



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Stephen Stein
Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Office of Aviation Safety – Western Pacific Region

NTSB Accident Number: WPR16FA126
Aircraft Registration & Make/Model: N1270P; Piper PA-23-150
Accident Location: Hayward, California
Accident Date: June 19, 2016

Note: The following interviews were documented by the Investigator –In-Charge (IIC), Stephen Stein.

Interview #1 Summary

Donna Kimmel
Witness No. 3

Interview date and time: June 21, 2016; 1640 PT

According to Witness 3, he observed an airplane flying abnormally low over a group of houses before noon on the day of the accident. The airplane suddenly entered a steep left bank angle, with the right wing approximately 70 degrees to the horizon. The airplane then disappeared behind a residential area. Approximately 10 seconds later he heard a sound that resembled a bat striking an aluminum shed; shortly thereafter plumes of smoke emerged from the airplane's direction. The witness stated that he observed the airplane in a wings level descent for a few seconds before it entered the steep turn. He added that he may have been downwind of the accident because he smelled fuel burning.

According to the preliminary radar data, the first witness (Witness 1) was located near the airplane's inbound leg, approximately 9 nautical miles from HWD. Witness 2 was located approximately 10 miles from HWD in proximity of the airplane's outbound leg. Witness 3 was located one half mile from the accident site in a nearby graveyard.



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Interview #1 Summary

Donna Kimmel
Witness No. 1

Interview date and time: June 19, 2016; 1907 PT

According to Ms. Kimmel, she heard the airplane and an abnormal sound from inside her home. She went outside and observed an airplane approaching her house from a group of hills located to the east. The airplane appeared to be losing altitude and the engine made a "sputtering sound," which she also described as "cutting out." The sound repeated when the airplane reached her property and again seconds later after it passed her home.

According to the preliminary radar data, the first witness (Witness 1) was located near the airplane's inbound leg, approximately 9 nautical miles from HWD. Witness 2 was located approximately 10 miles from HWD in proximity of the airplane's outbound leg. Witness 3 was located one half mile from the accident site in a nearby graveyard.



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Interview #1 Summary

Solano County Nut Tree Airport
Airport Employee

Interview date and time: July 6, 2017; 0830 PT

According to a representative of Nut Tree Airport, the airport's records indicate that the pilot purchased 100 low lead aviation grade gasoline from them on September 27, 2015 in the amount of 28.68 gallons and May 1, 2016 in the amount of 15.34 gallons. The airport records did not show any refueling history under the pilot's last name or the tail number of the accident airplane for any other day.

Interview #2 Summary

Hayward Airport
APP Jet Center Employee

Interview date and time: July 6, 2017; 0900 PT

A company representative stated that the pilot purchased about 23.4 gallons of 100 low lead aviation grade gasoline on September 12, 2015. He further added that the airport received records rainfall in February 2016 that nearly caused the airport's drainage ditch to flood. The fueling station did not have any reports of water contamination from other customers on the day of the accident.



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Interview #1 Summary

Gene Rugdroden
Pilot's Flight Instructor and Friend

Interview date and time: July 6, 2017; 1500 PT

Mr. Rugroden stated that he met the accident pilot in 1992 at Lincoln Law School in San Jose, California and remained close friends until the accident. He flew with the pilot on occasion and noted that the pilot was a "good stick, but wasn't a natural pilot." In an example, the pilot's friend reported that he shot a localizer approach with the pilot into an airport in Missouri during a time of 700 foot ceilings. The pilot observed the airport at a distance of 2 nautical miles and immediately started to descend the airplane, ignoring the step down procedure listed on the approach chart. His friend stated that he had to inform the pilot of the error and ask him to correct his altitude.

The flight instructor confirmed that he signed off the pilot's flight review endorsement in March 2015. During the flight review, which was completed in the pilot's BE-60 Duke airplane, the pilot completed multiple simulated single-engine instrument landing system approaches with a failed left engine at an airport in San Jose, California with a view limiting device such as a hood. Mr. Rugroden noted the approaches as "smooth" with good yaw control. At the time of the flight, they also ascended to 5,000 feet and completed several single-engine turns with the left

engine at 13 in Hg, manifold pressure. They additionally performed 30 degree turns to the left and right at flight idle and then 45 degree turns but were unable to hold altitude due to the lift/drag performance. He noted that the pilot flew the airplane above V_{MC} during the instrument approaches into San Jose Airport.

The pilot told Mr. Rugroden that he was thinking about purchasing the accident airplane and asked him to travel to Texas to inspect the airplane. He never disclosed if he harbored doubts about the airplane's mechanical abilities. Mr. Rugroden agreed to perform the inspection, but for some reason the pilot bought it without his friend's inspection. He later stated to his friend that the airplane had recently received an annual inspection in Texas. The pilot further remarked to Mr. Rugroden that his wife was not aware that he purchased the accident airplane.

Although the accident pilot invited him to fly together, Mr. Rugroden stated that he refused to fly the accident airplane without inspecting it first. According to the flight instructor, the accident pilot never remarked that he had trouble starting either engine or maintaining power on the accident airplane.



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Interview #1 Summary

Jerry Caeton
Witness No. 2

Interview date and time: June 20, 2016; 1309 PT

According to Mr. Caeton, he was working in his yard all morning and initially observed a red and white colored airplane on a southeastern heading at approximately 1,750 feet. He never observed any smoke, but heard a sound that resembled an engine "backfiring." The airplane subsequently made a left turn and proceeded eastbound and disappeared behind a group of hills. About 30 minutes later he observed an airplane northeast of his house flying towards the airport. The witness reported hearing more sounds that resembled an engine "popping" and "backfiring." He added that he did not observe any smoke, FOD, or fluids coming from the airplane, but clarified that the engine "backfiring" sounds were much louder during the airplane's inbound leg.

According to the preliminary radar data, the first witness (Witness 1) was located near the airplane's inbound leg, approximately 9 nautical miles from HWD. Witness 2 was located approximately 10 miles from HWD in proximity of the airplane's outbound leg. Witness 3 was located one half mile from the accident site in a nearby graveyard.



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Interview #1 Summary

Keith Amaro
California Airways

Interview date and time: June 20, 2016; 1143 PT

According to Mr. Amaro, he observed the accident airplane perform multiple high speed taxi tests on runway 28L at Hayward Airport before he taxied to the airport's self-serve fuel kiosk. A few minutes later the airplane taxied to the runup area, but the engines didn't sound like they were synchronized.