



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Joshua D. Cawthra
Senior Aviation Accident Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: 8/11/2019
Person Contacted: Clifford Todd Smith – Pilot Rated Passenger
NTSB Accident Number: WPR19FA215

Narrative:

An in person interview with Mr. Smith was conducted at the hospital. During the interview, Mr. Smith was medicated. Mr. Smith reported that the day of the accident, they were going to initially fly in the morning, however, due to the canopy not closing, they were unable to fly and worked with a mechanic that had been working on the airplane to get it fixed. After the canopy was fixed, they decided to wait until later in the day when it cooled off to fly. Mr. Smith said that during the preflight inspection, he and the pilot had checked the fuel in both fuel tanks, and recalled that he could touch the fuel with his fingers.

Following a normal engine start, they let the engine warm up, and taxied out for takeoff. They conducted one pass with the landing gear in the extended position, then continued in the airport traffic pattern, where the pilot conducted a touch and go landing. Following the touch and go landing, the pilot conducted a low pass down runway 33. At the completion of the pass, as the pilot pitched up and banked the airplane to enter downwind for runway 33, the engine suddenly lost power with no warning. Mr. Smith stated that the pilot attempted to initiate a forced landing to an open field.

When asked about the flight times in the accident airplane, Mr. Smith estimated the day of the accident, they were airborne for about 5 minutes, with the engine operating 30 to 35 minutes. He further estimated that the previous flight the week prior was about 30 minutes in length, as they took off, did a couple of touch and go landings before heading to Vale, Oregon, and returning to Ontario. As they returned to Ontario, they flew around the buttes, and returned to the airport, performed a few low passes, and landed.

When asked about fuel, Mr. Smith recalled that the fuel selector valve was in the “both” position, and thought they had 80-gallons per side, and at least half tanks on either side, and the fuel gauges indicated just below half, but he couldn’t recall how many pounds. Furthermore, when asked about power

settings, Mr. Smith recalled that the propeller and rpm settings were “in the green” and the oil pressure was normal.

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Date: 10/26/2021
Person Contacted: Clifford Todd Smith – Pilot Rated Passenger
NTSB Accident Number: WPR19FA215

Narrative:

During a telephone conversation, Mr. Smith said that he did not recall what the power setting was used during the low pass. He stated that he was more or less a passenger at this point and wasn't concerned until the engine lost power. Mr. Smith said that following the loss of engine power, he recalled that the throttle wasn't all the way forward, but possibly $\frac{1}{4}$ from full forward. He said that the pass was a low pass to make sure the gear was down. He stated that he would characterize the pass felt like the pilot had the power setting set prior to the pass and doesn't recall that if the pilot had changed the power setting or not. Additionally, Mr. Smith did not recall the power setting for the gear down and gear up.

When asked about what RPM on the ground and idle for taxiing, Mr. Smith thought it was maybe 900 to 1,000 rpm. He said that the pilot was the one who solely manipulated the controls in the airplane while on the ground and in flight.

When asked about the carburetor installation, Mr. Smith said he wasn't present when it was installed, however, he was around when they were putting the fairings on. Mr. Smith added that he recalled the engine would run really rough with the mixture one way or the other, but didn't remember which setting it was, and that he wasn't the one manipulating the engine controls.

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