



Elliott Simpson
Senior Aviation Accident Investigator
AS-WPR

Date: July 25, 2024
Subject: WPR24LA258, Pilot Statement
Contact: Mr. Tom Hester, Pilot

During the initial phone conversation shortly after the accident, while he was still at the accident site, Mr Hester reported that immediately after the touchdown the airplane began to veer right, he applied corrective control inputs, but was not able to correct it. As the airplane approached the right side of the runway edge, he considered applying power to go-around, but the propeller touched the ground, and the airplane nosed over. The pilot stated after the accident that it was pilot error, and there were no mechanical issues with the airplane.

The following day, I called the pilot for a follow up conversation, and he stated that his mechanic found that the left wheel rim was cracked. Mr Hester thought this may cause a flat tire which may have been the reason for the loss of control. I sent him the runway skid photos, which show aluminum on the runway from the left wheel rim (as the airplane tipped onto its left side). We discussed the possibility that this caused the crack. We also discussed the fact that a crack likely would not have resulted in a flat tire due to the inner tube, and that a failed left wheel/tire would likely cause the airplane to veer left rather than right.

FAA FSDO inspectors by chance were at the airport performing surveillance, and immediately responded to the accident.