



## RECORD OF CONVERSATION

**Howard Plagens**  
**Senior Air Safety Investigator**  
**Western Pacific Region**

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**Person Contacted:** Mark Ruston  
**Date:** 1-06-2016  
**Time:** 1000 MST  
**Subject:** WPR16FA046; YAK-52; N912EB; Alpine, WY

**Attendees:** Jackie Vanover      NTSB  
Matt Green      FAA Salt Lake City FSDO

### **Narrative:**

The following is a summary of statements made by Mr. Ruston, who was the accident passenger's father.

A group of three airplanes made a sightseeing trip over Yellowstone National Park. His daughter Mackensie flew on that trip with Owen Genzlinger, the accident pilot's (Reade Genzlinger) son. Reade was not part of that flight, but did have lunch with them prior to the flight, and Reade seemed sharp minded. Reade discussed formation flying and safety issues. Mark had known Reade for 4-5 years.

Mackensie was a private pilot, and had flown with Reade in the YAK on a previous occasion, and Mark knew that she desired to do so again.

The Genzlinger's hangar was on the opposite side of the runway from Mark's hangar, and each pilot went to their respective hangars after the Yellowstone trip. Mark observed Reade and Mackensie in the YAK preparing for a flight.

Mark decided to go flying again, so he departed, came around, and made a low approach. As he did this, he observed the YAK taxi, and then take off. The YAK departed to the west, and Mark later saw them doing loops. Owen departed after the YAK.

After flying around for a while, Mark landed on runway 13, and taxied for takeoff on runway 31, which was common practice at the airport. As he was holding short of 13 and facing southwest, he could see the YAK doing aerobatics; this was the last time that he saw the YAK. Owen called a 3 mile final for runway 13, so Mark took off on runway 31, and made an immediate 90 degree left turn. As Mark reached pattern altitude, he saw that Owen was now about 2 miles on a low

final. As he looked at Owen, he saw the debris field forming. Mark's son was in his back seat, and thought that something had fallen off Owen's airplane. There was a short burst of fire.

Mark immediately turned toward the site, and flew over it. He broadcast to Owen that the YAK was down. Owen went around, and started talking to someone on the ground. Mark heard no call from Reade, and observed that it was low light conditions with the sky slightly cloudy. There were high clouds to the north and west, which is where a ridge was. The ground was white. He then determined that he needed to land, and proceeded to the airport while Owen continued to fly over the site.



## RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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**Person Contacted:** Owen Genzlinger  
**Date:** 1-8-2016  
**Time:** 0800 MST  
**Subject:** WPR16FA046; YAK-52; N912EB; Alpine, WY

**Attendees:** Jackie Vanover      NTSB  
Matt Green      FAA Salt Lake City FSDO

### **Narrative:**

The following is a summary of statements made by Mr. Owen Genzlinger, who was the accident pilot's son.

Roger is the house caretaker, and will pick up the airplane's logbooks. We will establish contact to arrange a meeting at Alpine.

Owen performed his father Reade's flight review, and will provide a record of that.

He reported that Reade's primary physician was also his Aviation Medical Examiner.

#### 72-hour History Items for Reade

Reade didn't drink alcohol a lot. On New Year's Eve, he had maybe one or two beers. He had no alcohol the night before the accident.

He went to bed shortly after 2330 on New Year's Eve.

He had talked to his brother Joe several times during the previous 3 days, and Joe thought that he was in high spirits.

He was excited about a new woodworking shop that he had just built.

Normally, he would go to bed about 2200-2230, and arise about 0700 – 0800 the next morning.

He probably had his normal breakfast the day of the accident, eggs and an English muffin. He joined a group at a local restaurant for lunch consisting of a bowl of soup, salad, a few french fried potatoes, and water. He had been losing weight the last 2 years, and was careful about what he ate. The group was planning a sightseeing flight around Yellowstone National Park, and

arrived at the restaurant about 1145; it took about 1 hour to complete the meal. Reade provided insight on safety tips for the trip.

### Group Flight to Yellowstone Park

Several members of the group were going to fly the tour of Yellowstone in three airplanes. Reade didn't participate in that flight.

The group departed Alpine about 1300, and landed about 1530 after an uneventful 2.5 hour flight. Mackensie Ruston, the passenger in the YAK during the accident, had flown on that flight with Owen in a Husky that was yellow with black and blue accents.

Reade met Owen and Mackensie as Owen taxied the Husky to their hangar. Owen noted that the oil pan preheater was plugged in to the YAK indicating that Reade planned on flying it. Reade usually preflighted the airplane while that was happening. Owen did not see the preflight or observe a brief between his father and Mackensie, but said that his father was meticulous on his preflights.

Reade pulled the YAK out, and Mackensie smiled as she anticipated going for a ride in the airplane. She had ridden in the airplane the previous year, and Owen noted that she was familiar with the seat belt and canopy operation as he helped her strap in. The seat belt was a five-point harness, and the airplane was configured with a seatpack parachute that had two leg straps, a chest strap, and a right hand quick release.

Owen observed the run-up, and felt that it was normal; he did not see or hear anything that was unusual. The YAK departed to the north on runway 31 about 1530.

Reade usually climbed to get stabilized, and then did a teardrop maneuver back to south for a low pass about 40-50 feet above the runway.

On this flight, he climbed out to the west side of the reservoir.

It was a nice day, and everyone was returning home the next day, so Owen got back in his Husky for another flight.

As he got in the Husky, he heard the YAK calling its position doing aerobatics west of the airport.

Owen did a warmup, and took off to north.

He thought he saw Mark Ruston, Mackensie's father, make a low pass over the airport to the north direction. Thus, he was aware that Mark was in the air.

He was going up the east side of a reservoir; then decided to fly over the family house south of the valley to let his mom see the airplane. He saw his mom in the yard waving.

He started back to north. Where the Salt River starts by a bird sanctuary on the south side of the lake, he transitioned to north on the west side of the lake.

As he dropped over the lake to continue up towards McCoy Creek, he noted that the snow covered lake was very flat with no cracks, and the light was flat as well. As the lake expanded to the east, he could not tell visually exactly how high he was.

Going north, the lake started to crack, which helped height visualization. He continued north on the west side of lake to an open area boat ramp about 7 miles north of airport. He then transitioned to the east side of lake, and headed back south toward the airport.

Owen had been airborne about 30 minutes, so it was now about 1610.

He had the airport loaded in the GPS, and it indicated that he was about 5 miles out. He made a radio call that he was going to land to the south on runway 13.

Over the lake and about 100 – 200 feet while 3 miles out, he heard his father call, and knew he was lower than the YAK. He heard Mark make a radio call about taking off to the north and turning left to the west. Both had each other in sight.

He hadn't heard a call from the YAK in a while; the last radio call he remembered was a playful yellow husky better watch out. Verbiage such as this usually meant that his father was going to join up or flyby.

He kept the Husky wide open, and was going about 110 to 115 knots. He was expecting the YAK to join up to fly formation as they had done this a lot together. He needed to hold altitude and airspeed to facilitate the join up, and he changed his radio call from a landing to a low approach to the south. After join up and low approach, the YAK would typically break off.

Owen looked over his shoulder to watch the join up as his father would usually broadcast which side to join up (4 or 7 o'clock position). He didn't hear a radio call from his father. Then he heard Mark broadcast - Owen behind you. He kept looking for the YAK, but didn't see it, or hear his father call. He heard Mark say – Owen, Owen with each time more urgently and more stressed. It became obvious to Owen that something had not gone right. He thinks that Mark called his name three times. It was about 1 minute between the join up call from his father and Mark's transmission that the YAK was down.

He saw Mark on a northeast heading cutting behind him, and thought that if the YAK was there, Mark would cut between them. Owen did not see the YAK; he thought that it was far enough behind where he should be able to see it. He felt comfortable that he should be able to turn, and not have a collision. He made a right turn to follow Mark. As he arrived where Mark's airplane was, he saw a disturbance in the snow.

He pulled out his cell phone to call 911, but it didn't work because he was wearing his father's headset, which wasn't compatible. He climbed to 6,000 or 6,100 feet (about 500 agl) above Mark. Mark was circling really low over the site, and made two or three transmissions that it didn't look good. Owen could tell from Mark's tone of voice that Mark needed to land. After a second circle, Mark returned to land at the airport.

Owen started to circle the site, and heard Scot McClone on the radio. Scot asked who was on the radio, and what was going on. Owen told him that an airplane was down on the reservoir, and call 911. He gave the pertinent info, number of people and location. He circled about 15 minutes, and landed about 1630.

Bill Wiemann was on the radio shortly after Scot; Owen was not sure who was coordinating with 911. At one point, he flew over the site, and logged it on his phone. He stared at the fuselage, saw no movement, and decided to continue circling rather than land.

The first person on scene was wearing a red shirt, and that person waved to him. The person in the red jacket was to the site well before everyone else, but Owen doesn't know who this person was. Owen saw emergency vehicles responding. He could see the waterline, and knew that the airplane landed in dirt. He then saw tracked vehicles and sleds heading out. He flew a line from

the emergency vehicles to the site to give them reference to the site, which was about 1.5 miles from the airport.

He knew it was time for him to go, so he landed, and shut down his airplane. On short final, it was 1630.

Owen's husky is yellow with black and red stripes. Mark's airplane is black and maroon.

Owen stated that they used a hard deck of 7,500 (2,000 agl) when doing aerobatics; that was their safety net over flat terrain.

Normally, he flew the traffic pattern about 1,000 feet agl; sometimes in the Husky he would stay about 500 feet when making circuits.

He was not sure if the YAK flight was planned. Mark mentioned to Mackensie that if Owen took her to his hangar after the Yellowstone trip, Reade would take her flying. Maybe it had been discussed the day before.

His father had taken Mackensie flying in the YAK before, but not yet on this trip.



## RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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**Person Contacted:** Witness Scot McClone  
**Date:** 1-07-2016  
**Time:** 1300  
**Subject:** WPR16FA046; YAK-52; N912EB; Alpine, WY

### **Narrative:**

The following is a summary of statements made by the Mr. McClone:

Mr. McClone's office was across the runway from the accident pilot's hangar.

The YAK was pulled out of the hangar about 1500.

He was aware that two Huskies were in the air; one made two low passes or was doing touch-and-go landings.

He heard Reade Genzlinger, the YAK pilot, call in and possibly say that he was southwest of the airport doing aerobatics, and assumed that Reade was near the mountains near the edge of the lake. The Husky did a couple of more low passes.

He then heard Reade call in, and say that he was going to do a low pass.

He thought that Owen Genzlinger was coming in for a low pass; Owen said that he was pedaling as fast as he could.

Scot went to his window, and saw a Yellow Husky (Owen's) making a right turn to the west at midfield about 500 - 1,000 agl.

Scot was expecting the YAK, so he opened the window, but it did not appear. He was walking to his desk when he heard a transmission that the YAK was down.

Scot heard one person ask if they should make a call. He asked if they needed him to make the call, and they responded yes – the YAK was down. He was talking to Owen who informed him

that the airplane was down about 1.5 mile north, and there was no movement. Owen tried to explain how to get access to the site.

Scot tried Nate first, and then Bill. While they started for the site, Scot kept talking to Owen, and reminded him to fly the plane. Owen landed; Scot went to meet him at Owen's hangar, and help secure his airplane.