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Western Pacific Region

Date: June 23, 2018
Person Contacted: Mr. Michael Thometz
NTSB Accident Number: WPR18LA183

Narrative:

The following is a synopsis of the information provided by Mr. Thometz in a telephone interview immediately after the accident.

On June 23, 2018 at about 1300 Pacific Daylight Time Mr. Thometz. Mr. Thometz explained his duties as a Sky diver pilot. He said he was also an Air Traffic Controller for the Navy. He gave me his date of birth and his certificate number. He had a class II flight physical. He said that he was not injured at all. There were no injuries. There was no post-crash fire. He stated the weather conditions were isolated building cumulous, nothing significant with light winds. He stated it was VMC and he was under VFR. He did not file a flight plan. During the time of the accident, he was in contact with Jacksonville Approach. Mr. Thometz then explained he showed up for work and there was fuel in the aircraft. He explained the dipstick and the calibration card. He said there was between 22 and 24 gallons when he started. The accident occurred on the eighth hop of the day with only four tach hours put on the airplane. There was no hobs meter in the aircraft. After the first three hops he added 18 gallons and after the next 3 hops he added 14 gallons. He did the last three runs and it was on that last of run when he lost his engine. He says they watch the cylinder head temperature (CHT) very carefully. He said he kept the CHT under 400 for all his hops. He went up to 11,500 and let out two tandem jumpers. He descended and kept the CHT above 285 degrees. He got down to high left base for runway 29. At 4000 feet he saw another airplane lining up for runway 25. He said he gave him room to get out of his way. He said that he did pull the carb heat and left it out because it was 95 degrees. At about 3-4 miles from the runway at around 2500' MSL and about 140 MPH, the engine just quit. He said he had around 10-24 inches of manifold pressure and he realized that he lost his engine. He looked at the CHT and saw all of the heads cooling. He pitched up to 80 MPH for best rate of descent and verified both mags were on. He switched to the left tank. He hit the start button and the prop was wind milling, but

nothing happened. He went to BOTH tanks. He then saw trees and he decided that he was not going to make it over the trees. Looked to the right and saw a neighborhood. He saw a straight road and turned towards the road. He said he did his best to avoid a tree. He said he was dancing on the rudder pedals. He was worried about houses and used flaps to slow down. He said he doesn't remember much after that. His right wing must have hit an SUV and blew out the right back window and ripped off the end cap of the wing. The second impact was the right wing and a truck. It did some damage to the grill and bumper. From point of touchdown to stopping point was about 450 feet. Around 200 feet down was where the right main landing gear ended up. The airplane rolled onto the right side. He went skidding down the road on his right side. The airplane rotated about 120 degrees from the initial landing direction. Once he realized he stopped, he unbuckled and fell onto the right side of the airplane. He said the oil temp and pressure were normal throughout the entire day. The prop was still spinning after the engine quit. He said the engine did not sputter like you hear about when you run out of fuel, it just quit. He said he looked up and all the sudden no power.

He said he was very interested in figuring out what happened. He says he feels guilt and shame for crashing the airplane, but pride in doing everything right from the engine out to the time hit got on the ground. He said he did not open the door or secure the fuel before he went in because there was no time. He didn't pull the prop to increase glide speed because he didn't think it would do anything.

When asked if anything mechanical could have caused this accident he said, "I don't know" He thought of the fuel pump but didn't know if that could have caused the accident. He knew that the fuel was low but said "there was no way he could have burned through 55 gallons of usable fuel in four tach hours". But with fuel low and maneuvering around could have something to do with it. He said he was a pilot with 1300 hours but is not that mechanically savvy. He said he hopes that it was something mechanic. I advised him the FAA would be involved in getting the engine test run. Mr. Thometz was irritated that the FAA representative was not a pilot and mentioned that he only had a brief statement to make to the FAA regarding this accident.

Mr. Thometz was advised to submit the NTSB Form 6120.1 within the next ten days.

Follow up Interview held on August 20, 2018 at 11:30 Pacific daylight time. I telephoned Mr. Thometz to inform him of the successful engine run. I explained to him that the engine started and tested good and asked him if had recalled anything that may aid in the investigation. He informed me, in the past, he had observed fuel "gushing" out of an area around the vent and inside of the strut while he was in a left-hand turn. He corrected the problem but not turning in that direction. He mentioned that he had looked at his fuel receipts and according to his calculations should have had around 56 gallons that day. He also stated that in order to use up all of that fuel he would have observed a fuel consumption rate of around 13.75 gallons per hour which "would be unusually high for a 182."