



INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Elliott Simpson
Aviation Accident Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Interview Date: September 25, 2017
Person Contacted: Ed Kalibus
NTSB Accident Number: WPR17FA213

Narrative:

Mr. Ed Kalibus was the flight instructor for the pilot Spencer Kihlstrom,

Spencer began flying in 2016, about one year prior to the accident, and he was his exclusive flight instructor. He additionally provided Spencer training for a tailwheel endorsement, along with instrument training in preparation for his instrument rating.

He last flew with Spencer on Wednesday September 20, for an instrument training flight which lasted about 1.5 hours. At that time, Spencer had accrued about 120 hours of total flight, of which 60 were as pilot in command.

Mr. Kalibus stated that Spencer was one of the most conscientious and conservative students he had ever flown with, rating his skill level and competency in the top 20% of students he has trained.

Mr. Kalibus, stated that he had flown with Spencer through the Verde River canyon on one occasion previously, at a level just below the top of the canyon walls, and always with 500 ft separation. His intention for the canyon flight was to teach Spencer the importance of coordinated flight, and the correct use of the rudder pedals. The flight was performed in Mr. Kalibus's Cessna 140. For that flight they entered the canyon from the east near the town of Cottonwood. During that flight, they needed to overfly one of the canyon curves because it was too tight. Mr. Kalibus flew to the accident site on September 24, and noticed that the accident site was just north and adjacent to the area they overflew. (Image 1)



Image - Prior Canyon Flight



INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Elliott Simpson
Aviation Accident Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Interview Date: December 11, 2017
Person Contacted: Jeff Linnertz, Wendy Windsor
NTSB Accident Number: WPR17FA213

Narrative:

The following is a summary of a telephone interview.

Wendy Windsor and Jeff Linnertz are the parents of the passenger, Jeremiah (Jeremy) Linnertz. John Osborne, the legal counsel for Wendy Windsor, was present for the interview.

- Neither Mrs. Windsor, nor Mr. Linnertz knew Jeremy had gone flying on the day of the accident.
- Jeremy worked as a custodian at Embry Riddle Aeronautical University.
- He had moved into his own apartment, Mrs. Windsor lives locally (in the same apartment complex), and Mr. Linnertz lives in Texas, so they were not usually aware of his daily routine.
- Mrs. Windsor had last seen Jeremy about two days before the accident, and talked to him on the phone the day of. Nothing sounded out of the ordinary during those conversations, he did not seem depressed, and he needed to cut the phone conversation short, because his friend, the pilot had just arrived to pick him up.
- They were aware that Jeremy posted some morose comments on Facebook over the two-day period leading up to the accident, but they did not know what they were in reference to. Jeremys girlfriend had moved out of the apartment about 45 days before the accident. He had a child with her, and they were aware of some recent "court" issues between the two.



INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Elliott Simpson
Aviation Accident Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Interview Date: November 16, 2017
Person Contacted: Chellie (Jose) Newton, Lane Kihlstrom
NTSB Accident Number: WPR17FA213

Narrative:

The following is a summary of an in-person interview.

Lane Kihlstrom is the father of the pilot, Spencer Kihlstrom. Chellie Newton is Lane Kihlstrom's partner.

- Spencer had told his father two days before the accident that he was going to practice touch and go takeoff and landings, and that Jeremy Linnertz was coming with him. Lane does not know why he flew beyond the airport. Jeremy had flown with him multiple times before.
- Lane saw Spencer the morning of the accident, and he appeared in good spirits.
- They stated that Spencer was, "a straight and narrow kid", well behaved and responsible. He wanted to eventually become a commercial pilot, and took his flying very seriously.
- Spencer had known Jeremy for many years, both having gone to school together. They were aware that Jeremy had struggled over the years, and that Spencer often reached out to help and encourage him.
- Lane and Chellie both expressed serious concern that Jeremy had recently undergone some problems in his private life. They were aware of a dispute between him and his girlfriend, that had resulted in a restraining order being placed on him. They were also concerned that he had posted what they considered to be suicidal comments on Facebook in the days leading up to the accident.

To: Mr. Elliott Simpson
Senior Aviation Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Western Pacific Region - Los Angeles

From: Lane Kihlstrom



or % of Chellie Knutsen:

I worked backwards, because it was easier for me to recall. I hope that is ok.

Friday, 9-22

Last contact text from Spencer was 2:18pm:

I was to be out of town for weekend, so was traveling. I did speak with and see around 6:30am before he went to work as a helper/caretaker of an older lady - Sophia (so?). He was planning on working 7am-1:30 for Sophia and flying with Jeremy doing "touch & go's" in afternoon and was planning on flying Sunday am with Instructor Ed Kalabus.

Thursday, 9-21

Went through chores late evening, talked normal, acted normal and he was talking about Jeep he was rebuilding, Instrument Package and lighting and his plans for things. His typical school on Thursday was 9:30-10:45, 11-12:15, and 2-3:15. He also typically worked out at Planet Fitness with his girlfriend. He was supposed to work at the bed and breakfast that morning, but did not per his text.

Wednesday, 9/20

Spencer worked at the bed and breakfast at 5:45am. (Little Thumb Butte B&B). Was still working at 10am to prepare for a luncheon for the Granite Mountain Riders and the Audubon Society. He was planning to fly if weather permitted at 12:30. I'm not sure if he did fly. He was planning to be at the gym from 4-6pm, and then go to Engraving class from 7-9pm. That evening, we talked about plans while I was out of town. We discussed flying with Jeremy Friday afternoon, (for touch & go's and pattern work), and then to fly Sunday with instructor.

Tuesday, 9-19

Spencer worked at the bed & breakfast at 5:45pm. He had college classes all day: 9:30-10:45a, 11a-12:15p, 2-3:15p, 6-9p. I saw him briefly before bed, but he was doing ok.

As you can see, his busy days were Tuesday and Thursday. He usually left the house for the bed and breakfast before I got up, so I typically didn't see him those mornings. College had started and he was settling into a routine filled with school, working at the bed & breakfast and for Sophia, working on his Jeep, working out, flying, and Sammi. Between his schedule and mine, I am a mobile veterinarian, I reluctantly did not have much time with Spencer lately. He was busy, but he was driven and goal oriented. He was happy. I never saw him to be overwhelmed or depressed about what was going on in his life. His demeanor and attitude about life was very positive. He was very mature for his age and took his flying very seriously, and was very driven on becoming a Commercial Airline Pilot.

Thank you. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Lane



INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Elliott Simpson
Aviation Accident Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Interview Date: September 29, 2017
Person Contacted: Samantha Falls
NTSB Accident Number: WPR17FA213

Narrative:

The following is a summary of a phone interview.

Ms. Falls is the girlfriend of the pilot, Spencer Kihlstrom.

- Ms. Falls last saw Spencer the day before the accident, he seemed in good spirits.
- She spoke to him by phone about 1600 on the day of the accident, he said he was going to pickup his friend Jeremy, and they were going flying together. He sent a text at 1607, saying he was at Jeremys house. That was the last message she received from him.
- Spencer did not give a reason for the flight, or say where they were going, but she was aware that he had flown with Spencer before.
- She was an acquaintance with Jeremy, but did not know him well, her primary contact with him was through Spencer.
- She had flown with Spencer twice before, once to Cottonwood, and then above Prescott. They had not flown in canyons, and Spencer stated that he did not like to fly in canyons because they were dangerous. She stated that he commented that he always flew direct to his destination, and did not take detours.

September 28, 2017

To Whom it May Concern,

On Friday, September 22, 2017, a student and I completed a normal training flight to the Clark practice area (DRK radials 349-025) between 1530 and 1800 local time in N649ER (RDDL 49). The purpose of this activity was to practice emergency procedures to include simulated emergency descents and simulated emergency approaches and landings. As such, we were at altitudes between 9000 MSL and 500 AGL, and transiting between the altitudes fairly quickly. We departed KPRC around 1615 local, completed multiple simulated emergencies, then returned to the airport around 1715 to practice landings. During our time in the practice area, we stayed in the vicinity of the Drake cement plant and the flat areas to the north and south, locally known as the “bald spots.”

The weather that day was windy, but not to be considered out of the ordinary. Departing KPRC, the wind was gusting in the range of 25 knots out of the South-Southwest. While we couldn't particularly tell how gusty the winds were in the practice area or at altitude, it was evident that it was still quite windy, in the vicinity of 20-25 knots from the south-southwest. This led to some typical continuous light turbulence, both at altitude and near the surface, but again nothing out of the ordinary for a windy day like that one.

It should be noted that in our simulations of emergencies, we were making constant position reports on our local practice area frequency related to conducting simulated emergency descents and approaches. We also did occasionally monitor guard frequency as well in an attempt to more realistically simulate emergency procedures. We did not notice anything out of the ordinary while completing the activity.

Sincerely,

William Poppler, Instructor Pilot

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Prescott