

Cawthra Joshua

From: Lyle Strader <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, September 12, 2022 7:27 PM
To: Cawthra Joshua
Subject: Smoot/Yak Incident Statement

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On September 2, 2022, I Lyle Strader, was witness to the accident of the Yak-11 Czech Mate. At approximately 10:45, Sherman Smoot took off of Minter Field runway 30 and proceeded to do a climbing left hand turn to orbit the airfield. As he climbed to roughly 1800 feet while making a NE turn, Sherman radioed to David "Ld" Hughes, that oil pressure was 26 lbs. Ld radioed back to Sherman and asked "confirming, 26 two-six?" Sherman confirmed, and Ld told him to get on the ground now. About 3-5 seconds after that last transmission, the engine made 2 loud pops and went completely silent. Sherman proceeded to make a turn towards runway 12 while dropping the landing gear. As he was on his base to final turn, the airplane appeared to stall at a very high speed and dipped the left wing and went to a very steep nose down dive. A second before impact, it appeared Sherman pulled back on the stick to flare, and the airplane disappeared behind the trees with a loud bang and dust cloud. Approximate time of crash was 10:50. At no time during this short test flight were there any smoke trails or indication of any catastrophic trails, even after the engine stopped. The propeller was freewheeling as well and was not seized from my vantage point with binoculars.

Sent from my iPhone