

Jake Whelan

Statement for July 27th

My flight lesson was scheduled for 10:30am, I advised my instructor, Jarret, the day before I would be 15-20 minutes late. I was 15 minutes later than expected on top of that so he said he would preflight the plane in advance.

Upon arrival, Jarret informed me the plane was ready to go so we hopped in and discussed the flight for the day. This would be my first lesson at a grass strip and first time at Laney's. This was also a lesson in the Cessna 152 since it was only my third time in the aircraft, my first being three days prior to the crash.

We taxied to the run-up area and performed a normal run-up checklist. We took off at roughly 11:55am-12pm departing runway 32 out of 14A, performing a normal takeoff to the North.

After departing and executing the left turn-out departure procedure for 14A, we listened to the AWOS at KSVH. We then flew direct Laney's and entered a direct entry left downwind for runway 13.

Upon reaching final, we began our decent with normal procedures, Jarret instructed me through a short/soft field landing (which we had briefed prior to doing so) and full flaps were applied in the white arc. Jarret said we were too high and too fast early on, advised me so, and said to expect to go around.

Once we cleared the trees, Jarret informed me to go around when we were about a quarter way down the runway and still descending (roughly 50ft above the runway at least). At this point, we were still at least 400ft before the first row of hangars on the right side of runway 13, with the majority of the runway still available.

Before going around, we were at full flaps, about 70 kts, Jarret told me to go around, I confirmed with him to go around, and he said yes. I applied full power, pitched for wings level but noticed we were still slightly descending so I pitched for Vx. We began climbing but noticed the plane was struggling to maintain a positive rate of climb at all. After about five seconds and it becoming clear we weren't climbing fast enough to clear the trees, Jarret said "my flight controls," I said "your flight controls" and he assumed control of the plane immediately. Since there were full flaps, Jarret pitched for 50 in an attempt to clear the first set of trees.

I never once heard the stall horn nor did I feel an experience of loss of lift. With Jarret in control I began looking in front and beside of us to look for possible opportunities to divert but it was inevitable we were headed for the trees straight ahead. Our landing gear clipped the top of the trees and we briefly flew for another few seconds.

I then felt a noticeable drop in speed and altitude as we ran into several more trees which slowed us down and flipped us forward into a vertical dive to the ground.

After we contacted the ground, I never lost consciousness, looked to see if Jarret and myself had any major injuries and then unbuckled my seatbelt the best I could since I was hanging upside down. Jarret and I preceded to climb out the right seat door and I immediately asked the neighbor who came outside to call 911.

After a few seconds I ran back into the plane to shut off the fuel valve and emergency services arrived within 10 minutes.