



Record of Conversation

Fabian Salazar
Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Air Safety Investigator

NTSB Accident Number: WPR21FA211
Aircraft Registration & Make/Model: N1727T / Cessna 172
Accident Location: Eden, Utah
Accident Date: May 29, 2021

Christopher Edwards
Weber County Sheriff's Deputy
May 30, 2021

In an interview with Deputy Edwards, first on scene, he stated that he was called to respond to a potential airplane crash. As he approached the scene and could see smoke and was able to access a service road. He had to cut a lock to gain access to the location. While at the accident scene, he observed the pilot on the left side of the road near the creek. The deputy stated that the pilot had walked downstream about 100 yards and then turned around and walked back toward the accident. He said the pilot appeared badly burned and without clothing. He appeared to have a wound to his head. He reported the pilot was in shock but answered questions in a coherent and credible manner. The deputy said the pilot accurately answered questions pertaining to his name, birth date, and stated that "he got caught in a downdraft."



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

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

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

Interview #1 Summary

Austin White
Introductory Student of Accident Pilot

Interview Date & Time; June 10, 2021, 1333 PT

Mr. White stated that he flew with the accident pilot on May 15, 2021 on an introductory flight. According to Mr. White, he had his private pilot license at the time of the flight. The student reported that he showed up 15 minutes early and the accident pilot was already waiting for him and informed him that he already completed the aircraft weight and balance. The accident pilot then gave Mr. White a tour of the facilities, classrooms, testing center and the hangar. He walked Mr. White through a preflight inspection of the airplane and the checklists. After they boarded the airplane, the pilot asked Mr. White what he wanted to do and the student asked to fly over Salt Lake. Following their departure they flew under 5,500 ft and then climbed to about 8,500 ft after they exited class D airspace. They flew over Salt Lake City and returned to the airport where they completed one touch and go before returning to the ramp. Mr. White stated that he flew the entire flight since he completed his training in a Cessna 172 (the airplane they were flying) while the accident pilot worked the avionics. During the accident flight the pilot walked Mr. White through the checklist, operation of the Garmin G1000. They did not perform any maneuvers.



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Interview #1 Summary

Brad Burt
Student of Accident Pilot

Interview Date & Time; June 21, 2021, 1400 PT

Mr. Burt stated that he started flying with ATP on October 20, 2020 without any prior flight experience. He earned his private pilot certificate at the end of January 2021, his instrument at the end of March that year and his commercial certificate in the beginning of May. He flew with Braeden Raleigh April 13 – 16, during which time they mostly practiced commercial flight maneuvers in a practice area northwest of Ogden, Utah and Brigham City, Utah. They also completed a couple of cross-country flights.

Mr. Burt stated that he didn't like him as an instructor. On April 16, during their first flight together, a night cross-country, Mr. Raleigh told Mr. Burt that he was not excited to be an instructor after Mr. Burt inquired. The student also stated that he didn't feel Mr. Raleigh was the safest pilot. On one occasion while climbing out after having just departed Tooele, Utah, Mr. Raleigh asked Mr. Burt to turn off the lights on the primary flight display (PFD) and multi-function display to see the stars. Mr. Burt refused as they were near mountainous terrain in night conditions. Their destination was Wendover, Utah. On another occasion while returning to

Ogden from Brigham City after some practice maneuvers, the instructor asked Mr. Burt if he wanted to see how many “g’s” the airplane could take and subsequently pulled back on the yoke and “got the red chevrons on the PFD.” Mr. Burt also stated that the instructor struggled performing lazy 8 maneuvers.

On April 27 or 28th, after about 4-5 flights together, Mr. Burt approached a training support specialist with ATP to request a new instructor. He didn’t leave any comments about the instructor in the company’s dashboard. Mr. Burt did not receive a new instructor after he made the request.

According to his recount, he sometimes flew over the area of the accident site, but was typically at 11,500 ft or 12,000 ft. mean sea level. He stated there were no mountain courses with ATP, but the addition of mountain flight training would be helpful for awareness. Mr. Burt’s private pilot instructor was adamant about the consequences of flying in mountain environments. During his introductory flight, they flew over Ogden Canyon and Pineview Reservoir and then returned to their departure airport. They did not fly over Powder Mountain.



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Interview #1 Summary

Brandon Openshaw
Introductory Student of Accident Pilot

Interview Date & Time; June 11, 2021, 1403 PT

Mr. Openshaw stated that he already had a private pilot certificate when he completed his introductory flight with the accident pilot on May 14, 2021. The original instructor he was assigned to was unavailable, so the accident pilot filled in. He met with the pilot the morning of the flight and they performed a preflight inspection of the airplane together. The pilot then asked Mr. Openshaw what he wanted to do with the flight. They subsequently flew west of Ogden near the salt flats where they practiced maneuvers including power on and power off stalls, and steep turns. The pilot did most of the flying.



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Interview #1 Summary

Brent Criddle
Father of Student Pilot

Interview Date & Time; April 6, 2022, 1321 PT

Mr. Criddle stated that his son did not ski frequently and that his son may have skied 3-4 times in his life. He further remarked that his son had never been to Powder Mountain to his knowledge.



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Interview #1 Summary

Conner Fox
Introductory Student of Accident Pilot

Interview Date & Time; June 10, 2021, 1500 PT

According to Mr. Fox, he had accumulated a total of 35 hours of flight experience in a Piper Archer working towards his private pilot license when he had his introductory flight on May 26, 2021. The accident pilot called him the day before the introductory flight to inform him that they had assigned him a new instructor. When he arrived, the accident pilot gave him a tour of ATP's facility and asked him where he wanted to go, but Mr Fox did not select a destination for the day's flight. The accident pilot preflight the airplane prior to departure. Mr. Fox did most of the flying while the pilot worked the Garmin G1000 and made the radio calls. During the flight the pilot told Mr. Fox that he had accumulated a total of about 350 flight hours and was teaching 3-4 students at the time. He further remarked that he had one student fail a checkride, which was his fault because he didn't ask the student if there was anything he needed help on.

They flew over the great Salt Lake and then back to Ogden, Utah. During the flight they covered positive exchange of controls, climbs, descents, and cruise flight and talked for most of the flight.



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Interview #1 Summary

Gar Phelps
Friend of Accident Pilot

Interview Date & Time; June 15, 2021, 0941 PT

Mr. Phelps stated that he started flying 40 years ago and had accumulated a total of 3,000 flight hours, owns a Cessna 210 and also bought a Cessna 182. He first took the accident pilot out on a flight when he was 3 years old. The accident pilot started flying with Mr. Phelps additionally about 1.5 years before the accident when he first started taking flying lessons. During flights together they would fly near the greater Salt Lake City area, but never in the mountains. Mr. Phelps stated that he flew over Powder Mountain and the accident site the day after the accident and was about 1,000 above ground level. In his opinion, he believes that the accident pilot realized he couldn't make the summit. He further remarked that the entrance to the canyon where the accident occurred looked like an illusion and the accident pilot probably thought he could clear the top of the summit.



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Interview #1 Summary

Jimmy Clews
ATP Flight Standards Instructor

Interview Date & Time; June 14, 2021, 1029 PT

Mr. Clews reported that he is a flight standards instructor for ATP responsible for completing students' evaluation flights and supports instructors if their student is lacking in a particular area. The accident flight, Braeden Raleigh, was assigned to Mr. Clews at the time of the accident and they interacted about 2-3 times per week. They flew together once when Mr. Raleigh was new. Mr. Clews stated that he didn't have a good "feel for how he was" at the time, but knew that Mr. Raleigh had a reputation as a good pilot. Mr. Clews reported that Mr. Raleigh's expectations were high as he seemed to be looking for perfection.

According to Mr. Clews, introductory flight locations are selected by the instructor and he usually flies introductory students to a practice area northwest of Ogden airport and sometimes to Pineview Reservoir through Ogden Canyon if the weather was appropriate. He would normally approach Ogden Canyon at 8,000 ft – 8,500 ft mean sea level before entering the mouth of the canyon. His goal is to have the ridges below him as he enters the canyon, but sometimes he would enter with the ridges a bit above him while climbing.

During introductory flights Mr. Clews allows the student to take control of the airplane (except for takeoff and landing) to expose them to climbs/descents, and straight and level work. Mr. Clews stated that he did not see a reason why any instructor would take a student to Powder Mountain, where the accident took place, due to the limited time they have to complete the introductory flight and safety concerns as Powder Mountain is a high terrain mountain area.

Mr. Clews stated that he knew where the accident took place and doesn't know anyone he works with that would fly through the canyon where the accident airplane was found, nor does he know why the accident pilot was there. The flight standards instructor further remarked that he had flown over Powder mountain about 11,000 – 12,000 ft mean sea level, but not through the canyon.

He stated that the instructors discuss mountain wave and how it can get bumpy and mountain training is part of a mandatory lesson the private pilot phase. During flight the concept of mountain flying comes up casually because they feel downdrafts and updrafts, but the teaching depends on the instructor.

Interview #2 Summary

Jimmy Clews
ATP Flight Standards Instructor

Interview Date & Time; June 17, 2021, 1502 PT

According to Mr. Clews, the instructors discuss downdrafts, updrafts, and turbulence with their students casually because its something they encounter in the region. Mr. Clews stated that he talks about it with his students because they encounter it often. First, he asked students why they're experiencing the mountain weather condition and waits for them to inform him its due to the mountains nearby. Further, Mr. Clews also instructs how air flows over and down mountains and the use of maneuvering speed in turbulent conditions. Additionally, he instructs them to use true airspeed to improve their situational awareness. They also discuss aircraft performance including density altitude, takeoffs and landing.

In his experience some instructors are stronger at flying in mountain conditions than others.

Mr. Clews stated that he believed that Mr. Raleigh had mountain knowledge, but that the cause of the accident was likely the result of whoever's decision to enter the canyon. He believes there should be greater emphasis on decision making and more training on mountain knowledge.

Interview #3 Summary

Jimmy Clews
ATP Flight Standards Instructor

Text Message Conversation Date & Time; December 8, 2021, 1354 PT

During a follow-up conversation, Mr. Clews stated that he later learned that mountain flying is not in ATP's training curriculum.



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Interview #1 Summary

Kris Rosser
Regional Lead Instructor at ATP, Ogden, Utah

Interview Date & Time; June 11, 2021, 1502 PT

Ms. Rosser stated that the ATP Ogden base had 9 Cessna airplanes and 2 Piper Seminole airplanes with 12-15 instructors at the time of the interview. According to her, each instructor had about 4 students. Part of her job as a regional lead instructor with ATP was to perform evaluation flights with students every 2 weeks and to be the contact point for the Western region concerning evaluations. Additionally, she would perform phase checks for candidates, and to provide guidance and mentoring to instructors. At the time of the interview, she had about 1,300 total flight hours, mostly accumulated in the Cessna 172SP. She started her flying career with ATP in its professional pilot program.

Ms. Rosser reported that she never flew with the accident pilot. She stated that the company manual for introductory flights is one page and covers the four fundamentals of flight and different phases of flights. The company does not provide any formal guidance or a list of locations for instructors to fly. She generally takes prospective students to the company's practice area northwest of the departure airport, or to Brigham City. Ms. Rosser further added

that there's nothing written that would have prevented the accident pilot from flying to Powder Mountain for an introductory flight, but that destination is typically too far for a 1 hour introductory flight. Other instructors will usually take students to Pineview Reservoir.

Interview #2 Summary

Kris Rosser

Regional Lead Instructor at ATP, Ogden, Utah

Interview Date & Time; June 14, 2022, 1532 PT

Ms. Rosser further remarked that instructors normally fly over Ogden Canyon or Sardine Canyon for introductory flights. For flights over Ogden Canyon, the instructor contacts Ogden Tower to let them know they will need to circle before entering the canyon. They generally try to maintain at least 8,000 ft mean sea level before entering the canyon. She added that they can be level with the ridgeline when they reach the canyon, but should be above most of it. Ms. Rosser stated that she prefers to maintain 8,500 ft mean sea level while flying over Pineview Reservoir. During introductory flights she covers the four fundamentals of flight and talks the prospective student through straight and level flight, turns, and turning to a heading. She also might demonstrate a steep turn.

She stated that Powder Mountain is not a specific destination for them and not used for introductory flights in general due to time.

According to Ms. Rosser, ATP doesn't teach any specific mountain flight training; however, some of the mountain flying concepts are taught in the private phase by the instructors.



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Interview #1 Summary

Rosendo Felix
Introductory Student of Accident Pilot

Interview Date & Time; June 10, 2021, 1302 PT

Mr. Felix stated that he flew with the accident pilot on May 26, 2021 during an introductory flight. When he called ATP to book the flight, they selected an instructor for him; however, his assigned instructor was changed the day before the flight took place. He arrived at the airport and met the accident pilot who gave him a tour of the facility and the airplanes. The pilot also told him where the introductory tour would take place and did not provide him with any options. He walked Mr. Felix through his preflight inspection of the airplane before they boarded the airplane. During takeoff, the pilot allowed Mr. Felix to pull back on the yoke. They subsequently flew to Wendover, Utah near the salt flats where the pilot performed some basic maneuvers. The pilot controlled the airplane while in the air for the rest of the flight.

During the flight the pilot covered positive transfer of controls, taxiing, straight and level flight, climbs, descents, and turns. He also allowed the pilot to taxi the airplane after the landing and to the airport run-up area.



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Interview #1 Summary

Ryan Hormann
Former Instructor of Accident Pilot

Interview Date & Time; June 15, 2021, 1343 PT

Mr. Hormann stated that the accident pilot had been assigned to him to complete private, instrument, commercial single engine land and commercial multi-engine land training. Another instructor oversaw the accident pilots' flight instructor, instrument instructor, and multi-engine instructor training. Mr. Hormann stated that he graduated from ATP's training program in February 2019 and started instructing at the Ogden, Utah base, after training in their Denver location in March 2019. He then left ATP in July 2020. He stated that ATP doesn't normally give beginning instructors students seeking their private pilot certificate because they are more difficult to train than a pilot with experience. The lead instructors usually give the beginning instructors instrument and instrument instructor candidates to ease them in.

In his experience, the accident pilot worked hard and prepared well for each lesson. Mr. Hormann stated that he was never worried about the accident pilot falling behind. He further remarked that the accident pilot was there "to win" and that he wanted to be a pilot "real bad."

According to Mr. Hormann, he would perform introductory flights with prospective students over Pineview Reservoir through Ogden Canyon. On some occasions he would take prospective students to the salt flats or Brigham City and sometimes the canyon loop, but rarely anywhere else due to the time limitation associated with an introductory flight. Mr. Hormann enjoyed introductory flights because he had an opportunity to fly the airplane. During these flights he would usually circle the mouth of Ogden Canyon to gain altitude and would typically be above the peaks of the canyon before entering otherwise you'd encounter turbulence. He would then fly over the reservoir about 1,500 – 2,000 ft above ground level and perform simple maneuvers such as steep turns. During flights he would also discuss coordination, turns, pitch, power and trim. He recalled that radio coverage was not adequate over the reservoir unless above the terrain.

Mr. Hormann stated that he never heard of anyone flying through or over Powder Mountain during an introductory flight while he was there and that there would be no reason because of the time limit. In Mr. Hormann's opinion, the accident pilot's skill would not lead him to believe that he would have flown over Powder Mountain for an introductory flight.

Mr. Hormann further reported that ATP does not teach instructors how to perform introductory flights.

Interview #2 Summary

Ryan Hormann

Former Instructor of Accident Pilot

Interview Date & Time; June 16, 2021, 1303 PT

Mr. Hormann stated that he never received any specific mountain flight training when he was training at ATP's Denver location mostly because they never flew west towards the Colorado Rockies. He stated that he self-funded a mountain flight ground course with another flight school to improve his mountain flight knowledge.

He stated that he did not recall any mountain flight training ground or flight work during his time as a student or instructor with ATP. Although, ATP may have had a module on its intranet site, but he did not recall. In his experience, the instructor and student may have discussed mountain flying concepts when they came up, but it wasn't included in ATP's curriculum, nor was it a requirement that mountain flying be taught by any instructor.

Mr. Hormann reported that he discussed mountain flying with some of his students, but it wasn't part of his standard curriculum.



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Interview #1 Summary

Tyler Potter
Student of Accident Pilot/Instructor

Interview Date & Time; June 24, 2021, 0900 PT

Mr. Potter stated that he started flying with ATP in October 2020 and without any prior flight experience. He started flying with Braeden Raleigh as his instructor in April 2021 for training towards his Commercial pilot certificate and was Mr. Raleigh's first student. They flew together for under a month doing commercial training and cross country flights. In Mr. Potter's experience, the instructor was a "cool dude" who was by the book. He recalled that they completed one night cross country to Wendover. During touch and go practice, the instructor insisted that Mr. Potter perform the landing checklist each time. Mr. Potter stated that he never felt unsafe flying with the accident pilot/instructor. On one occasion he remember Mr. Raleigh demonstrated lazy 8's and made some mistakes, but he walked Mr. Potter through what mistakes he had made. He had heard that Mr. Raleigh turned off the lights on the glass panel display during a night flight because he wanted to see the stars. He heard this through a crew partner who was roommates with one of Mr. Raleigh's students.

Mr. Potter reported that his introductory flight with ATP was through Ogden Canyon, over Pineview Reservoir, then north to Brigham City, Utah and finally south over the highway and back to the airport. They did not fly over Powder mountain nor had he ever heard of anyone flying over Powder mountain during his time at the ATP Ogden campus. In his opinion, ATP was strict about mountain flying. During his private and instrument training phases, while flying through Ogden Canyon the instructor would emphasize downdrafts, updrafts, and a few options for emergency landings. Most flights went northwest or south away from the mountain terrain east of the airport (where Powder Mountain was).



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Interview #1 Summary

Tyson Howes
Former Instructor of Accident Pilot

Interview Date & Time; June 17, 2021, 1302 PT

Mr. Howes stated that he started training with ATP in November 2018 and graduated from the program in September 2019. He started instructing for ATP in October 2019. He had accumulated about 1,200 flight hours when he left ATP in February 2021. All his primary training and instruction work was completed at ATP's Ogden base. His flight instructor training was completed in Florida.

Mr. Howes reported that he completed a total of 10 flights with the accident pilot. At the time Mr. Howes was a lead instructor at ATP and his primary function was to perform stage checks with candidates and mock check rides. He also signed the accident pilot off for his multi-engine instructor certificate checkride.

According to Mr. Howes, the accident pilot "blew it out of the water" during a cross country flight together and excelled at each stage check. He never had the opportunity to fly with the accident pilot when he was an instructor.

Mr. Howes also performed introductory flights with prospective students and the location varied on weather. These flights usually took about 1 flight hour, during which time he would typically fly the prospective student to Pineview Reservoir, and sometimes north to Brigham or the practice area, but never took them over Powder Mountain. Mr. Howes stated that he selected these destinations after talking with other instructors and Powder Mountain was never mentioned as a possible location. He also never did any canyon flying as he liked to maintain a couple thousand feet over mountains. On one occasion he passed over Powder Mountain during a flight to Evanston. During flights through Ogden Canyon he always circled to gain altitude and planned to be about 7,500 ft mean sea level (msl) prior to entering the canyon. They would normally be about 9,500 ft – 10,500 ft msl.

The former instructor stated that ATP never had a specific part of the curriculum dedicated to mountain flying. During primary flight training they held discussions about temperature, aircraft performance and high density altitude areas. Instructors would sometimes casually discuss mountain flying during training flights, specifically downdrafts, updrafts, and turbulence. He also believes mountain flying may have been covered in ATP's online platform, Whiteboard. In his opinion, the students could benefit from a specific curriculum dedicated to mountain flying as there is an art/skill to it. He further remarked that more training in this areas is necessary.

He never received any specific training on how to conduct an introductory flight, but thinks it may have been mentioned some point during his training. After viewing it on a map, he stated that Powder Mountain was further northeast than he would have taken an introductory flight.



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Interview #1 Summary

Zach Raleigh
Brother of Instructor

Interview Date & Time; June 14, 2021, 0846 PT

Mr. Raleigh stated his brother was living with him at the time of the accident and went to bed about 9pm almost every night. On Friday morning he saw the accident pilot about 0830-0900 as he was leaving the house and did not observe anything unusual about him.

According to Mr. Raleigh, his brother flew 3-4 introductory training flights in the month that preceded the accident flight and told him that he enjoyed it. He further remarked that his brother told him that it gave him the opportunity to interact with prospective students and to discuss the program with them. Most of the time he flew introductory training flights over the Great Salt Lake towards Wendover. His brother never talked about Powder Mountain.

Interview #1 Summary

Zach Raleigh
Brother of Instructor

Interview Date & Time; April 7, 2022, 1029 PT

Mr. Raleigh stated that his brother enjoyed skiing in his leisure time, but did not know if his brother ever skied on Powder Mountain or if he was aware of it.