



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Joshua D. Cawthra
Senior Aviation Accident Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: July 1, 2020
Person Contacted: John Lane
NTSB Accident Number: WPR19LA157

Narrative:

During a telephone conversation with Mr. Lane, he reported that prior to the day of the accident, he recalled that the pilot asked him if he had test flown the airplane, to which responded that he hadn't, and that there was a big thundershower in the area, which ended up in a substantial crosswind later in the day. Mr. Lane said that the pilot told him he would go fly it. The pilot started asking him a lot of questions, technical things within the cockpit. They talked over things, did a good walk around of the airplane, made sure it had plenty of fuel and so forth. Mr. Lane stated that the pilot did an engine run up, which took quite a bit of time, before taking off. Mr. Lane noted that the airplane gradually came up to power, and it appeared it developed full power, however, at the time the pilot should have or he would have expected them to rotate to get the airplane airborne, the airplane remained on the ground in a tail high attitude. Mr. Lane said that at about that time, the airplane was passing midfield, and the tail of the airplane appeared very high, shortly before the pilot aborted the takeoff. Shortly after the pilot aborted, the airplane immediately veered right, exited the runway surface.

Mr. Lane said that when he got to the airplane, the pilot told him that "I don't have a clue what went wrong", and that when he went back to the elevators, and told him look at the elevator trim. Additionally, Mr. Lane recalled that the pilot asked him what he should tell the feds, to which Mr. Lane stated "tell them the truth."

Mr. Lane stated that in days prior to the accident, he tied the tail of the airplane down, and they ran the engine at full power, due to the propeller governor not working correctly when they got the airplane and wanted to make sure it was running right. Mr. Lane said that he made fuel enrichment changes on the ground, and that he did tell the pilot that it would run rich on the ground and to manually lean it, but at full power, use auto rich, and that it ran good for him during all previous engine runs.

Mr. Lane said that at the time he let the pilot take the airplane, he had no doubts or concerns about the carburetor and that he would fly the airplane himself. Mr. Lane said that he never had any trouble running the engine, other than when it was cold, and it was running rich, however, manually leaning the

carburetor resulted in no additional trouble. Mr. Lane thought it was something on the low / idle circuit that was causing it to run rich. During his high-power engine test runs (5 times at least), they had no issues with the engine or carburetor.

Mr. Lane said that when the takeoff was being conducted, he never heard variation of engine rpm/noise, until the pilot reduced power to abort the takeoff.

Mr. Lane added that when he flies a Corsair, the tail will typically rise about 6 to 8 inches and stay there.



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Date: July 1, 2020
Person Contacted: Steve Baxter (Shop Forman)
NTSB Accident Number: WPR19LA157

Narrative:

During a telephone conversation with Mr. Baxter, he recalled that the day prior to the accident, it was nice out, and that Mr. Lane was going to go fly it, but before they knew it, wind picked up, unfavorable weather, and that they weren't going to fly it, but if Mr. O'Connor wanted John to fly it the next morning, Mr. Lane would. He recalled that after they fueled the airplane, the wind was bad. Mr. Baxter recalled that O'Connor declined Mr. Lane's invitation for him to fly it.

Mr. Baxter recalled that Mr. O'Connor was extremely nervous, anxious, and that it was a cool, pleasant morning, and that Mr. O'Connor was sweating, had issues with his eye glasses, couldn't find the right pair, and seemed overwhelmed, or just anxious. Mr. Baxter recalled that John O'Connor had another guy with him, not sure who he was, but that they were talking about various things concerning the airplane with starting, different aspects with preflights, and the guy was taking notes, and asking questions. Mr. Baxter was in the vicinity of this but wasn't paying much attention to it. He didn't recall any conversations about the carburetor.

Mr. Baxter recalled that Mr. Lane and himself were out there the previous Saturday, Mr. Lane was running the engine, and Mr. Baxter was adjusting the resistor for the fuel boost pump, worked on it for quite some time, until Mr. Lane was happy with it. The engine was running well, little rich on the bottom end, but over 1,000 – 1,200 rpm, it cleared right out, can't recall exactly, but it didn't take much to clear it out, and wasn't much of a concern. Mr. Baxter said that Mr. Lane ran the engine pretty hard on the ground and had no complaints. He recalled that it was several engine runs, but doesn't remember how many.

When asked if there was any time where they could not get the engine running, there was possibly one day, but doesn't remember completely. He said it seems they had problems at one point but doesn't recall 100%.

Mr. Baxter said that the pilot taxied to runway 9, did a run up, and as he was on the takeoff roll, heard power come up, once the airplane became visible, the tail appeared to be high in the air, and recalled John Lane saying "come on John what are you doing, get the tail down". The airplane continued to past mid point of the runway, power came back, couple brief puffs of smoke from the tires, went off the right side of the runway, into the runup area, and up a slight embankment, became airborne, banked left, and impacted the ground.

By the time he got there, Mr. O'Connor was out of the airplane. Recalled that O'Connor said he did not have power, or something, or the airplane wasn't running right.

Mr. Baxter later recalled that the cannon plug was off of the boost pump, and that was the issue they had previously with the airplane. Mr. Baxter said that at any time during the takeoff, he didn't hear anything that would have suggested the engine was having issues of any sort.

Mr. Baxter added that when he was down by the wreck, the elevator trim tabs were barely off streamline, maybe 1 degree of nose up trim. In addition, that prior to takeoff, Mr. Baxter recalled that John O'Connor grabbed his preflight checklist, looked at it momentarily, and then tossed it up on the glareshield.



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Date: July 1, 2020
Person Contacted: Tyler Farmer
NTSB Accident Number: WPR19LA157

Narrative:

During a telephone conversation with Mr Farmer, he stated that he left two days prior to the flight but was present the first day of the engine run. They pulled it out, tried to start the engine, however, discovered the boost pump cannon plug was disconnected, from being replaced. The cannon plug was reconnected, the airplane started, got to oil temp, shut down, check for leaks, etc. The engine was started again and put to a mid-range to high power setting, with no concerns to him other than it ran rich at idle. However, that after 1200-1400 rpm, the engine cleared up once the carburetor was off the idle circuit. The RPM consistency when the magneto check was performed, there was nothing out of the normal. Recalled that on that day, they did the initial run, and then the second engine run with medium to medium high-power settings were applied. Mr. Farmer stated he was not present the day prior to or the day of the accident.



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Date: July 1, 2020
Person Contacted: Nancy Lane
NTSB Accident Number: WPR19LA157

Narrative:

During a telephone conversation with Mrs. Lane, she stated that prior to the flight, the night before, Mr. O'Connor had asked Mr. Lane for the startup procedures. She recalled that Mr. O'Connor did not display much confidence that morning, and that she wasn't comfortable with him flying it due to this. Mrs. Lane said that after the accident, everyone was in shock over the accident. When they went down there, she called John Musgraves (friend of the pilot) that he needed his glasses. Mr. Musgraves when notified of the accident, he did not seem surprised. When Mr. Musgraves arrived, he did not say anything to John, but handed Mr. O'Connor a payday bar, to which Mr. O'Connor asked the paramedics if he could have this. She again repeated that Mr. O'Connor did not display any confidence that morning in regard to the airplane.