



Lucas Winn
Aviation Accident Investigator
Aviation Safety, Eastern Region

Date: December 18, 2024

Subject: ERA25LA077, Pilot Interview

Contact: Andrew Buck, Pilot

I spoke to Andrew Buck about an accident that happened on December 12, 2024, involving a Pietenpol Aircamper, Registration Number N161DW.

Mr. Buck stated that after refueling his airplane, he attempted to start the engine, but the battery was old and too weak to turn the prop over fast enough to start the engine. He got out and placed standard general aviation low profile chocks under the wheels, set the throttle, and hand propped the airplane. He did not have anyone helping him and he did not tie the airplane down. As soon as the engine started, it had enough power to jump the chocks and taxied itself into a closed hangar door.

I asked him why he didn't seek maintenance support for the low battery. He stated that the battery is difficult to get to in that airplane and he didn't want to take the airplane apart to get to it.

I asked if he had any previous formal training on hand-propping an airplane. He stated that a mechanic showed him how to do it once, but he had no formal instruction on how to properly perform the procedure or the safety precautions.

Mr. Buck has since educated himself on the proper procedures and safety precautions for hand propping an airplane.

He stated that prior to the accident, there were no issues with the starter itself, just the battery.