

## Inspector Statement

I was informed on Sept. 06, 2023 that aircraft N772KS, RV-8 had departed Umatilla Airport (X23) on Sept. 05, 2023 at approx. 7:40pm and lost power and crashing in the "East Lake" next to the Umatilla Airport. The pilot was able to escape and swam to shore as aircraft sunk to the lake bottom. Pilots name is Ethan Ensley and Police Chief Adam Bolton was on scene.

I spoke to pilot Ethan Ensley on 9/6/2023 and he advised he departed Sanford Airport on Sept. 05, 2023 and landed at Umatilla Airport and fueled aircraft. He departed approx. 7:40pm and while taking off at approx. 150' AGL the engine quit and crashed into the lake at the end of runway.

I spoke to Chief Adam Bolton on Sept. 06, 2023 and he met me at the accident scene at approx. 0930 and pointed out the crash area on lake, at approx. 1030 I was able to get on the Sheriffs boat and found the sunk aircraft at 28-55' 53.84N and 81-39' 4.90W at approx. 15' deep.

On Sept. 07, 2023 I met with Seat-Tow and Florida Air Salvage near accident scene on East Lake, Sea-Tow was able to float the aircraft to the top of water and tow the aircraft to the land where Florida Air Salvage was able to retrieve aircraft from lake to shore. There was damage to R/H Wing from impacting the lake. We were able to recover aircraft Maint. Records/logs from aircraft. Many photos were taking during this aircraft recovery and once the aircraft was on land, the wings were removed for transporting aircraft to Jacksonville, FL where Florida Air Salvage is located.

On Sept. 15, 2023 I met with Lauren August from IAT Insurance Group at Florida Air Salvage in Jacksonville, FL at 9:00am as she requested to take a few "photos" prior to our inspection and investigation and she left at 9:30am. We began our inspection and investigation and removed all spark-plugs, we observed that the "upper" spark plug leads went to the Electronic Plasma Igniter and all had automotive spark-plugs installed. The "lower" spark-plug leads went to the Magneto and all had aviation spark-plugs installed. The #3 Cylinder had both spark-plugs severely corroded and the lower plug smelled like fuel and oil was present. We rotated the prop and found compression in all cylinders.

We verified the Fuel Selector was operating properly and we found continuity from fuel tanks to fuel selector valve and to the fuel boost-pump. We found a broken fuel line from fuel-boost pump to the fuel sump [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. We also verified the Fuel Boost Pump operated. Please see submitted photos for this finding.

[REDACTED]  
Inspector Joseph W. Gramzinski/ASI  
Orlando FSDO-15