

Ryan Enders
Aviation Accident Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: May 28, 2024

Subject: ERA24LA229 Passenger Interview

Contact: Elizabeth Ross, Front Seat Passenger

Elizabeth was contacted via telephone at [REDACTED] regarding the accident of N818K. Below is a summary of the conversation:

Elizabeth was asked how she was doing and if she could go through the events leading up to the accident. She stated that she does not have a lot of memory regarding the accident. She remembers showing up to the airport. Dan (her boyfriend) went up first with Mark (the pilot) and she remembers their flight. She watched their landing then she and Dan traded spots. She was in the front seat, and she remembers taxiing out. She barely remembers the takeoff.

Elizabeth was asked if the engine started up normal. She replied with yes, no concerns from her. She was asked if she remembers what runway they used and she replied that it was a grass strip near Naylor Mill Road, runway 35. Once lined up on the runway she does not remember anything beyond that. She was asked if she could remember the pilot applying full power for takeoff, but she could not remember beginning the takeoff roll.

Elizabeth was asked at what point she regains her memory. She remembers the ambulance ride but described it as a "dream". She mostly remembers being in the hospital.

Elizabeth was asked if there is anything else she could think of that may assist in the investigation and she replied that she could not.

Elizabeth was asked if she is a pilot. She responded that she is a pilot with a CFI, CFII, and multiengine pilot but does not have a tailwheel endorsement. She knows the pilot because he is a mechanic at the airport where she is a CFI.

She was asked for her email address, and she provided [REDACTED]

-End of Conversation.

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Date: July 29, 2024

Subject: ERA24LA229 Passenger Interview (follow-up)

Contact: Elizabeth Ross, Front Seat Passenger

Elizabeth was contacted by telephone for a follow-up interview regarding the accident of N818K. The following is a summary of that conversation:

It was explained to Elizabeth that the airframe and engine were examined and that there were additional questions for her. Elizabeth was asked if she could remember anything new about the accident. She replied that it was hard to tell if she was remembering anything new or was speculating about what could have happened. She stated that she remembered the airplane "felt slow and mushy" but could not remember what phase of flight that was. She stated that it could have been because this was a slower than normal airplane for her to fly in.

Elizabeth was asked if she took control of the airplane at all. She replied "no".

Elizabeth was asked if she looked at the instruments in front of her at all while in the airplane and she responded that she might have during the taxi but she was looking outside during the climb.

Elizabeth was asked if she remembered the pilot adding gas to the airplane and she said that she did and that it was from a 5 gallon "tub" in the hangar. She was asked if she knew what kind of gas was added and she replied that she did not and that he had several other canisters in the hangar.

The findings and status of the airplane examination were discussed with her. It was discussed that we did not have any findings during the airplane examination.

Elizabeth was asked when her boyfriend would be available for a discussion, and she stated that he left work at 2pm today.

-End of conversation

Elizabeth called back at 12:25 to discuss that on the flight prior to hers, the pilot taxied the airplane into a runway marker with the left wing. She stated that the wing did not appear to have been damaged. She asked if there were any problems with the left aileron or controls that were found during the airplane examination, and she was told that there were no control discrepancies found during the examination.

She further stated that she had a video of the airplane taxiing just prior to contacting the runway marker and that she would send the video via text message. \

-End of conversation

Ryan Enders
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Eastern Region

Date: July 31, 2024

Subject: ERA24LA229 Passenger Interview (follow-up 2)

Contact: Elizabeth Ross, Front Seat Passenger

Elizabeth was contacted by telephone for a follow-up interview regarding the accident of N818K. The following is a summary of that conversation.

Elizabeth was asked if she had time to answer a couple follow-up questions. She replied that she did. She was asked to describe the details from the point of the engine starting to the last thing she could remember. Elizabeth asked if she could call right back.

Elizabeth called back a few minutes later and the same question was asked. She responded that she entered the airplane and fastened her seat belt. The engine started and it sounded fine, no problems. The pilot taxied to the end of the runway. Elizabeth commented that she knew a mag (magneto) check was performed before the previous flight but could not remember if one was done before the accident flight because the engine was only shut down for a couple of minutes. They lined up at the end of the runway. The pilot applied full throttle and they rotated. She was looking outside to the right; the airplane was turning right to go around trees at the end of the runway. She commented that she remembered feeling slow. Elizabeth commented that she remembered shadowing the rudder pedals for the takeoff and taxi.

Elizabeth was asked if she remembers anything prior to getting into the airplane. She replied "yes". She was asked if there was any discussion for her to fly during the flight and she replied "no, not that I remember". She was asked if she had planned on flying for any part of the flight and she said "no, just hoping for a joyride". She commented that Mark (the pilot) talked to Dan (previous passenger) about establishing the transfer of controls by kicking the back of the seat. She thought that was a clever way

to transfer controls in this airplane. She stated that the same conversation did not happen with her. Elizabeth was asked if Dan flew the airplane during his flight and she said that he did when they were level in cruise but that he did not do the takeoff or landing.

Elizabeth was asked if she was present when the pilot and Dan had the transfer of controls conversation and she replied "no". She was asked when the pilot and Dan had the transfer of controls conversation and she said that she was not sure. Elizabeth was asked if her and Dan rode to the airport together that morning and she replied that they did.

Elizabeth was asked if she was flying the airplane and she replied "no, I was not". She was asked if she was planning on flying the airplane and she replied "no".

Elizabeth was asked if she had any questions or comments at this time. Elizabeth replied that she was speculating about the accident for a while. She stated that if they were going to do a transfer of controls, the pilot would not have done that in a critical phase of flight like the takeoff.

Elizabeth was asked when they were in the right hand turn after rotating, were they still climbing. She replied, yes. She was asked if she remembered the airplane leveling out and she replied that she does not remember. She was asked how high she was at the point that she last remembers, and she replied a "couple hundred feet".

Elizabeth was asked if she knows the pilot well and she replied that she knows him well. She was asked if he has any medical conditions that she was aware of and she replied no, just the postaccident items.

She was asked if she had any additional comments or questions and she replied "no".

-End of conversation