



MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Todd Gunther
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: May 27, 2020
Subject: Accident Involving N514TW
NTSB Accident Number: ERA20CA178

On May 18, 2020, Mr. Scott Gross, the pilot of the glider advised inspector Joseph Lewis of the Federal Aviation Administration that on the day of the accident, after pre-flighting the glider and planning a route to Waynesboro, he departed Merlin Aerodrome around 1230 EDT.

He crossed the ridge into the valley at Waynesboro at approximately 8,000 feet MSL. As he moved south to connect with the ridges, he attempted to find lift under a few clouds and over a few fields but was unsuccessful.

He identified a few potential landing sites and I decided on a brown, flat field that appeared to have been recently tilled and appeared to be an acceptable landing site. He set up for a landing and deployed the glider's sustainer engine. The engine failed to start so he continued his approach in the pattern to land. The right wing struck the ground and the glider ground looped. he exited the glider with insignificant injuries and no damage to the property of others.

On May 19, 2020, Inspector Lewis, asked Mr. Gross if he felt there was a malfunction with the engine or if there was just not enough time to start it before he landed.

On the same day, Mr. Gross responded that, he did not know if there was any malfunction with the engine, and that usually you can get it started with only about 200 feet loss of altitude, and that sometimes two cycle engines can be a little finicky and it takes a little longer to get them running. He also advised that anytime you put the engine out you should have a landing site in case it does not start (This information was also reflected in the flight manual for the engine which was provided by Mr. Gross).

On May 20, 2020, Mr. Gross advised the NTSB that there was no mechanical malfunction or failure, and that he would recommend trying to start the engine at a higher altitude.