

From: [REDACTED]
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Subject: Statement on N87GX gear collapse
Date: Thursday, November 5, 2020 11:26:50 AM

Nov. 5, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

Had been working on polishing up my landings with my CFI, Wesley King (Wes), flying N87GX pretty much exclusively.

Went up Sunday, Nov 1, with Wes in N87GX, and then again on Tuesday, Nov 3 by myself to dial in pattern speed and altitude control. No problems with the aircraft and the landings on Tuesday felt good.

On Wednesday, Nov 4 2020, Wes and I took N87GX up again to review landings. Everything proceeded normally. Did a normal takeoff, a normal landing, and a soft field takeoff. No problems with the aircraft and actually got a compliment on my landing.

On the soft field landing, was settling onto the runway carrying a little power, stall indicator was barely chirping, and I was waiting for the "bump" indicating that the wheels had settled on the pavement. During the last few seconds of the "landing", we had started to drift a little to the left and I started adding some control inputs to counteract that. About that time Wes grabbed the controls and you could hear crunching sounds (as it turned out the gear was collapsing). I went to apply full power to abort the landing and Wes grabbed my hand to stop me. At that point, Wes had control of the aircraft and we "were along for the ride". As he was working with the controls, I got on the radio and reported to the tower that we had a gear collapse. After we had pretty much come to a stop, Wes gunned the engine and was able to "drag" N87GX clear of the runway and onto the taxiway.

At the time, my first thoughts were, "OMG, I've broken the plane" and then "wait a minute, it wasn't *that* hard a landing". It felt like I had dropped the plane in from maybe 1 or 2 feet off the ground.

Post Landing Notes

In reviewing things later, it appears that I had a pretty good landing (why I didn't feel the landing "bump" or hear any sideways wheel squeak) with the main gear failing almost immediately upon touchdown. My drift to the left apparently was caused by the gear collapse. The ground staff person who did the runway FOD inspection said we had left a pretty good mark or path to the left on the runway.

I realized almost immediately after Wes stopped me that applying full power would

not have been a good idea. Doing a go around with damaged landing gear would not have ended well. Wes and I later reviewed the rule that if you're on the ground when things go wrong, you stay on the ground - it's much safer.

-- Christopher E. Daley