



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Stephen Stein
Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Office of Aviation Safety - Eastern Region

NTSB Accident Number: ERA15LA039
Aircraft Registration & Make/Model: N284CF
Accident Location: New Smyrna Beach, Florida
Accident Date: October 29, 2014

Note: The following interviews were documented by the Investigator –In-Charge (IIC), Stephen Stein.

Interview #1 Summary

Eliot Cross
Pilot of Accident Airplane

Interview date/time: November 3, 2014 0845 EDT

Interviewer was Stein.

Mr. Cross stated that he was landing on runway 02 and the winds were from 060 at 9 knots, which was not a "big deal" for this airplane. Runway 07 was available; however, he preferred to use runway 02 because it had a shorter taxi time. The pilot stated that during the landing he closed the throttle while in the landing flare and landing in a near three point attitude relatively quickly. During the landing roll the tailwheel shimmied. According to Mr. Cross, the tailwheel has shimmied in the past, but usually an input would "make it stop." The airplane then turned to the right into the direction of the wind. The pilot applied full left directional control, but was not able to stop the turn. He then applied left brake, but didn't feel like he was getting any "braking action." The airplane began to ground loop while on the runway centerline, and was nearly half way around by the time it departed the runway to the right. The left main landing gear dug into

the ground and the right main landing gear failed aft. The pilot reported no engine problem and added that the flight controls all "felt normal."

According to Mr. Cross he had about 40 hours of total time in Curtiss airplanes. The accident airplane had arrived from the United Kingdom in mid-September and, after construction, had been approved for 5 hours of local flight time for Mr. Cross to get acquainted with the airplane and perform some test flights.

Interview #2 Summary

Eliot Cross

Pilot of Accident Airplane

Interview date/time: November 21, 2014 1434 EDT

According to Mr. Cross the accident occurred during his second flight in the accident airplane. The first flight took place within 30 days of the accident and only lasted a few minutes. During this flight the pilot encountered a several coolant overtemp shortly after he retracted the landing gear. The radiators had failed as a result of the overtemp and a mist of coolant was leaking from the engine. The pilot completed a no flap landing with a tailwind. The tailwheel shimmied during the landing, but there were no directional control problems. While the coolers were being repaired the maintenance staff verified that the tailwheel cables "hardly had any slack in them" and that the cables had been "good and tight" during the initial flight.

Stein Stephen

From: eliot cross [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2015 4:20 PM
To: Stein Stephen
Subject: RE: NTSB Investigation: N284CF

Yes, it was four or five years since I'd been flying the D model that Tom Reilly built up. That was the last P-40 time until the B model. My first hop in CF was VERY short due to an overtemp about the time the gear came up. The second (incident)hop was an hour. It was about a month and a half between hops, and no one else flew the airplane. Touchdown probably between 75 & 80 statute. Have a good weekend, Eliot

Subject: FW: NTSB Investigation: N284CF
Date: Fri, 20 Mar 2015 15:22:34 -0400
From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]

And I'm talking about strict time in this make/model, not in general.

Also, how much time had elapsed between the first flight and accident flight? Was the airplane flown by anyone else during this time?

From: Stein Stephen
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2015 3:10 PM
To: 'eliot cross'
Subject: RE: NTSB Investigation: N284CF

One more question. You told me that you only had one flight on top of this one that lasted a few minutes and the accident flight was about an hour long. In the form you also stated that you accumulated 1.2 hours in the past 30 days in this accident airplane make/model. Would it be true to state that you have accumulated 1.2 hours in the past 4-5 years then?

From: eliot cross [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2015 2:32 PM
To: Stein Stephen
Subject: Re: NTSB Investigation: N284CF

About 4 or 5 years previous if memory serves me

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 20, 2015, at 12:38 PM, "Stein Stephen" [REDACTED] wrote:

Hi Eliot,

I'm building my factual report for the investigation of N284CF and was wondering if you could answer a question for me. You listed about 40 hours of experience in the aircraft make/model. When was the last time you flew a P-40 before the first test flight of N284CF (not the accident)?

Thanks,

Stephen

From: eliot cross [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, November 07, 2014 4:08 PM
To: Stein Stephen
Subject: RE: NTSB Investigation: N284CF

That's what was entered on the entry for the recent condition inspection. Have a good weekend. I'll be gone sunday through probably next thursday. I understand Gary is going to get copies of all the logbook stuff he has to you. From my conversation with him today, I understand that you interpreted my comment on the brake as a "failure". I wouldn't consider it as such. It just didn't give me what I needed at the time. Keep in mind, those old drum brakes are nothing to write home about even at their best. The brakes on the "K" model I flew previously gave me trouble a time or two, but never in a situation that would produce results such as what happened to me in 4CF. eliot

Subject: RE: NTSB Investigation: N284CF
Date: Fri, 7 Nov 2014 15:53:44 -0500
From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Eliot,

The form came through OK. You listed the aircraft total time as 99 hours. I just wanted to be sure that is accurate.

Stephen

Stephen Stein
Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Eastern Region Aviation

[REDACTED]

From: eliot cross [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, November 07, 2014 3:10 PM
To: Stein Stephen
Subject: RE: NTSB Investigation: N284CF

Subject: NTSB Investigation: N284CF
Date: Mon, 3 Nov 2014 09:18:02 -0500
From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Cross,

The National Transportation Safety Board is investigating the accident of N284CF, a Curtiss P40B, which occurred on October 29, 2014 in New Smyrna Beach, Florida. You have been identified as the pilot-in-command of that aircraft.

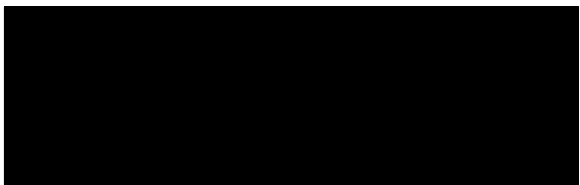
A copy of the NTSB 6120.1 form is enclosed. Please complete the pilot section and include a detailed written statement of the events as they pertain to the accident and return as soon as possible. Please pay particular attention to the narrative section of the form, and explain the facts, conditions, and circumstances surrounding the accident.

You may submit the completed and signed form to this office in any manner that is convenient to you. In the signature line of this e-mail you will find my mailing address and fax number. If you elect to submit the form by electronic mail, please be sure to print, sign (last page), scan and e-mail the form to me at [REDACTED] no later than November 10, 2014.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at the number below.

Regards,

Stephen Stein
Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Eastern Region Aviation



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