



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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Air Safety Investigator
Central Region

Date: October 11, 2019 at 1430 CDT
Person Contacted: Charlie Roberts, accident pilot
NTSB Accident Number: CEN20LA004

Narrative: In a phone conversation with Mr. Roberts, he stated the following:

Ranger Fly-In at Ranger Airport for vintage airplanes. This is the third time he's attended. Family weekend at the fly-in. Those attending with him in the airplane: his son (age 6) and his neighbor (Carl). Only flew 3 people total and fuel since his friend would drive out the camping gear and heavy stuff in the car.

He got familiar with the airplane and checked out in it earlier in 2019. Rented the airplane from the owner (Rick) to go to the fly-in. Bonanza is adequate in a grass/turf runway. The runway was pretty firm dry turf. Airplane hangered at T67 (Hicks Airfield). He did walk around with Rick and filled the left main tire with air because it was slightly low. Airplane hadn't flown since Charlie flew it in late August. Uneventful flight out there. Weight and balance done on excel sheet that Charlie built for this airplane. He ran it before the flight for the worst-case loading (Charlie up front, Carl in back). Tidied up the weight and balance with a Foreflight W&B when he gets to the airplane.

Takeoff out of Hicks, airplane weighed 3,546 lbs of 3,850 lbs. Performance numbers showed he needed 1,400 ft takeoff distance. No issues with weight or performance as he planned it out. The plan was to not take fuel at Ranger because he didn't know if they had fuel, so he planned to have enough fuel for the round trip. Checked the fuel level before takeoff – 28 gallons per side on takeoff. Checked gauges on JPI and wing visual float gauges. He wanted to get there 5-6pm Friday night. Sunset was 7:12pm. Landed right at 6pm. Taxied in and marshalled to parking spot. No anomalies noted on the flight out. Made full power and normal 30 min flight.

Airplane didn't move or turn on Saturday.

Sunday morning awake about 630, sunrise. Sunday afternoon he had a flight DFW-ABQ for Fiesta, so he needed to get back home that morning. Only baggage in airplane was a small tote bag (5 lbs), 2 pillows, small blanket, and small camera case. Ready about 745am and did preflight with passenger Carl. He sumped fuel tanks and gascolator, checked good.

Friend's son (age 6) wanted to fly with them so they added another child on the return. Son is front right. Other kid in back right seat looking after. Carl in back by the door in seat 6. 3,462lbs of 3,850lbs on takeoff per the weight and balance.

Engine started fine. Taxied from parking spot to runway 19. Wind was 190 at 10 knots. 75 yards from the end of the runway pointing at hangar and propeller wash away from people. Completed 3 propeller exercises. Noted that oil temp was in yellow and not in white (which you need for takeoff power) 102 on oil pressure and went to white arc. Took extra time to fasten son's lap belt correctly – undid the whole thing and refastened it tight. Taxied to the end of runway 19, turned at the end of runway and kept rolling for soft field takeoff. Throttle, propeller, and mixture full forward. Glanced down and saw 28" of manifold pressure (MP) and climbing. Airplane had normal acceleration. 36" MP is full takeoff power. Anything 20-30" is where turbocharger kicks in. He doesn't like the JPI engine monitor because it's hard to see trends in the digits. He's looking outside and flying the airplane. Glanced down and saw 70 kts, which is rotate speed. Picked nose up. For soft field you get in ground effect then shoot for 90 kts then climb out. That was his plan.

In ground effect and it was not accelerating like normal – slugging down. Wasn't trying to climb yet but the airplane was still flying in ground effect. No pops, bangs, or surge that he felt or heard. Nothing gave him a reason to look back down at the instruments. Looking out front of windscreen and he sees not enough runway to get it down and stopped. Just saw I-20 elevated interstate with 20 ft embankment ahead. Thought about raising gear but he didn't do it. There was a clearing off to left that was recently mowed, wanted to get it in the clearing instead of straight ahead into I-20. Both hands on yoke, banked left, heard stall horn in the turn, nose was high so he couldn't see in front. Flew through mesquite trees (4) and clipped them. Propeller shredded through trees, so he yanked up on yoke and airplane slowed with the belly hitting the trees. Hit bigger chunk at the left-wing root, rotated the airplane left 140-160 deg. Airplane was about 10 ft in the air and came down into the heavy vegetation (4-6 ft high) which padded the final impact enough to come down more soft than expected.

After the airplane came to rest, he turned the key off, battery/alternator off, and fuel selector off. He does not remember the tank he was using but probably LEFT. Then evacuated himself and son through the front right. Then he opened the clamshell door by Carl and the two back passengers got out.

In May 2019 he squawked the airplane because it wasn't producing 36" MP. They did maintenance work turbo wastegate. He most recently flew the airplane from Hot Springs, AR and back. Turbocharger issue seemed to be fixed and no other engine issues. Average fuel burn is 15 to 18 gph

End of conversation.