

Aaron Sauer Sr. Air Safety Investigator Office of Aviation Safety - Central Region

**Date:** 08/03/2023

**Subject:** CEN23FA333

**Contact:** Randy Schulz - Passenger

According to Mr. Schulz, prior to the accident, he visited the gyroplane owner/pilot's, Mr. Eric Bruce, exhibit booth at AirVenture to discuss the gyroplane and was presented an opportunity to take a flight during the event in the interest of possibly purchasing one in the future. Mr. Schulz had not previously met Mr. Bruce before coming to his exhibit booth. Mr. Schulz had his name added to a demonstration flight list and was informed when to meet for the flight.

Prior to the flight, Mr. Bruce refueled the gyroplane and Mr. Schulz boarded the gyroplane for the flight. About 1200 (noon), the flight departed a hard surface runway area near the EAA designated Ultralight/Homebuilt Rotorcraft runway. During the flight, Mr. Schulz was wearing an aviation headset to be able to communicate with Mr. Bruce. Mr. Schulz described the weather as a beautiful day to fly; a perfect day.

Mr. Schulz stated the flight was not too long, maybe 10-15 mins and he wasn't sure if they were in the designated flying area or not (not familiar with what the designated flight pattern was for that flight), but he knew they stayed in the general area near the AirVenture grounds. He stated he knew it would be a shorter flight because there were other persons that were going to get a flight and there was only a certain amount of time given to do the demonstration flights. His flight consisted of the one takeoff, and they had not yet landed before the accident.

While coming into land at the ultralight grass runway, the pilot did what he referred to as an impressive tight left turn, which he did not know the reason for doing the left turn. The next thing he heard was a loud pop and the gyroplane was going to the ground. Mr. Schulz was awake during the entire time. The gyroplane

came to rest and his right leg was pinned under the pilot, who was unconscious. Mr. Schulz exited the gyroplane and was ultimately assisted by medical persons.

Mr. Schulz added that another company gyroplane (black in color) was also flying at the same time. He was not sure if they were following the other gyroplane or if it was behind them during their flight. In addition, Mr. Schulz stated that there was a GPS or some type of display in front of him during the flight; however, he was not paying too much attention to the display as he did not have his glasses on and was enjoying looking outside. Mr. Schulz recorded a portion of the flight on his mobile phone and provided the video to local authorities.

**END OF CONVERSATION**