



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy N. Sorensen
Aviation Accident Investigator
Central Region

Date: November 8, 2021
Person Contacted: Terry Hall
NTSB Accident Number: CEN22LA020 – Benton, Illinois

Narrative:

Mr. Hall provided the following additional information regarding the accident:

My belief is that I was performing a coordinated landing without flaperons and no obvious structural or mechanical abnormalities. I had landed over 10 times without flaperons since resuming flight testing alone. I had spent almost 60-70 hrs practicing landings on my personal flight simulator with a Zenith 701 aircraft and Cessna 152 simulation. I was following the EAA manual for flight testing.

On October 26, 2021, at Benton Municipal (H96), I had just completed 1.5 hrs of flight testing at 4,000 ft msl; both stalls with and without 1/2 flaperons. I also adjusted and tested the electrical trim during flight. I was well aware that this airplane dropped its nose without minimal power at landing. My approach at final was 65 mph and 400-500 fpm descent. There was minimal wind which had slowed according to witnesses.

[When] the crash occurred, the front aluminum nose gear sheared off the four AN4 bolts attaching the wheel frame, and the nose gear post scraped the runway. The wings and fuselage flexed after hitting the runway. I assume [the] nose gear post was intact [since] there was a scrape on the runway. The airplane veered off into field left of runway. Clearly during this time, I hit right and left wingtips. The prop strike probably occurred in the field.

I have been informed by Zenith that nose wheel collapse occurs when the airplane hits the nose gear at greater approximately 800 fpm, therefore it had to be a hard landing.

I personally tried to be as safe as possible in flight testing under the conditions. I have not had problems flying Cessna and Piper airplanes for over 170 hrs in the past. I know these conditions resulted in my crash, but I remain unable to proceed otherwise.