



RECORD OF EMAIL

Albert P. Nixon
Senior Aviation Accident Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: September 23, 2020
Person Contacted: Troy Meskimen (FAA Aviation Safety Inspector)
NTSB Accident Number: WPR20LA304

Narrative:

On an email from, Troy Meskimen the following is a summary of what he stated:

- On Saturday September 12, 2020, N3720R departed Seeley Lake airport (23S) with a tach reading of 2265.11 destined for Bowman Field Airport (3U3) near Anaconda, Montana.
- Bowman Field has no services available.
- According to the Seeley Lake Flying Club Tach Log. Mr. Wolff put 23.96 gallons of fuel and 1 quart of oil in N3720R at the Deer Lodge-City-County Airport (38S) near Deer Lodge, Montana.
- N3720R fuel tanks have a maximum capacity of 19.5 U.S. gallon per side, 18.0 gallons usable, and a total of 36 U.S. gallons usable.
- Although it has not been determined if this was a direct flight. The direct distance between 38S and 23S is about 63.5 miles.
- N3720R had altered by Avcon Industries, Inc. Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) Number SA807CE which removes the Continental O-300 and fixed pitch propeller and incorporates a Lycoming O-360-A1A with a Hartzell HC-C2YK-1B/7666A-2 constant speed propeller.
- Seeley Lake Flying Club General Operating Rules #10, Plane should be returned to hangar for the next pilot at least half full of fuel. There is not fuel available at Seeley Lake Airport.
- Assuming 75% power cruise at about 7,000 feet the O-360-A fuel burn is about 11.3 gallons per hour.
- At a distance of about 63.5 miles, it is about a 30-minute flight from Seeley Lake to Anaconda.
- Anaconda airport is about 17.5 miles from Deer Lodge Airport where Mr. Wolff took on 23.96 gallons of fuel. (Deer Lodge Airport only sells 100LL)
- The total time on the tach from the departure to the accident is 2.64 hours, subtract .7 hours for flying from Seeley Lake to Anaconda then onto Deer Lodge leaves about 1.9 hours of flight time presumably after they departed Deer Lodge with at least 23.96 gallons of fuel onboard.

- They should have had at least about 2.1 hours' worth of fuel onboard, but most likely it was topped off to 38 gallons.
- The return flight should have only taken .5 hours, leaving 1.4 hour unaccounted for. Having a minimum of 12 minute of fuel on board and a maximum of about 1.5 hours of fuel on board.

- N3720R was on final approach to runway 16 at Seeley Lake Airport (23S) a 4,575 ft long unlighted grass strip.
- It impacted trees and came to rest 365 feet after the initial evidence of impacting treetops.
- Height of trees initially hit are estimated to be 75 feet tall and the aircraft traveled 365 feet from this point.
- Path of damaged trees indicated a heading of about 152 degrees.
- There was no pre or post impact fire.
- Aircraft tachometer reading 2267.75.
- One propeller blade was straight and the other bent rearward starting near the blade root and arching rearward.
- Fuel strainer and electric fuel pump contained a little residual fuel.
- Fuel selector was on both tanks.



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Date: October 21, 2021
Person Contacted: Les Doud (Hartzell Propeller Air Safety Investigator)
NTSB Accident Number: WPR20LA304

Narrative:

On an email from Les Doud, the following is a summary of what he stated:

- Attached to the email was his propeller damage observations.
- Damage was consistent with the propeller rotating under some about of power.
- Leading edge gouges observed on one blade was consistent with a about a zero angle of attack on the blade which was consistent with some amount of power.
- One blade had compound bending and twisting which was consistent with signatures of power.
- One blade had damage consistent with a tree impact with some amount of power.
- Chordwise and rotational scoring and spinner dome torsional damage was consistent with power.
- Overall, the damage sustained on two blades would not be consistent if there was no power.



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Date: September 25, 2020
Person Contacted: Christian Cahoon (Surviving Passenger)
NTSB Accident Number: WPR20LA304

Narrative:

On an email from Christian Cahoon, the following is a summary of what he stated:

- He was in the hospital.
- He did not have much information for me.
- He did not remember the return flight home to Seeley.
- He remembers going golfing but did not remember his whole golf game.



RECORD OF EMAIL

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Date: May 19, 2022
Person Contacted: Sophia Chuc (Missoula County Sheriff's Office, Criminal Justice Clerk)
NTSB Accident Number: WPR20LA304

Narrative:

On an email from Sophia Chuc, the following is a summary of what she stated:

- The case number 2020-15754 case report was attached.
- The following are excerpts from the report:
- A fairly exact flight path could be seen by the topped off trees as the airplane descended.
- Using a rangefinder it was estimated the plane traveled 135 yards from the first tree it struck.
- One caller to 911 said that he heard the engine of the airplane sputter and then a crash.
- Another caller reported seeing an airplane and then hearing the crash.
- USFS Officer Robinson responded to try to locate the crash site.
- One volunteer mentioned that he could smell aviation fuel.
- Officer Robinson thought he could smell it as well and noticed a slight reflection off his flashlight.
- The airplane wreckage was located shortly thereafter.



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Date: May 19, 2022
Person Contacted: Troy Meskimen (FAA Aviation Safety Inspector)
NTSB Accident Number: WPR20LA304

Narrative:

On an email from, Troy Meskimen the following is a summary of what he stated:

-- An individual was traveling through and camping out at Seeley Lake airport. He never visually spotted the aircraft, probably due to the thick smoke in the area at the time, but heard the aircraft approach from the south and flew past the airport.