



## **Record of Conversation**

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**Date: September 30, 2014**

**Person Contacted: Mr. Richard Breault**

**NTSB Accident Number: ERA12FA540, N221DV, Cirrus SR22, Falmouth, MA**

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On this date, I spoke with Mr. Breault, who was one of the flight student s of Mr. Mentkowski, and during that training, flew a Cirrus SR-20. I asked how Mr. Mentkowski passed control of the airplane, and Mr. Breault said that Mr. Mentkowski used the positive passing of control method, "I have the controls, you have the controls."

When asked if Mr. Mentkowski ever rode the controls, Mr. Breault stated that no, and that he had had about 60 prior hours of training on an SR-22 when he was in California, and that perhaps Mr. Mentkowski had good confidence that he could handle the airplane.

Mr. Breault was one of Mr. Mentkowski's students that did not pass his initial private pilot practical (flight) test. When asked what the problem areas were, Mr. Breault said that it was nerves on his part. Specifically, he had problem with dead reckoning navigation with reference to two VORs, and subsequently, did not put the airplane into a full stall, which Mr. Breault said he was not trained to do. After that, the examiner failed the test; Mr. Breault requested to complete the flight anyway, which went fine because he was then relaxed.

Mr. Breault passed his subsequent flight test.

Mr. Breault also stated that Mr. Mentkowski was "very mellow and relaxed in the cockpit. He was a good pilot, a good instructor, good instincts, who always had a plan, while other instructors would just show up to fly. He always had something he wanted to accomplish during the flight." He was also always alert; Mr. Breault felt safe with him.

Mr. Breault further noted that when a Cirrus powers up at low airspeed, "you have to be on the rudders" quickly.

Paul R. Cox  
Senior Air Safety Investigator



## **Record of Conversation**

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**Date: September 30, 2014**

**Person Contacted: Mr. Robert Colangelo**

**NTSB Accident Number: ERA12FA540, N221DV, Cirrus SR22, Falmouth, MA**

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On this date, I spoke with Mr. Colangelo, who was one of the flight students of Mr. Mentkowski, and during training, flew a Piper PA-28. He flew with Mr. Mentkowski in the latter part of his training for a private pilot license. I asked how Mr. Mentkowski passed control of the airplane, and Mr. Colangelo said that Mr. Mentkowski used the positive passing of control method, "You have the controls, I have the controls," and another response that "you have the controls."

When asked if Mr. Mentkowski ever rode the controls, Mr. Colangelo stated he may have made some "adjustments" during touch a go's, but toward the end of training he did not.

Mr. Colangelo was one of Mr. Mentkowski's students that did not pass his initial private pilot practical (flight) test. When asked what the problem areas were, Mr. Colangelo stated that there was some confusion with VOR work – how questions were asked. It was VFR navigation but the way the questions were asked made him a little nervous. He opted to return to the airport.

Mr. Colangelo passed his subsequent flight test, and there were no issues with either the landing pattern or his landings.

Mr. Colangelo thought that of the instructors he had, Mr. Mentkowski was "the best of all of them." He was the best rounded, patient, made Mr. Colangelo feel comfortable; "very thorough and meticulous."

Paul R. Cox  
Senior Air Safety Investigator



## **Record of Conversation**

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**Date: September 30, 2014**

**Person Contacted: Ms. Cathy McGuire**

**NTSB Accident Number: ERA12FA540, N221DV, Cirrus SR22, Falmouth, MA**

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On this date, I spoke with Ms. McGuire, who was one of the flight students of Mr. Mentkowski, and during training, flew a Piper PA-28. Ms. McGuire flew about 30 hours with Mr. Mentkowski, but then decided to take training in a Cirrus SR22, which at the time, he was not qualified to instruct. Ms. McGuire went on to complete her qualifications for a private pilot license.

I asked how Mr. Mentkowski passed control of the airplane, and Ms. McGuire said that Mr. Mentkowski used the positive passing of control method, "I have control, you have control, I have control."

When asked if Mr. Mentkowski ever rode the controls, Ms. McGuire noted that before her solo flight, during touch and go's, she would land, and he'd say she did a good landing, but she would be upset because she thought that Mr. Mentkowski helped her, maybe with rudder or put a finger on the yoke to influence the landing.

Ms. McGuire also stated that Mr. Mentkowski was always professional in the airplane; "encouraging," and loved to fly; always at the airport.

Paul R. Cox  
Senior Air Safety Investigator



## **Record of Conversation**

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**Date: September 30, 2014**

**Person Contacted: Mr. Robert Oetjen**

**NTSB Accident Number: ERA12FA540, N221DV, Cirrus SR22, Falmouth, MA**

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On this date, I spoke with Mr. Oetjen, who was one of the flight student s of Mr. Mentkowski, and during training, flew a Piper PA-28. He flew with Mr. Mentkowski an estimated 20-25 hours up to his checkride. I asked how Mr. Mentkowski passed control of the airplane, and Mr. Oetjen said that Mr. Mentkowski used the positive passing of control method, “I have the controls, you have the controls.” In addition, they were never in a dangerous situation where Mr. Mentkowski would have had to take the controls, and it was always very clear who had the controls.

When asked if Mr. Mentkowski ever rode the controls, Mr. Oetjen stated no.

Mr. Oetjen was one of Mr. Mentkowski’s students that did not pass his initial private pilot practical (flight) test. When asked what the problem areas were, Mr. Oetjen stated that his flight was the day before Christmas, and that his daughter arrived home the night before, and that he was tired from that night before; he may have had too many things on his plate. He also noted that he had previously done a mock check flight with Mr. Mentkowski and with another instructor, and did it “fairly well.” However, on the actual check flight, his pilotage was off; he couldn’t find the VOR in Hartford (used as a visual check point) and by the time they reached Chester, his “head wasn’t in it.” The failure had nothing to do with landing pattern or landing work.

Mr. Oetjen passed his subsequent flight test.

Mr. Oetjen thought that Mr. Mentkowski was a “very good instructor” and noted that he knew what he wanted to do, how to do it, and then did it. Mr. Oetjen enjoyed flying with him, felt no fear with him and was comfortable with him as an instructor.

Paul R. Cox  
Senior Air Safety Investigator



## **Record of Conversation**

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**Date: September 30, 2014**

**Person Contacted: Ms. Binjal Patel**

**NTSB Accident Number: ERA12FA540, N221DV, Cirrus SR22, Falmouth, MA**

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On this date, I spoke with Ms. Patel, who was one of the flight student s of Mr. Mentkowski, and during training, flew a Piper PA-28. She flew with Mr. Mentkowski the entire time she took flight training in New Haven, having taken some flight training years earlier at another location, then talking time off. I asked how Mr. Mentkowski passed control of the airplane, and Ms. Patel said that Mr. Mentkowski used the positive passing of control method, “I have the controls, you have the controls,” then repeat who had the controls.

When asked if Mr. Mentkowski ever rode the controls, Ms. Patel said no, although during some landings he would have his feet on the rudder pedals.

Ms. Patel was one of Mr. Mentkowski’s students that did not pass her initial private pilot practical (flight) test. When asked what the problem areas were, Ms. Patel said that she was very nervous. The weather wasn’t good and she should have cancelled. She was asked what altitude she was at and the altitude she gave was off by 1,000 feet. It was not something she had done before. In addition, the door came open during the flight and it distracted her.

Ms. Patel passed her subsequent flight test.

Ms. Patel thought that Mr. Mentkowski was a “pretty good instructor,” especially compared to another instructor, and he had a lot more confidence in her. She felt very comfortable with him; he explained everything very well.

Paul R. Cox  
Senior Air Safety Investigator