



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Stephen Stein
Aviation Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Office of Aviation Safety – Western Pacific Region

NTSB Accident Number: WPR21FA044
Aircraft Registration & Make/Model: N6380A; Piper PA-38-112
Accident Location: Grass Valley, California
Accident Date: November 10, 2020

Note: The following interview was documented by the Investigator –In-Charge (IIC), Stephen Stein.

Interview #1 Summary

Caleb Jorgensen
Flight Instructor

Interview Date & Time; January 25, 2022, 1031 PT

According to Mr. Jorgensen, he flew with the accident pilot for his instrument rating and commercial certificate training. In his experience the accident pilot was always a top student and the flew the airplane well. The accident pilot seemed to be ahead of the airplane, was calm and confident and his approaches and briefings were always clean. He would also learn from mistakes quickly. The instructor stated that they did the pilot's instrument and half his commercial training in a Piper Archer and the second half of his commercial training was in a Cessna 172. All the airplanes at this particular flight school had a Garmin 430 with a fuel scheduler that would show yellow every 20 minutes to prompt the pilot to switch fuel tanks. The Garmin G100 also had the same system. This was not required on the Cessna 172 because the airplane was always flown with the fuel selector in the BOTH position.



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Interview #1 Summary

David Williams
Accident Pilot's Brother in-law

Interview Date & Time; November 24, 2020, 1012 PT

Mr. Williams stated that the accident pilot worked as a maintenance officer with him in the United States Air Force and was responsible for the backshop maintenance on C-17, C-5's and KC-10 airplanes in a squadron. The accident pilot started working with him in about 2016.

They had planned to fly together on the day of the accident. The Tuesday prior he received a text message from the accident pilot requesting his weight (210 lbs). The accident pilot met Mr. Williams at 1100 at an airport in Davis, California where they planned to depart. He stated that the pilot had his iPad open along with a checklist that was strapped to his kneepad. Before they departed they did a walkaround inspection and checked the oil before takeoff. The pilot went through the pre-takeoff checklist and complete an engine runup. They subsequently departed and flew to Yolo County where they performed some S turn maneuvers, 360° turns around a point along with some other basic maneuvers. They completed touch and goes at Yolo County Airport as well. Mr. Williams added that during this time he observed the accident pilot make normal

radio calls and talk about the airplane and what he was doing. They returned to the airport in Davis, California about 1400.

The entire flight took about one hour and he recalled that the accident pilot narrative his actions for the entire flight. This included reviewing the instruments and the performance of the airplane. He also noticed that the pilot was able to spot nearby traffic quickly. He could not recall if the accident pilot switched fuel tanks during the flight, nor did he take any photographs of the cockpit during this flight.

He also stated that he did not observe any abnormal behavior from the accident pilot or the airplane on the day of the accident.



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Interview #1 Summary

Guy Hooper
Accident Pilot's Father

Interview Date & Time; November 16, 2020, 1144 PT

Mr. Hooper stated that his son lived with him at the time of the accident and added that he did not observe any unusual sleep patterns or behavior in the 72 hrs that preceded the accident.

The pilot had accumulated about 50 hours in a Diamond DA-20 and 80 hours in a T-6 Texan during his time training as a pilot with the United States Navy. At the time of the accident he had obtained his instrument pilot rating, commercial single-engine land, and multi-engine land. He completed the instrument rating and commercial certificate in San Diego, California and then relocated to Northern California about 8 months later where he obtained his multi-engine add-on locally. The accident pilot was building time in the accident airplane to 500 hours so he could seek employment flying for a Part 135 operator.



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Interview #1 Summary

Josh Michael
Pilot

Interview Date & Time; January 4, 2021, 1326 PT

Mr. Michael stated that the accident pilot would accompany him when he flew passengers on demand in a Baron and Kingair.

In the Baron they would frequently fly to San Jose to collect passengers and return to Sacramento. The accident pilot would “tag along,” but this was also an opportunity for him to become introduced to twin-engine high performance airplanes. Mr. Michael would answer questions from the accident pilot during these flights and also familiarize the pilot with the San Jose area. During the last flight they completed to San Jose they were returning passengers to the city in good VFR weather conditions. The accident pilot would fly the airplane while Mr. Michael would work the radios. Mr. Michael stated that he never had any concerns about the pilot’s flying in either airplane.

According to Mr. Michael, the Baron had 2 fuel tanks with 2 fill ports per tank. The fuel selector of the Baron allowed the pilot to toggle between ON, OFF, or crossfeed. Mr. Michael stated that

he would only use crossfeed in single engine operation. Normally engine one uses fuel from the left tank and engine two uses fuel from the right fuel tank.

In the Kingair, the pilot would fly the airplane as well, but Mr. Michael stated that he had to walk him through which power settings to use since it's a twin turboprop airplane. The fuel selector in the Kingair is similar to the Baron with ON, OFF and crossfeed options. The airplane contains both main and auxiliary fuel tanks, but transfers fuel from the auxiliary to the main tanks automatically.



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Interview #1 Summary

Wylie Carder
Airplane Owner

Interview Date & Time; November 11, 2020, 1324 PT

Mr. Carder stated that he had owned the accident airplane for about 30 years and never experienced any issues with it during that time. He was a neighbor of the accident pilot's father. Mr. Carder had an agreement with the pilot that he would pay for routine maintenance and for his own fuel. He flew with the accident pilot for about 12 hours so that he could be added to the insurance policy, which they completed in October.

Interview #2 Summary

Wylie Carder
Airplane Owner

Interview Date & Time; November 17, 2020, 1445 PT

According to Mr. Carder, the last time he flew the accident airplane, on November 7, he landed with about 2-3 gallons of fuel in one fuel tank and 6-7 gallons in the other. He stated that he wanted the accident pilot to fly the airplane like he did and told him to keep one fuel tank as his margin and the other fuel tank as his main fuel tank. According to Mr. Carder, the airplane consumed 5.5 to 6gph in cruise flight consistently. He also stated that the fuel gauges were accurate in his experience. Mr. Carder stated that he told the pilot to land on the tank with the most fuel in case you uncover a fuel port. He further remarked that the told the pilot that when flying alone the tank with the lowest quantity should be on his side of the airplane and the other side should have more fuel to maintain balance.

Mr. Carder stated that he did not have any doubts about the accident pilot's flying abilities. During flights together Mr. Carder would fly a few laps in the traffic pattern before the pilot would take over. They flew to Oroville and Willows, but never Nevada County or Davis. He also advised the pilot to avoid Tahoe due to the airplane's climb rate. He further added that the airplane normally climbed at 500 fpm, maybe 700 fpm on a cold day, but about 5,000 ft field the climb rate would reduce to 200-300 fpm.

Interview #3 Summary

Wylie Carder
Airplane Owner

Interview Date & Time; November 19, 2020, 1027 PT

The owner also stated that he taught the pilot to manage limited fuel resources and to set a timer in the airplane if he had to. He also told the pilot not to run the fuel tanks under 3 gallons and to plan his fuel consumption based on 6 gph or 1 gallons every 10 minutes.

Mr. Carder stated that when he last flew the airplane on Saturday, 11/7, he landed with approximately 6 gallons in the right tank and 2-3 gallons in the left tank.

Interview #4 Summary

Wylie Carder
Airplane Owner

Interview Date & Time; April 13, 2021, 1353 PT

The owner stated that he tried to leave it to the pilot to practice switching fuel tanks when they flew together. According to Mr. Carder, he advised the pilot a couple of times if the pilot thought he should be switching tanks. He stated that he also suggested to the pilot that he never run the

fuel under 5 gallons per tank, that he set a timer on his phone to manage his fuel, and to select a point at which to switch fuel tanks.