



Justin Coe
Air Safety Investigator
AS-ERA

Date: 10/16/2025

Subject: ERA25LA379 Pilot/Flight Instructor Interview

Contact: [REDACTED]

Mr. [REDACTED] was contacted via telephone to discuss the accident of N533SE. He was asked to provide a summary of the day's events.

Mr. [REDACTED] explained that this was his and the student's first flight in the aircraft, which was recently purchased. He stated that his student was getting his tailwheel endorsement. Initially the flight was planned for approximately a week ago, but was cancelled due to weather. The aircraft was fueled and a weight and balance performed by the student before the initial, and ultimately cancelled, flight. The aircraft would be taking off at its maximum gross weight.

Mr. [REDACTED] explained that a preflight inspection was completed, the aircraft was taxied out to the runway for a mid-field departure, which provided about 4000' of runway. Mr. [REDACTED] was asked if any abnormalities were noted during the taxi or runup. He responded that magneto drop and carburetor heat were both checked, and that he did not observe any abnormalities. He was then asked if there were any mechanical problems that would have prevented flight, to which he responded that there were not.

He stated that the takeoff appeared normal at first, though he said acceleration was slow. He qualified that statement that since he had no experience in this particular aircraft, he did not think there were any problems and continued. He was asked to explain in detail the takeoff process, to which he responded that the general technique he uses is to apply forward pressure on the elevator to allow the tail to rise once there is sufficient airflow. He stated that the aircraft was rotated around 45mph, then flew for a "second or so" in ground effect and then began a climb at 55mph. He stated he provided light control inputs on the rudder and control stick during the takeoff. When asked, Mr. [REDACTED] stated that the engine noise appeared constant.

Mr. [REDACTED] explained that once reaching 50' the airplane appeared to level off, potentially even descending. The two pilots decided that it was safer to attempt to land on the runway than risk flying past the departure end of the runway, which has trees and a cliff. Mr. [REDACTED] took the controls, reduced power and lowered the nose. He noted that the plane "dropped quick" and he increased power just before touchdown.

When asked about his relevant experience, he stated that he has approximately 50 hours in a Kitfox which he said was similar in operation to N533SE. Mr. [REDACTED] also provided updated information related to the address listed on his medical.