



Joshua Young
Air Safety Investigator
AS-ERA

Date: 7/24/2024

Subject: ERA24LA306, Flight Instructor Statement

Contact: Jeremy Upperman, Flight Instructor, Middle Georgia State University

Mr. Upperman provided the following statement to Federal Aviation Administration Inspector Flores via electronic mail. Inspector Flores then forwarded that statement to the IIC.

"On 7/10/2024 I Jeremy Upperman was doing a review flight with Tyron Johnson for his CFI EOC. We were in the pattern in Cochran practicing landings. On downwind we were talking about how to improve what to say to the students to reduce student confusion. We were abeam the numbers when I saw two large vultures or buzzards. When I first saw them I wasn't sure if they were flying out of our path but when I saw they were in it I told Johnson, "Birds". At which point I took controls and attempted to climb above them. Normally birds dive and both of us thought they were going into a dive which lead me to pulling up. I did not add power due to the short window there was before impact. When I pulled up it looked to me that the bird started to climb up as well. When I saw this I then attempted to lift that wing up above the bird but we still impacted with the bird.

After impacted I kept the controls and said, "My controls", just in case he still had his hands on the controls. I made a radio call to dispatch with the attempt to let them know so they could get started on getting a new plane to Cochran as well as letting maintenance know so they can get ready to deal with the plane. I then swapped to Cochran Unicom and made a radio call stating I was coming in for a PAM

landing. I was not entirely sure if there was anyone in the area and was hoping that it would get them out of the way so I could land safely.

I came in the same as a power off landing and landed on runway 29. After landing I made a radio call that I was on the ground and when I was clear the runway I made the radio call as well.

On the ground I then swapped back to Dispatch to let them know we were on the ground safe and answered a few question. After shut down I called Nicholas Cataldi and went from there.

Both the student and I were safe no physical injuries, just shaken up.

Regards,

Jeremy Upperman"