



RECORD OF PHONE CONVERSATION

Kathryn Benhoff
Air Safety Investigator
AS-20; General Aviation Accident

Date: December 12, 2016
Person Contacted: Mr. Ralph Hutchins
NTSB Accident Number: GAA17CA090

Narrative:

The following is a synopsis of the information provided by Mr. Ralph Hutchins in a telephone conversation on this date: December 12, 2016.

- The pilot reported that to help him find the other aircraft in the traffic pattern he slipped the airplane so the back of the airplane went to the right. He also reported that he held this slip for “a while”.
- The pilot reported that he was too high, so he pulled the power to idle and he glided from downwind to final of the approach.
- He further reported that the airplane “apparently clipped the top branches” of a tree and landed prior to the runway blast pad.
- The pilot further reported that he was able to taxi the airplane to the tarmac under its own power and that the aircraft operator, Wisconsin Aviation, performed an engine examination and the engine ran “fine”.

The following is a synopsis of the information provided in a follow-up telephone conversation on January 19, 2017.

- The pilot reported that during his slip to search for traffic, he used left rudder and no aileron inputs. He repeated this technique multiple times during the left traffic pattern approach.
- He reported that after the engine surged and prior to hitting the tree, the engine was “sputtering”. He also reported that he “never heard any quiet” throughout the glide and landing.
- He further reported that after landing prior to the runway, the propeller continued to rotate and he switched the fuel selector to the right tank and was able to taxi to the tarmac under the airplane’s own power. He did not test the power prior to switching to the right fuel tank.
- The pilot reported that during his preflight inspection, he tested all fuel drains and did not observe any contaminants or debris.