

Monday, May 30, 2016

My name is Larry O'Brien, and below is my best recollection of events occurring on Saturday, May 28th regarding Edgar Friedrichs (pilot).

Edgar arrived at my hangar at approximately 11:00 am eager to go for a short flight. We decided to fly to Lompoc (LPC) for lunch (typical flight for a Saturday). Edgar flew his plane and I flew mine. The weather was clear. We flew up to Lompoc at 6500 feet and back to Santa Paula (SZP) at 5500 feet. Total flight time was one hour.

We departed Santa Paula at approximately 12:00 noon and returned at 2:15 pm. When we got back to our hangars, Edgar told me he promised Matt a ride. Matt was standing outside of his hangar with his Dad. Edgar asked Matt if he wanted his ride, and Matt said "yes", so they loaded up and started the plane. They taxied to the fuel pit.

After five or ten minutes, I suggested that Greg (Matt's Dad) walk out to the end of our hangar row to watch the take-off. I brought my handheld radio so that Greg could hear Edgar call out his take-off, and when they return, hear them call out their position in the pattern.

I was anticipating the flight should only take 15-20 minutes. I assumed they would take-off on runway 22 straight out, then bank to the right near the 33 Freeway toward Ojai, and then bank right again through the Ojai Valley. I assumed they would then return back to Santa Paula for an upwind entry for runway 22.

Greg and I watched the take-off. It looked and sounded normal. It seemed that it was only 5-7 minutes after Edgar took off when I heard over the handheld radio only one transmission in a clear and calm voice "Larry my engine stopped." Everyone on the frequency in the pattern started looking for the plane.

I think it was around 3:05 or 3:10 pm when I called Edgar on my radio and received no response. At 3:29 pm I tried calling Edgar on his cell phone but there was no answer. I called 911 at 3:33 pm.

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