



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Michael Hicks
Air Safety Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date of Conversation: 26AUG2020@1000PDT & 12JUL2021@0950PDT
Person Contacted (Pilot): Harold (Larry) Brown
NTSB Accident Number: WPR20LA278

Summary:

During conversations with the NTSB IIC, the pilot reported that before he took off from Boseman, MT, the airplane was near its maximum gross weight with about 40 gallons of fuel on board. The airport elevation at Boseman was lower than the elevation at the destination airport, and the temperature was cooler at the destination airport as well. The morning of the accident he and his passenger made three trips around the airport traffic pattern and the airplane was flying normally. He believed that the maintenance shop was correct in that the engine operation complied with manufacture specifications, and everything was okay. Oil temp and oil pressure were in the green, and they embarked on a day, VFR, cross-country flight to Harlowton, MT.

After an uneventful landing at Harlowton, the pilot and passenger onboarded two additional passengers at Harlowton. The pilot noted that he was in the left front seat, and estimated that his weight was 155 lbs. The estimated weight for the passenger seated in the right front was about 225 lbs. The right rear passenger weight was estimated as being 150 lbs. and the left rear seat passenger was estimated as being 152 lbs. The pilot believed that according to the performance planning charts in the POH, about 1,500 ft would be needed for the takeoff roll, and about 3,000 ft would be needed if there was a 50ft obstacle.

The temperature at Harlowton was about 80° F that day and the pilot chose to perform a short-field takeoff. He chose the short-field takeoff because the airplane was near the maximum gross weight and he believed that the short-field technique would offer better climb performance. The POH indicated that the airplane needed to rotate about 60 mph, and climb out near 70 mph. The pilot selected runway 27 and chose to rotate at 77 mph. The airplane would not climb above 100 ft agl. The pilot did not look at the airspeed indicator when the airplane climbed to 100 ft agl, he did not see the stall warning light illuminate, and he did not feel an impending stall. However, he felt that the airspeed decreased. The airplane descended and touched down on the main landing gear in a pasture, subsequently struck a barbed wire fence, and nosed over. The airplane crossed four irrigation channels prior to colliding with the barbed wire fence.

Pilot agreed to send the IIC, the airplane weight and balance sheet, and the performance planning charts that he used.

Arlins maintenance facility in Boseman, MT, had performed the previous maintenance. 12AUG2020, two days prior to the accident, the pilot took the airplane to the maintenance facility as he believed that the engine was losing about 200 rpm. He felt that the airplane was not producing as much power during straight and level flight, as it had during the spring and winter months. He had flown the airplane pretty consistently during the month prior to the accident.

When flying toward the "M" on the hill, he was not as high above the "M" as normally. Over the last 6 months he noticed that the airplane was simply not climbing as fast as normal. The maintenance facility inspected the engine tachometer and the engine rpm. The pilot was informed by the maintenance facility, that the tach was operating normally, and that the engine produced between 2,200 rpm and 2,300 rpm, which was within the manufacturer's normal operating specifications.

The airplane is currently at Arlins.

Recent maintenance consisted of Annual Inspection conducted in October of 2019. 16JAN2020 the air vents were adjusted, and the airplane received an oil change 04JUN2020. The engine was overhauled 30APR1993 and had accumulated 1,268 hours of operating time since overhauled, where in the number 2 & number 4 cylinders received a top overhaul. The airplane had accumulated nearly 694 hours since he purchased the airplane.

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When requested, the pilot provided the weight and balance sheet.
When asked, the pilot reported that he did not believe that the stall warning light illuminated.
When asked, the pilot reported that the airplane was not shaking when the airplane began to lose airspeed and lift.

NOTHING FOLLOWS