



INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Elliott Simpson
Aviation Accident Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Interview Date November 27, 2017
Person Contacted: Westly (Jim) Hoffman
Accident Date: Nov 27, 2017
Registration Number: N6002Q

Narrative:

During a telephone conversation, Mr. Hoffman stated the following:

- Three weeks prior to the accident he had had filled both wing tanks, and estimated that after fueling they contained about 43 gallons of total fuel, and most likely more.
- At that time, he did not fill both tanks to capacity because there was slight seepage at the top of both tanks, which often resulted in fuel vapor entering the cabin. Typically, and in that instance, he filled the left tank just "short" of capacity and the right tank even lower because the leak appeared to be closer to the top of the right tank. The seepage had been a long-standing issue.
- He stated that he has a regular routine of 3 touch-and-goes in the pattern, which use about 0.2 to 0.3 hours of tach time per the EI electronic tachometer. He typically flies about ten of these flights before needing to refuel. He has a graduated stick for dipping the tanks, but only uses it when he judges the fuel levels to be approaching the 5-gallon mark.
- He estimated that since the last refueling, he had flown three trips in the pattern, with the right tank selected, and then a 0.7-hour flight on the left tank, during which he performed a GAMI lean test.
- For the accident flight, he removed the fuel filler caps and visually confirmed what appeared to be adequate amounts of fuel in each tank, but because he had recently purchased fuel, he did not dip the tanks. He sumped both wing tanks, and the fuel was clear and free of contaminants.
- The airplane was on level ground both at the time of fueling, and prior to the accident flight when he checked the tank levels.
- He switched to the right fuel tank and departed for what he planned to be the standard 3 touch-and-goes in the pattern.
- After the second takeoff, and just before turning cross wind, the engine lost all power.

- He performed a forced landing, and as the airplane approached the ground he switched to the left tank, and the engine immediately regained power. He was concentrating on flying the airplane rather losing control, and by the time the power had resumed he was at the level of the bushes. The airplane collided with a mesquite bush.
- After the accident, he looked into the left tank and it contained about 10-12 gallons of fuel, and the right tank was empty. He estimated that the right tank should have contained about 9 gallons. Neither tank was breached during the accident.
- He checked the airplane for fuel leaks after the accident and found none.
- He stated that there were no mechanical problems with the airplane that would have caused the accident, and that it could have been prevented if he dipped both fuel tanks prior to flight, and switched tanks earlier during the event.
- He stated that he was baffled as to why the left tank was empty, but concluded that his preflight routine should have included dipping the tanks each time.