

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Introduction and information
Date: Monday, August 17, 2020 4:55:37 PM

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Hi Andrew.

Here are some of the problems encountered with the LAK-Mini as I remember them. I tried to document the sequence of events as well. Issues are in **BOLD** type:

When he picked it up:

- difficult to assemble the wings to the fuselage at the SSA convention where it was being displayed-three people assisting

Second Assembly:

when the glider was inspected by (a compnay in Lampson airport), they put it back in the trailer incorrectly

asa result a spoiler was damaged on one wing, when matt tried to remove it

the spoiler was then repaired by Shaefer Aviation in Williams, CA

the **spoiler handle/linkage impinged on the seat back**- a small amount of seat back material needed to be removed for clearance

first flight

folding prop would not dock in correct position after ground run

again, it was **difficult to assemble wings**-they would not seat correctly-took 3 experienced people several hours to assemble

spoiler sensor was installed in the wrong position (by the factory) such that a “check spoiler” alert was heard even when spoilers were closed and locked

gear sensor was installed in the wrong position (by the factory), causing false gear status indication on LX9000

Pilot made a normal take-off under power, and normal initial climb from Lampson.

engine monitoring system indicated motor was getting hot (this is normal), so the pilot reduced power per normal procedure

There was some kind of continued warning from the motor controller, so pilot turned the motor off with the speed controller, but had not reached desired altitude

pilot announced pattern entry, and **the act of keying up the mic caused engine to start up and run, un-commanded**

pilot turned off master motor controller switch to stop the motor, and the **prop continued to spin** (probably windmilling at that point, but pilot thought it was still running)

as he had not finished the climb-out and the engine was “running”, pilot chose to land, and entered abbreviated pattern as he was not high enough for a full pattern. He turned base mid-field and had plenty of runway to land.

on final, he flaired a little too high (2 ft?) to avoid a potential prop strike, and landed hard, damaging the tire and wheel axle.

in Nevada:

an A&P at Spanish Springs replaced the tire, and inspected the gear. Axle was slightly bent, but he deemed the aircraft airworthy

downloaded code from manufacturer to adjust prop docking position -successful

made an adjustment per manufacturer to avoid radio activation of motor (**a known issue to them!**)

re-positioned spoiler and wheel sensor to correct position

at air sailing:

assembly of wings (with me assisting) went smoothly and quickly

all systems checked out

normal aerotow launch and flight with no events, (about 3.5 hrs of local flying together with me in my ASW27b)

audio transmission was weak from headset and we had trouble hearing each other.

Landing was normal and uneventful on RW 03

on the ground we tried my headset in Matt's plane with similar poor results. We then switched the radio to the built in boom mic and speaker, solving the communication problem

Please let me know what else I can do to assist your investigation. And please let me know if you recover any flight logs and can share them with me.

Regards,

Matthew Herron

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, August 9, 2020 11:59 AM
To: Swick Andrew <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Jeannine Herron <[REDACTED]>; Melissa Titone
<[REDACTED]>
Subject: Introduction and information

[CAUTION] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click any links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good morning Mr. Swick.

My name is Matthew Herron. I am Matt Herron's son. Thank you for responding so quickly to this accident.

I am also a glider pilot, and have flown numerous times with my father, including the flight just prior to his fatal flight. We flew together out of Air Sailing in Nevada, near Pyramid lake. I can give you some general details about that flight if you wish.

I want you to be aware of several things that might help with your investigation.

First, aerial photographs were taken of the crash site around 5PM, the day of the crash, by Rex Mays, who flew over Matt's last known coordinates to search for him. Rex runs Williams Soaring Center with his wife Noelle Mays. They can be reached at [REDACTED]. Noelle's personal cell is [REDACTED].

Second, there are multiple potential sources for flight logs that might help with the investigation. The aircraft was equipped with an LX9000 navigational moving map that has a flight logger built in. In addition it had a PowerFlarm collision warning system that has a logger built in. Both these loggers generate .IGC files that can be viewed with a program called SeeYou. There are other viewers and tools as well for .ICG files. Should these devices be damaged, or the files inaccessible, please contact Rex Mays, as he has assisted the NTSB in the past with glider accident investigations, and is an expert with this type of equipment. There was also a SPOT emergency locator. The spot uploads positional information every 10 minutes to a website. that's how we located the wreckage. Finally, the airplane had ADS-B out. I know ADS-B logs are recorded externally, but not sure how to access them.

As far as documentation goes, Matt had a bi-annual flight review on May 10th, 2019. He did not have a medical certificate, as none is required for glider pilots. The aircraft had just been imported, and certified as experimental. The glider was insured with Costello Insurance Associates Inc., and the policy number is [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Please feel free to contact me either by e-mail or cell phone [REDACTED] for further information, and please keep me in the loop on your progress. I am anxious to get the flight log files myself, as soon as that is possible.

Regards,

Matt Herron

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