RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: December 10, 2014
Person Contacted: Daryl McMillan
NTSB Accident Number: ERA15LA062

Narrative:

FAA inspector Darrell McMillan contacted NTSB on December 1, 2014, at 1243 EST. He called from [redacted]

He provided an e-mail address of [redacted]

He inspected the airplane at the accident site, and noted the airplane was resting in a nose-low attitude. The empennage was broke away but still attached somewhat by structure. About one half of the right wing was detached due to tree contact, and he was unable to get access to the engine cowling. He could not see the bottom of the fuselage, but he did not see any oil on the windshield.

He estimated the accident site was located between ½ and 1 mile from the Hampton-Varnville Airport (3J0), Hampton, South Carolina. The ZIP Code is 29944.

The digest was reviewed with him during the phone conversation and he agreed with the content.

RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: December 6, 2014
Person Contacted: Robert Brenton Hinkle
NTSB Accident Number: ERA15LA062

Narrative:

On December 1, 2014, at 1330 EST, a conference call was made through the NTSB Response Operations Center (NTSB ROC) with Mr. Robert Brenton Hinkle. Also present on the conference call were Messrs. Kent and Grice from Continental Motors, Inc., and Mr. Brad Miller from Cirrus Aircraft.

He provided the address on his pilot certificate of [redacted] Purcellville, Virginia, [redacted] He was called at his cell phone number of [redacted] He provided an e-mail address of [redacted] He holds a private pilot certificate (certificate number [redacted], with airplane single engine land, and instrument airplane ratings. The instrument rating was issued in June 2010, and the airplane single engine land rating was issued in 2006. He holds a third class medical certificate issued 3/17/2014, with an expiration of 3/17/2015, and limitation to have available glasses for near vision. He provided a date of birth of [redacted] He indicated his total time is approximately 350 hours, of which approximately 310 hours are in make and model. He owns another Cirrus Aircraft [redacted], and estimated that he has 250 hours in it and 60 hours in the accident airplane. He used an instructor from Leesburg, Virginia, for his training; the instructor attended the Cirrus Certified Instructor Program (CCIP). His last Flight Review was on October 20, 2014, and was done in [redacted]

He indicated that the airplane is based 50 percent of the time in Sarasota, Florida, at Sarasota/Bradenton International Airport (SRQ), Sarasota, Florida, and 50 percent of the time at Leesburg Executive Airport (JYO), Leesburg, Virginia. Since owning the airplane he reported there have been no issues with the engine. The maintenance records are in Virginia.

Following manufacture of the airplane, he went to Minnesota to pick up the airplane, and then flew it home, and then to Florida, and back. At 25 hours since new, he had the mineral oil drained and oil filter changed, with new oil and oil filter at Landmark Aviation, in Frederick,

Maryland. He indicated the oil and oil filter were changed again at 50 hours since new, and since then had only operated the airplane for 10 hours. He was asked if the oil filter was cut open at the last oil and oil filter change and reported he believed so. He stated that he purchased the maintenance program from Cirrus Aircraft.

The purpose of the accident flight was pleasure. He intended to fly from SRQ to Orangeburg Municipal Airport (OGB), Orangeburg, South Carolina, which was the half way mark of the flight. The ultimate destination was KJYO. The flight was conducted under 14 CFR Part 91 as a pleasure flight. He was in the left front, Dawn Skinner was in the right front, his wife (Brenda Hinkle) was in the left rear, and his son-in-law (Michael Skinner) was in the right rear seat.

They arrived at SRQ, and while the passengers were in the car, he went inside the hangar where the airplane was parked and he did not notice any oil stains on the airplane or on the hangar floor. He removed the airplane from the hangar and topped off the fuel tanks. He then performed a preflight inspection of the airplane using "the guide" or checklist, which included checking the fuel tanks for contaminants; none were noted. He also checked the oil quantity and noted it was reading 8.0 quarts, which is considered full. After the preflight inspection was completed small bags were loaded into the airplane and he and his family boarded the airplane. Because his daughter was interested in flying she read the checklist. After engine start he taxied to the run-up area, and while there performed an engine run-up using the checklist. It included a check of the magnetos at 1,700 rpm, and checking the load of the alternators. When the checklist was completed he obtained his IFR clearance, and departed from runway 04 about 0930. He was told to expect 8,000 feet 10 minutes after departure, and after departure established contact with several air traffic control facilities. He flew towards Tampa, however, he was soon instructed to fly direct to Brunswich VORTAC, followed by direct to Savannah, followed by direct to OGB. He reported checking the engine parameters, and noted all readings citing specifically (oil temperature, oil pressure, and CHT) were in the green.

The flight continued and about 3 minutes after checking the engine parameters when near Savannah, or about 50 to 60 miles from OGB while flying at 9,000 feet with the mixture leaned to the mark and the engine between 65 and 70 percent power, or 2,400 rpm, he heard an audible warning that the oil pressure was zero. The engine power went to idle, and he did not hear any rods knocking and reported the engine was running smooth but was idled back. He reported he had no control over the power, and did not observe any oil or mist coming out of the engine and did not notice any smoke from the engine from oil getting onto a hot exhaust. He also reported he did not hear a change in sound from the propeller as if the propeller had changed pitch, and the propeller never stopped. His daughter read the display on the multi-function display (MFD) that the oil pressure displayed in the red showing 0 oil pressure. In addition, on the primary flight display (PFD) a red highlighted "WARNING" about the oil pressure displayed. He fully enrichened the mixture control and moved the throttle in an attempt to restore engine power but there was no result. Using the on-board avionics he confirmed the nearest airport was Hampton-Varnville Airport (3J0), Hampton, South Carolina, which ATC confirmed. The controller called to 3J0 to inform them, and he descended at 98 knots (best glide speed is 88 knots). Realizing he was unable to land there, he informed the passengers to tighten their restrains (seatbelts and shoulder harnesses) before activating the Cirrus Airframe Parachute System (CAPS), and pulled the parachute at 800 feet; he did not recall the airspeed at chute pull. He reported that the engine

stayed at idle during the descent, and reported the training he had received regarding the parachute matched almost identical to what occurred; however, the first jolt spooked him although he was prepared for it. He reported that while under canopy the tail came down just as the airplane hit the trees. He attributed this to the altitude of deployment. A portion of a wing was knocked off and the tail was almost separated. The airplane descended to the ground, and he reported the contact was hard.

All exited the airplane, and his son-in-law called 911 to report the accident; the call occurred at 12:01 PM EST. Using the GPS coordinates from his phone first responders arrived at the accident site. All were transported by ground to Hampton Medical Center, and his wife, who was in [redacted] was airlifted to Medical University of South Carolina. He reported that he did not see any oil on the sides of the airplane.

The following injuries were reported:

Robert B. Hinkle (Left Front Seat) – [redacted]
Dawn Skinner (Right Front Seat) – [redacted]
Brenda Hinkle (Left Rear Seat) – [redacted]
Michael Skinner (Right Rear Seat) – [redacted]

With respect to the chute pull, he reported he wished he would have done so at 1,000 feet, which would have allowed for more time for the descent under canopy to get stabilized. He also reported that he believes the lines may have been caught in the trees which could have resulted in the hard landing.

With respect to the engine, he likely attributed it to failure of the oil pump, because the oil temperature did not rise, the first indication was the oil pressure was zero.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on December 2, 2014, at 0940 EST. He replied on December 6, 2014, at 1030 EST, with, Mr. [Monville], I have reviewed the interview notes and have included correction/additional information referencing paragraphs.

Correction:
Para 2, last sentence is a statement regarding my instructor, not myself.
Para 7, in reference to the statement "He did not recall checking the oil pressure reading directly" it should be appended that my daughter read the display on the MFD that the oil pressure displayed in the red showing 0 oil pressure. In addition, on the PDF a red highlighted 'WARNING' about the oil pressure displayed.
Para 9, Brenda's [redacted]

Additional information:
Para 8, the 911 call was at 12:01 PM ET.
Since the date of our call, the outline of injuries in Para 9 need to be updated regarding my wife: she has undergone [redacted] and a possibility of [redacted] remains, at the time of this writing.
The date of BAR is 10/20/14.

I trust this will assist the investigation. If you have additional questions, I am available on my cell [redacted]

Regards,
Robbie Hinkle”

These changes were incorporated into the narrative.

RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: December 10, 2014
Person Contacted: Todd Thaxton
NTSB Accident Number: ERA15LA062

Narrative:

Mr. Todd Thaxton of Atlanta Air Salvage contacted NTSB by phone on December 2, 2014, at 1329 EST. He called from a cellular phone of [redacted]

He stated that the main wreckage was located at 32 degrees 51 minutes 38 seconds North latitude and 081 degrees 3 minutes 42 seconds West longitude. The airplane heading was 249 degrees magnetic. There were no obvious issues with the engine, and no oil was observed inside the engine compartment. In the resting position of the airplane (slight nose low), a total of four quarts registered on the oil dipstick (actually called oil gage rod and cap assembly, part number (P/N 656616-2); it was tightly secured. The empennage was fractured slightly forward of the leading edge of the horizontal stabilizer, but remained connected by control cables. He did not see any evidence of oil streaking on the empennage, but he had not yet raised the airplane.

Figure 1: View showing the fractured empennage

The right wing was broken about the location of the outboard end of the flap.

Figure 2: View of the Right Wing Fracture Location

He called the same day at 1533, and advised that the airplane was raised to a level attitude, and no oil streaking or stains was noted on the bottom of the fuselage or airframe. In a level attitude, the oil quantity registered slightly above the “8” mark on the oil gage rod cap assembly, which is full. He indicated he would check the emergency locator transmitter (ELT).

He was called the same day at 1557 EST, and was asked questions about fuel in either fuel tank. He advised that the right fuel tank was breached, but some fuel remains in the left fuel tank.

The digest was reviewed with him during the phone conversation and he agreed with the content.