

CEN16LA369

N715FB, STINSON V-77, S/N 77-443

FAA EXAM NOTES

09/14/2016

The FAA arrived on scene of accident at approximately 11:00 on 09/14/2016. The accident had been reported by the pilot of N715FB. The pilot was at the scene and stated that he had not been injured. The location of the aircraft was documented as the GPS coordinates of 44-38-53 N, 93-34-41 W. The location was approximately 2.5 miles southeast of Jordan, MN. The damage appeared to be limited to the top of the tail section, propeller, engine cowling and wings. The fabric of the wings in the areas of apparent damage was cut open and it was determined that the wing damage appears to be limited to bending of some of the ribs and no damage to the spars were noted. There did not appear to be any damage to the firewall of fuselage other than the tail. Continuity of control of ailerons, elevator, rudder and flaps was verified with no issues noted. The fuel was unable to be accessed due to the position of the aircraft. The engine compartment was not readily accessible due to the aircraft being upside down. In order to remove the engine cowling, the fasteners on the top of the cowling need to be removed. The positions of cockpit controls and switches were photographed. The fuel selector was in the left tank position. The magneto switch appeared to be in the "Both" position. The primer appeared to be in and locked. The mixture was towards the rich position. The throttle was towards the closed position. The prop control was approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way towards the increase position. The only damage to the instruments appeared to be to the glass cover of the carburetor air gauge, which appeared to be dislodged. The initial touchdown point appeared to be at GPS coordinates of 44-38-53 N, 93-34-49 W, which is approximately 825 feet from the final resting spot of the aircraft. According to witness marks to the vegetation in the field, there were no indications of the tail being close to the ground until approximately 575 feet from the final resting spot. The aircraft appears to have landed in an easterly direction and the terrain appeared to be sloped quite a bit downhill from initial ground contact to final aircraft location.

According to a brief verbal statement obtained from the pilot while on scene, the aircraft has approximately 28 hours on the aircraft since being fully restored. The current engine has approximately 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours since installation. Prior to installation on this aircraft, the engine had approximately 7.2 hours of running on a test stand following overhaul by repair facility. This would put the time since overhaul for the engine of approximately 10 hours. The pilot was not sure of the name of the facility that overhauled the engine. That information will be obtained at a later date when the aircraft records will be reviewed. The aircraft records and pilot records were not available on scene. The pilot stated he had done some initial flights in previous days near South Saint Paul Airport (SGS) since the installation of the engine. According to his statement, on the accident day, he was planning on doing some flights to monitor and document engine parameters. He stated

that according to his notes, he started the engine at 08:12 on 09/14/2016. He had been documenting engine parameters on a notebook with the last noted entry at 08:45. At that time, all engine parameters seemed to be normal. He stated that about 10 minutes later, while at 2000 feet msl, the engine started to pop and backfire. He stated that on one of the significant backfires, the glass on the suction gauge shattered (on scene determined this to actually be the carb air gauge). He stated the engine was losing power and he was unable to maintain altitude so started to look for a suitable landing area, since he did not feel he could make it back to an airport. When asked if he noted any unusual indications on the engine instruments when he started having the issues, he stated that he was concentrating on flying the aircraft and finding a suitable landing area and was not paying attention to the instruments.

According to information from the local law enforcement at the scene, witnesses had reported hearing the aircraft come over and sputtering and making sounds like frequent gun fire. The information on witness statements and contact information will be in the local law enforcement report that will be provided to the FSDO IIC when completed.

The retrieval of the aircraft was discussed with the owner/pilot. The only insurance that he has on the aircraft was liability, so the plan was for him to remove the wings and trailer the aircraft to his hangar at SGS. He was going to attempt to cap the fuel lines and remove the fuel tanks with the remaining fuel intact before removing the wings so that fuel could be checked for contamination with FAA oversight. At the request of the FAA IIC, he is going to leave the fuselage/engine intact including the engine cowling until the FAA IIC can provide oversight of removal of cowling and examining the engine compartment.