



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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Aviation Accident Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: 6/1/2021
Person Contacted: Travis Almuti (pilot)
NTSB Accident Number: WPR21LA208

Narrative:

The following is a synopsis of the information provided by the pilot on N75016 in a telephone conversation on this date:

The airplane was owned by a man who completed a full restoration in 2013. The airplane was then flown for a year, but the previous owner stopped flying due to a medical condition. The accident pilot bought this airplane on 5/20/2021. Prior to the accident, the pilot had been flying in other Stearman for about a year. He added that his friend owns a Stearman and that he would fly with him.

Vintage Ways was hired to complete an annual inspection. After the airplane was signed off to be airworthy, the pilot bought the airplane, the airplane was flown from Fraser Lake (1C9) to Hollister back to 1C9 without any anomalies.

On May 25, 2021, the pilot asked Ernie to provide him an instructional walkaround and further familiarize himself with the airplane by going over a thorough preflight inspection. They spent about 3 hrs. doing a walkaround and preflight and getting everything ready for the next day which would be the pilot's first time in this airplane.

On May 26, 2021, at 1135PDT, the pilot and Chris, who acted as a pilot-rated passenger, completed a run-up at Fraser Lake with no anomalies noted. They took off and completed about 10 takeoff and landings at 1C9. Then, they decided to fly to Hollister, CA and after an uneventful flight, they landed. At Hollister they refueled (topped off; max is 42 gallons), departed and landed back at Fraser Lake at 1400. The pilot is not sure if he performed one or two landings before a takeoff that resulted in the crash. The pilot stated that during that last landing, Chris told him to apply the full power and go around. About 600 ft agl, the pilot felt something was wrong; there was

no bang, no sound indication, but he noted that the engine RPM was decaying and the airplane wasn't gaining any altitude. As they approached telephone lines, they realized that the airplane would not clear the lines and completed a forced landing in the desert. Both lower wings were damaged on impact. The pilot stated that the engine never lost complete power, RPMs were just dropping, and he wasn't gaining any altitude. He further noted that it was not a hot day, and that the density altitude should have not been a factor.