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Air Safety Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: May 31, 2024

Subject: WPR24LA167, Memorandum for Record

Contact: David Murray, Pilot, Owner

The following is a synopsis of the information provided by Mr. Murray in a telephone conversation.

On May 31, 2024, he conducted a preflight inspection of N7522U, Canadian Car and Foundry, Harvard IV and filled the fuel tanks with fuel. The airplane has two fuel tanks, one on each wing (55 gal), and the total fuel capacity is about 110 gal. He and his passenger departed Eagles Nest/David Wardall Field Airport (CA20), Lone, California at about 10:00 am local, and landed at the Paso Robles Municipal Airport (PRB), Paso Robles, California at about 12:00 pm. During his flight, he estimated the altitude ranged from about 4,000 ft mean sea level (msl) to about 8,000 ft msl while over flying mountainous terrain. For the flight planning, he estimated 30 gal an hour for the flight.

On June 2, 2024, while at PRB, he conducted a preflight inspection of the airplane, conducted a visual inspection of the fuel level in the fuel tanks and estimated the airplane had about 65 gals of fuel in the fuel tanks. At about 11:45 am he departed with the intent to return to CA20. During the return flight, he estimated the altitude ranged from about 5,000 ft mean sea level (msl) to about 8,000 ft msl while over flying mountainous terrain. About an hour into the flight, he switched from the right fuel tank to the left reserve tank. The airplane was equipped with a four-position fuel selector lever (left reserve, left, right and off). The left wing only has one fuel tank, but has different pick up heights. Shortly after switching tanks, the engine sputtered and he switched the fuel selector lever back to the right tank. The engine again sputtered and had a complete loss of power. Unable to restart the engine, he made a radio call and elected to land in the airplane in an open field. During the landing roll, the airplane impacted a dirt berm and came to a stop. He and his passenger then exited the airplane and awaited for a friend to pick them up.