

Joshua Young
Air Safety Investigator
AS-ERA

Date: 2/7/2023
Subject: ERA23LA124, Witness Interview
Contact: Sheldon Heatherington

Mr. Heatherington was contacted by phone on February 7, 2023, the following is a summary of the conversation had between the IIC and Mr. Heatherington.

- He was on final approaching the airport and observed the accident airplane takeoff
- At about 200-300 ft the pilot of the accident airplane “pushed over hard” leveling off and then called a MAYDAY over CTAF stating he had an engine failure
- Did the takeoff look normal?
 - It looked steeper than normal, he could see the whole top of the airplane.

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Date: 2/7/2023

Subject: ERA23LA124, Witness Interview

Contact: Austin Beverly, Mechanic, Pray Aviation

Mr. Beverly was contacted by phone on February 7, 2023. The following is a summary of the conversation had between the IIC and Mr. Beverly.

- He heard the takeoff, then heard sputtering from the engine
- The airplane banked to the left, likely trying to land back on the airfield
- Airplane slid backwards into the fuel truck
- Airplane "lost engine" at a couple hundred feet.
- Did not see any smoke
- Heard a "couple of backfires"
- May have gotten the engine back for a couple of seconds before impact
- Did not sound like the engine had power on impact
- He had talked with the pilot Thursday of the prior week
 - Did the pilot mention any problems the airplane was having?
 - Just mentioned that he had had some magneto problems a couple months ago but that those problems were fixed.

- Thinks the airplane was on the field to have work done by Flight Level Avionics

Feb 07th, 2023

Dear to whom it may concern,

My account of the aircraft accident on Feb 6th, 2023 at Peter Prince Airport in Milton, FL is as follows:

I heard an urgent shout from one of my coworkers around 2:30 pm from inside the reception room at AMS flight school. It took me about 3 seconds to rush to the front door just in time to see a small airplane dive into the ground. It appeared the airplane was at about a 45 degree bank (I cannot recall left or right), and approximately 15 degrees pitch down as it hit the ground. From my point of view it was hard to see, but the airplane might have hit the side of the hanger as it crashed. I saw parts and pieces fly up off the ground and then everything was quiet for a couple of seconds until people from the east side of the airport started rushing toward the site. I expected to see flames or smoke, but nothing blew up. Due to some obstacles (I believe vehicles) constricting my view I was not able to see if anyone exited the airplane or what remained of it.

I am a full time flight instructor at AMS flight school, and have been teaching for about a week. However, I have been involved in aviation for about 5 years.

Christiana Jankeviciute

[REDACTED]

Pensacola, FL 32504

Date: 7 Jan. 2023

To whom it may concern,

As requested by FAA official Nina McBride, I am writing a statement of what I saw

And heard on 6 Jan. 2023 at 2:30 PM.

Around 2:05ish the owner of N330PC was on the flight line with his aircraft doing what looked to be a preflight, I was at the front of my shop with good view of where he was parked at on the ramp (south east corner). I heard the aircraft start up and taxi out heading to the north end of the runway to take off runway 18, the engine was running smooth and sounded like it was running normal, I could hear some of his run up and never heard anything that sounded wrong, I then heard him when he had full power taking off and I'm guessing he was around 250 or 300 feet and the engine started to run very rough popping, at that point I stepped out from under the shop door and seen the aircraft and at that point the engine went quite, it looked to me like he still had nose up of the aircraft and within seconds the left wing went down and the aircraft turned very hard to the left and down wards, around what looked to be 75 feet from the ground the engine started back up and he impacted the ground first and was out of my view, I jumped on my golf cart and took off to the crash which at that point he had impact the second time into the JetA fuel truck. There were several people that had run out to check and help, the owner was pulled out of the crashed plane and carried over and laid down on the grass until the fire department and rescue arrived and took over.

Thanks

Stacy Blackburn

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted signature]

Ronald Keith McDonald

February 7, 2023

[REDACTED]

Maintenance; Parts Room Associate

AMS Flight School

Peter Prince Field Airport

[REDACTED]

Milton, Florida 32583

[REDACTED]

On Monday February 6, 2023, I was assigned to AMS Flight School's Maintenance administrative office located west of the runway at Peter Prince Field Airport in Milton, Florida. At approximately 2:30pm I heard a loud noise sounding like an aircraft engine running rough. I proceeded to leave the office to investigate the noise. Looking to the East I witness a single engine aircraft above the runway heading South make an abrupt left bank changing the direction of the aircraft to the Northeast and rapidly losing altitude. The tip of the left wing contacted the ground making the aircraft cartwheel. The aircraft's forward movement ceased after contacting a ground service truck. This concludes my report.

[REDACTED]

Ronald Keith McDonald

February 7, 2023

At approximately 2:30 P.M. on February 6, 2023, I was working maintenance in the front of the AMS flight school maintenance hangar. I was paying close attention to the traffic pattern at Milton (Peter Price Field 2R4) when I noticed what looked to be a small, off-white, tailwheel airplane that I assumed to be experimental performing a takeoff that I perceived to be at a slightly aggressive pitch attitude. After a few seconds it looked like the pilot leveled off the plane into either a less aggressive climb, or cruise. A few seconds later the engine sounded like it was beginning to sputter, and I could visibly see the speed decrease as the engine seemed to lose all power. At this point the airplane was approximately mid-field, and if I had to estimate 150-300 feet above ground level. The plane remained level for a couple seconds and then I watched what appeared to be the aircraft decrease pitch attitude and bank hard left simultaneously. The aircraft struck (from my view across the runway) what looked like the taxi way hitting the nose/leftwing and began a short cartwheeling motion counterclockwise. The viewpoint was too far away to see what/where the aircraft hit.

Kyle Kelly

AMS Flight Instructor/A&P Mechanic



On 02-06-23 at about 2:30pm, while standing in front of the AMS FBO building, I hear a plane take off on Runway 18 headed south. At about 150ft, the engine begins to sputter multiple times before shutting off. The plane levels again and the engine starts, at this point the plane begins to turn east in an attempt to land. The plane struck the ground on the east side of the field, striking on the nose and left wing before flipping 180 degrees and striking the front of the fuel truck.

Jonathan Mace

AMS Lineman

