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Date: 08/06/2024

Subject: ERA24LA332 - Midair Collision

Contact: David King – Pilot in formation behind N108CH and N1041U

The following is an excerpt from an email from the pilot that was last in formation during the midair collision. The pilot was asked to provide a statement of events leading up to and including the midair collision between N108CH and N1041U from his point of view:

Airshow incident on 7/28/2024 at Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome

At 13:00 hours I attended our airshow briefing where the pilots were assigned aircraft and acts for the day.

At 13:20 hours I briefed the pilots for the formation of our bombing raid act, assigned positions in the formation to individual pilots, and the type of formations to be flown.

Our first formation pass was to be a "V" formation followed by a switch over to a left echelon and a right break to an individual pass from south to north to drop our dummy bombs on our village.

For our "V" formation, I had Rob Williams in his Stearman in the lead, followed by Brian Coughlin in the Fleet 1, followed by Cliff Daly in his Great Lakes then Dave Trost in his Bucker Jungman, all off the leaders left wing. On the inside right of the formation was Brad Gould in his Great Lakes with me in my Tiger Moth.

On completion of our first pass in the "V" formation, the two inside aircraft would switch over to the left side to form an echelon formation for the second pass and break to the right to begin our individual bombing passes.

As the formation turned to the east, Brad Gould and I departed the "V" formation to form an echelon. Brad Gould went underneath the formation and I was going over the top of the formation to take our position in the echelon formation, which had Brad Gould take his position on Dave Trost's left wing and myself on the outside of the formation on Brad Gould's left wing.

As the formation turned to the north, it was the Stearman, Fleet 1, Great Lakes, Bucker Jungman, Great Lakes and Tiger Moth in a left echelon. As the last man in the formation, I was able to see the first three aircraft break to the right (east) and then observed Dave Trost in the Bucker Jungman pull up and touch Brad Gould in his Great Lakes with the top wing of the Bucker Jungman touching the landing gear of the Great Lakes. I watched Brad Gould in the Great Lakes pull upward and to the east while Dave Trost in the Bucker Jungman started a slow descent turning to the north west. At that time, I decided to follow the Bucker Jungman to see if he could make it safely back to the runway. As I followed the Bucker Jungman I could see it was not gaining altitude and was slowly descending towards the trees on the west side of the runway behind the crowd line. At this point I was above the Bucker Jungman off his right wing. As the Bucker Jungman slowed down, I was unable to stay above and behind him and lost sight of him under my left lower wing. I did a slow "S" turn to see if I could find the Bucker Jungman, but without success I had to assume it went into the trees.

At this time I followed the remaining formation and landed, then put my Tiger Moth in its hanger.

After reviewing my report, please feel free to reach out to me with any questions.

David King

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