

National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Aviation Safety

Washington, DC 20594



WPR23FA287

ACCIDENT SITE REPORT

July 30 - Aug 1, 2023

A. ACCIDENT

Location: Upland, California
Date: July 30, 2023
Time: 0640 Pacific Daylight Time
Airplane: Beech P35, N8572M

B. ACCIDENT SITE REPORT

IIC Tealeye Cornejo
National Transportation Safety Board
Federal Way, Washington

Party Coordinator Maria LeBlanc
Federal Aviation Administration
Riverside, California

Party Coordinator Kurt Gibson
Textron Aviation
Wichita, Kansas

C. SUMMARY

On July 30, 2023, at 0640 Pacific Daylight Time, a Beech P35, N8572M, was destroyed in a postcrash fire when it was involved in an accident near Upland, California. The pilot and two passengers were fatally injured. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Federal Aviation Regulations Part 91* personal flight.



Photo 1 - View of Main Wreckage

D. DETAILS OF THE INVESTIGATION

1.0 Accident Site

The accident site was located on airport property adjacent to the Ontario Police Department Air Support Hangar. The hangar was the last hangar on the south side of the departure end of runway 24.

The left wing was found upright on the hangar rooftop near the windsock. The fuel cap assembly was the furthest piece outside also on the hangar rooftop, about 80 ft south of the left wing.

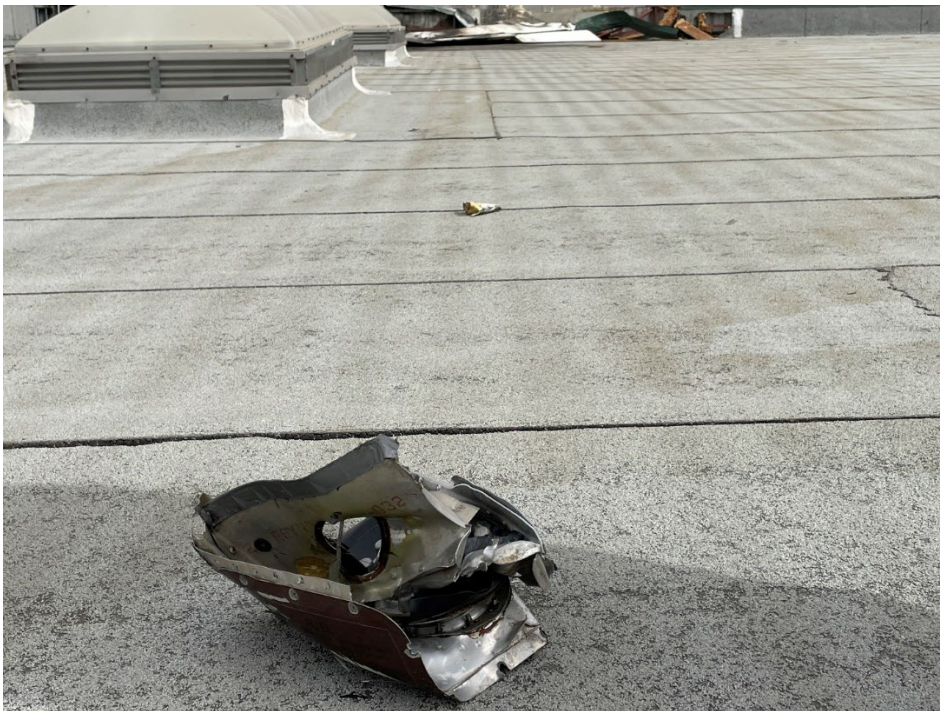


Photo 2 - Rooftop with Fuel Cap Assembly and Left Wing in Background

The remainder of the airplane came to rest at the base of the hangar on the ramp and was thermally destroyed in the postcrash fire. The right wing with its landing gear separated from the fuselage and came to rest inverted with the wing tip bent adjacent to the hangar door.

Flap setting was in the retracted position. However, because of the postcrash fire and thermal damage to the landing gear actuator gearbox, the landing gear position could not be determined.

The fuselage was thermally destroyed exposing all the flight control cables. All flight control cable separations were consistent with tension overload. Flight control continuity was established from the cockpit to all flight control surfaces.

The fuel selector valve was found in the OFF position. Manual movement of the fuel selector to the LEFT and RIGHT positions was normal and without binding.

The instrument panel was thermally destroyed. The tachometer and vertical speed indicator were identified; however, both were thermally destroyed.

Three of the four seats were found on the left side of the wreckage (closest to the hangar on the east side of the wreckage) and were lined up in a linear manner. The seat closest to the hangar door was the right front seat, the middle seat was the left front seat, and the third seat closest to the tail and runway was a rear seat. All three victims were still in their seats. Three of the four seat belt buckles were identified and were unbuckled, no male side of the seatbelt assembly; the seatbelt webbing had burned away.

The tail section was inverted and had thermally separated from the fuselage. The elevator trim actuator was measured and found to be in the neutral position.



Photo 3 - View of Main Wreckage

The nose strut with wheel assembly separated and was located inside the hangar. It was about 60 ft behind the helicopter.



Photo 4 - Nose Wheel Strut and Wheel Assembly Inside the Hangar

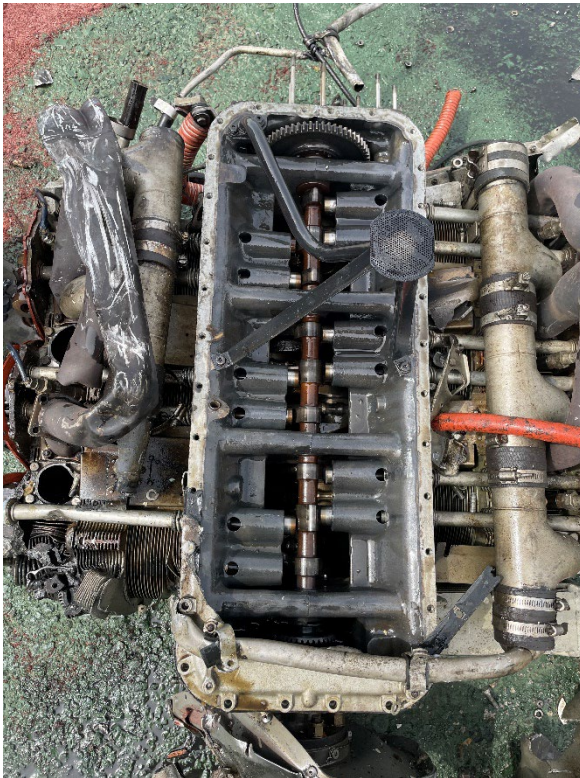
2.0 **Engine Examination**

The firewall/engine mounts, a portion of the nose, and nose landing gear were embedded in the hangar door frame.

The engine separated from the engine mounts and came to rest inverted about 20 ft northwest of the main wreckage. The oil sump was broken exposing the interior of the engine case. The oil sump was removed; the camshaft and crankshaft were intact, and the connecting rods all appeared to be intact. The Nos 5 and 6 cylinders sustained impact damage as did the front of the engine/nose-propeller hub assembly.



Photograph 5 - View of Engine



Photograph 6 - Bottom View of Engine

The top spark plugs were removed. They were sooted and appeared to show normal wear and operating signatures when compared to the Champion Aviation Check-A- Plug AV-27 chart. The magnetos separated from their respective mounting pads. The ignition leads were damaged but remained attached to the magnetos.

Seven of the ignition leads were separated from their respective spark plugs. The magnetos were manually rotated and produced spark at all posts. Attempted to rotate the engine via the accessory case and the crankshaft; the engine did not rotate.



Photograph 7 - Top Spark Plugs



Photograph 8 - Top Spark Plugs

3.0 Propeller Examination

The airplane was equipped with a two-bladed McCauley propeller. The propeller hub was broken, with a portion of it remaining attached to the crankshaft. Another portion of the propeller hub along with portions of the firewall, engine mount and nose landing gear were embedded in the hangar door. Both propeller blades separated from the propeller hub.

One propeller blade was located inside the hangar on the floor at foot of a movable helicopter platform. The propeller blade had leading and trailing edge nicks and gouges, chordwise scratching, and S-bending.



Photograph 9 - Propeller Blade inside Hangar

The other propeller blade was in the main wreckage and had sustained fire damage. Leading edge nicks and gouges were identified, and the blade was curled at the tip.



Photograph 10 - Propeller Blade in Main Wreckage



Photograph 11 - Propeller Blades

4.0 **Aircraft Information**

The pilot's widow reported that the airplane logbooks were likely on board the airplane. She also reported that the airplane had a recent annual inspection but was not sure where the pilot would have had it done.

7.0 **Additional Information**

A Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector from the Riverside Flight Standards District Office (RAL FSDO) went to local businesses at the airport seeking information as to whether the airplane had been maintained at their facility. The businesses reported that they had not performed maintenance on the airplane. The FAA Inspector also contacted two mobile (travel) mechanics to see if they had worked on the airplane, the mechanics had not worked on the accident airplane.

Submitted by:

Tealeye Cornejo
Air Safety Investigator (Field)