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Date: March 7, 9, 2023
Subject: NTSB# ERA23LA121
Contact: Scott Ling (Pilot in Command, Airplane Owner)

The individual noted above provided the following information via telephone conversation. The below contents are a summary of what was reported:

- He was planning to conduct a few approaches to Groton. He had not flown in about 30 days in the accident airplane and wanted to remain current. On the upcoming Sunday, he was planning a flight to Dover, DE.
- Everything was normal during preflight. The airplane had been pulled out of the hangar by ramp staff.
- He taxied to the runway and aborted the first takeoff. He said that "something was not feeling right" on the first takeoff.
- After this first takeoff and abort, he stated that he wished he would have told the mechanics to look at the airplane. He said, "something just did not feel right."
- He reported that he decided to depart again, due to nothing being obviously wrong with the airplane.
- He reported that on the second takeoff attempt, the airplane immediately pulled left when it got in the air. He said that the first thing through his mind was, "I gotta get this plane on the ground."
- He stated that the engine power was normal. When he knew that he needed to get the airplane on the ground, due to the left banking tendency, he started pulling back on the power and reducing thrust.
- He believed he could make a landing in the grass next to the runway, but "the plane just kept going to left" despite his attempts to lower the right wing. He recalled that the left wing hit the ground first.

- When the impact happened, he thought that everything would be fine, but then he saw sparks and fire. He subsequently was ejected from the airplane and “edged” himself away from the airplane and fire. Eventually firefighters rescued him from the wreckage.
- He stated that on the primary flight display (PFD), the fuel readings are usually correct.
- He stated that he had replaced some sort of fuel switch in the summer. He believes he may have received an erroneous fuel gauge reading.
- He stated, “there was way too much weight on the left wing” on takeoff.
- He stated that he believes a fuel shutoff valve was replaced last summer. This was the most recent work on the fuel system. It is his belief that there was some sort of fuel issue. He had a shutoff valve replaced to stop the tanks from siphoning from the right wing to the left wing. This was an ongoing issue that he was dealing with for months.
- He stated that he had not put a lot of hours on the airplane.
- The maintenance records were in the aircraft and to his knowledge were destroyed.
- He stated that there was “no problem with the engine” and that “the power was fine.”
- He stated that he had to reduce the power, due to his desire to get the airplane on the ground as soon as possible.
- He reported that the airplane “wanted to go to the left” and it wanted to “spin” to the left.
- He stated that “there is way too much weight on the left side of this plane.”
- He thought that pulling the power back, would potentially stop the left turn, however, it did not.
- He never attempted to retract the landing gear. He did not have time.
- He was asked whether there was any specific problem with the nose gear. He stated that “the nose gear wasn’t a factor in the accident.”
- He recalled that the PFD read 38 gallons were available, per side. He recalled that the fuel gauges never read the same on past flights. They “never read identical” and he suspected that the PFD total may have been incorrect.
- He stated that he is very confident that under 45 gallons per tank was present on the airplane.
- He did not want to add fuel for the accident flight, due to the short flight, which would have made the airplane over the maximum landing weight.
- He stated that for the entire accident flight, the fuel selector/ mode control was in auto mode.
- He stated that he would always try to keep the wing tanks under 45 gallons, per tank, when storing it in the hangar.

- If the tanks were over 45 gallons, the fuel would siphon out of the wing vent and leak all over the hangar. This was an issue he was still mitigating for, despite maintenance efforts to address the problem. During his last return trip to his home airport, he recalled burning off fuel during flight to ensure that under 45 gallons sat in the wing tanks.
- He reported that that must have been “a lot more fuel in the left wing” for the accident flight.
- He did not recall receiving the PFD annunciator for a 10 gallon fuel imbalance. He stated that he never experienced a fuel imbalance problem during flight. It was always a ground issue with his airplane.
- He reported that he did not visually check the fuel during the preflight. It was a short flight, and he knew that he had enough fuel to get to his destination of Groton.
- He stated that “I probably should have checked it [fuel].”
- He stated that in past instances, when he normally would check the fuel visually, it sometimes would be imbalanced to a level where it was nearly topped off on the left wing, and to a level on the right wing, you could not see the fuel.
- He was asked if there were any problems with the flight controls. He stated that the rudder was working, the ailerons were working, all flight controls were working.
- He stated that everything was working with the flight controls.
- He was specifically asked if he could recall any binding of the flight control stick, or rudder pedals. He stated that there was no binding with the stick, or rudder pedals of any kind.
- He stated that he would occasionally need to use manual fuel modes due to his concern about keeping the wing tanks below about 45 gallons (in order to prevent fuel from venting and leaking onto the hangar floor). He received a hangar clean up fee after the last instance that his airplane leaked fuel all over the hangar.
- He recalled about 40 gallons were available per side on last landing preceding the accident (about 30 days prior to the accident).
- He stated that the airplane was not insured. He stated that it was nearly impossible to get insurance on an experimental airplane like his.
- He stated that the recent maintenance work completed over the summer of the fuel shut off valve was performed by Pete Trabold.

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