectives with the investigation here into, uh, the plane crash. Can you just tell me what, what you saw?

Speaker 2 - Yeah, so I was over here, uh, pre plighting my plane. Okay. And we were about to go, but I saw this plane. It was even on a takeoff or go around. It was right above the runway. Right. Okay. And it went into a steep turn. Okay. Probably stalled the plane. Okay. Okay. The engine was still on. I heard the engine the whole time. Okay. So I don't think there was an engine failure. Okay. They went into a really

steep turn. It was about sideways stalled, spun down to the ground, and it crashed. And then exploded.

Speaker 1 - Okay. Um, so you're not sure if it was taken off or landing?

Speaker 2 - No, because these planes were in the way. Okay. So I didn't know. Well, I know it was taking off. I just don't know if it was already touched down and then went again. Gotcha. Or if it was going around, hadn't touched down yet. Okay. Okay.

Speaker 1 - Um, do you know, um, anybody in the plane?

Speaker 2 - No. Do you know that they're, um, Air Max Aviation cause it was a tail number three kilo victor that I hear all the time. Okay. Cuz I work at Palm Beach Flight Training, so I know kind of the planes around here.

Speaker 1 - Gotcha. Um, and when you first, um, what, what drew your attention to the plane? Were you just looking that way or? No,

Speaker 2 - I saw it. It was like, I saw it kind of go really, really steep climb and then started to turn, so I noticed it, you know, cause I'm like, why is this guy doing such a steep turn right here? And then I just realized like right when they got into the, it was like sideways. I was like, oh, they're about to crash. Okay. So I saw my other instructor, he was preflighting as well. He's a witness. He's over there. Okay. Um, and we both looked at each other and we both get on the phone and call and start running towards them. Okay.

Speaker 1 - What was the name of uh, the other instructor?

Speaker 2 - Jordan Moss. Jordan Moss. He's over there by the crash. I was

Speaker 1 - About to stay over there when they, um, got into the steep climb. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Um, how, what would you say their altitude was from the runway?

Speaker 2 - Probably about 300 feet. It was really low. Yeah, really low. Really low.

Speaker 1 - Okay. Yeah,

Speaker 2 - They had just taken off, so it was really, really low.

Speaker 1 - Okay. Yeah. Um, and from the time that you first noticed them to the time that the actual crash happened, when would you say the elapsed time was?

Speaker 2 - Oh God, probably it was, it all happened really, really fast. Could 10 seconds, you know. Okay. Could

Speaker 1 - Be

Speaker 2 - Really, really fast, but, you know, things happen like this and I couldn't really tell you for sure how fast it really was.

Speaker 1 - Oh,

Speaker 2 - I'm in a split second in my brain. Okay.

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Subject: Summary of Emails from eyewitnessreport@ntsb.gov

In an email dated May 26, 2023, Mr. Jan Nordqvist stated the following in an email:

I just wanted to let you know that I did see what was almost certainly the lead up to today's (5/26) fatal crash at KLNA at around 11:18am EST. I am currently taking helicopter lessons at Palm Beach Helicopters and was performing a preflight inspection outside of a nearby hangar at the school when I did see a plane make a strange take off. It accelerated down runway 04 and descended to perhaps 50' before ascending somewhat and seemingly leveling off before being obscured from view by the hangar. Shortly after I saw people being agitated and getting in vehicles heading out towards the field, which caused me to walk out further on the tarmac where I saw a plane on fire some distance down runway 16.

Given the timing and the color of the plane I am 99.5% confident that the crashed plane was indeed the same plane that I saw making the takeoff. My personal guess is that the plane stalled, either from losing engine power, or ascending to steep and then made a sharp right turn, perhaps in an attempt to land on runway 16.

In an email dated May 26, 2023, Ms. Krystin Weiss stated the following in an email:

My boyfriend and I witnessed the plane this morning on our way to JFK (hospital). The plane was flying west to east and then made a sharp knife bank to the south and did a 180 degree turn facing north and hit the ground.

In an email dated May 27, 2023, Ms. Lizaan Wennick stated the following in an email:

My name is Lizaan Wennick.

I'm camping at John Prince Park Campground.

I sat on the floor of my RV with the door open, facing the water. I witnessed the plane on its side (top of plane facing me) almost touching the trees. Then it turned/angled right going along the fence line between the airport and campground where it disappeared behind the trees where it crashed. I ran over immediately. I took 2 videos [after the accident]. One at 11:21am and another at 11:26am.

My mom and I would describe what we heard, as the plane went by as "engine failure".