



## RECORD OF CONVERSATION

**Timothy W. Monville**  
**Sr. Air Safety Investigator**  
**Eastern Region**

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**Date: April 4, 2022**  
**Person Contacted: Heinrich J. Theron**  
**NTSB Accident Number: ERA22LA177**

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### Narrative:

Mr. Heinrich Johannes Theron was contacted by phone on April 5, 2022, at 1010 EDT. He was contacted at [REDACTED]. He provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED].

At the beginning of the interview he was advised that the NTSB is a federal agency mandated by Congress to investigate aircraft accidents, and NTSB has no authority to take any action against any individual. He was also informed that the purpose of an NTSB investigation is for safety only, and any person NTSB talks with has the right to representation; he agreed to the interview without representation.

He provided a home address of [REDACTED] Taylorsville, North Carolina [REDACTED]. His date of birth is [REDACTED]. He holds a student pilot certificate, which was in the hangar. Because of his broken ribs he was advised there was no need to get it during the call. He has accrued 140 hours in the accident airplane, and between 900 and 1,000 hours in a Light Sport airplane.

He was asked the following questions –

Are you currently medicated?

Yes. He was taking pain medication every 6 hours.

Did you feel clear headed enough to discuss the accident?

Yes.

What was the purpose of the flight?

It was a beautiful day and he only planned to fly 30 minutes.

## Questions Continued –

Explain the accident flight?

He departed from Taylorsville, North Carolina about 1700 hours local and flew to a small airstrip called Gryder-Teague Airport (NC58), Taylorsville, North Carolina. After landing, he spoke with a friend of his then flew to the accident site airstrip. He came in on final approach to land with a tailwind and knew he should fly the approach slower because of that and the fact that it was a short runway, but the flight was a little high and he went around. He performed another approach to the same runway but abandoned that approach and with full flaps extended added power to go-around, but the airplane was not climbing. At this point he indicated it was, “totally my mistake it was nothing to do with the aircraft.”<sup>1</sup>

What was the airport identifier where you first departed?

NC2

Where did you fly to next?

NC58

What was the name of the accident airstrip?

Steve Miller owned it, and it is private.

Did you have permission to land there?

Yes.

What is the runway length?

1,000 to 1,200 ft<sup>2</sup>.

What direction did you make both approaches?

To the North.

Explain the tailwind?

It was 5 mph from the south. “It was my judgement mistake.” The wind caused him to drift. He abandoned the landing and attempted to climb out with full flaps. That was my second mistake. The airplane would not climb.”

When he applied throttle did the engine respond?

Yes. The engine only had 300 to 350 hours since overhaul. The airplane was very well maintained.

What seat were you in?

The left seat.

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to NTSB Record of Conversations and NTSB Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident/Incident Report contained in the public docket for this investigation for clarifying details as to who was flying the airplane and when.

<sup>2</sup> According to Google Earth, the grass portion of the runway is 1,391 ft long oriented northeast and southwest.

Were you the pilot flying?  
Yes he was the pilot-in-command.

### **Questions Continued –**

What were your injuries?  
He sustained 5 broken ribs, a broken nose, a gash on his leg, and internal bleeding caused by the impact with the control yoke which broke his ribs. He also had his top dentures knocked out.

What restraint were you wearing?  
Only the lapbelt. Shoulder harnesses were not installed.

Would shoulder harnesses have helped?  
Definitely.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> approach did you touchdown?  
No I didn't.

Explain the 2<sup>nd</sup> approach?  
He touched down at least 1/4 way down the runway, and he thought there wasn't enough runway remaining to stop so he must go-around. He had full flaps extended, and not enough engine power to climb in that configuration. There was nothing wrong with the engine or airplane.

Were you aware that as a student pilot carrying passengers was prohibited?  
I was aware of that.

Do you have any questions for NTSB?  
No.

The call end time was 1027 EDT.

He called back the same day from the same phone number and advised that he would work to complete the NTSB Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident/Incident report tomorrow at a local public library. He also indicated that he has flown into that airstrip many times by himself. He is a mechanic by trade and works on million-dollar boats. Thus, the airplane was very well maintained. The engine was operating very well, which only had 350 hours since overhaul.

About 1 week ago the aircraft was registered to the passenger, but no money had been exchanged or traded hands yet.

He was asked whether there were powerlines on either end of the runway?  
Yes there were powerlines on the south side of the airstrip.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on April 5, 2022. He replied on April 8, 2022, at 1339 EDT with, "I review the letter and is all good Hein Theron." The FINAL digest was e-mailed to him on April 8, 2022.



## RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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**Eastern Region**

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**Date: April 6, 2022**  
**Person Contacted: Rodney McCurdy**  
**NTSB Accident Number: ERA22LA177**

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### Narrative:

Mr. Rodney McCurdy was contacted by phone on April 5, 2022, at 1547 EDT. He was called at [REDACTED]. He provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED].

Because he was in the hospital, he was asked at the onset of the conversation –

Are you medicated?  
Yes, for pain.

Did you feel clear headed enough for the interview?  
Yes.

He was then advised that the NTSB is a federal agency mandated by Congress to investigate aircraft accidents, and NTSB has no authority to take any action against any individual. He was also informed that the purpose of an NTSB investigation is for safety only, and any person NTSB talks with has the right to representation; he agreed to the interview without representation.

He was asked to relay what happened during the accident flight?  
He was in the right seat and they were out flying, landing at grass airstrips. He indicated that at the time of the landing, he was flying the airplane and bounced, which was due to his lack of taildragger experience. The pilot (Mr. Theron) took the controls and took control of the airplane, which hit the tree tops.

How many approaches were made?  
Just one.

## Questions Continued-

What did the pilot do when he took the controls?

He throttled up to go around.

What direction were you landing?

To the north.

Had you flown into there before?

Yes, several times with that airplane.

Had you landed there before in that airplane?

Yes, in that airplane and another airplane.

What airport did you depart last?

NC2

How did you get help?

EMS rescued him from the wreckage.

What restraint were you wearing?

Lapbelt.

In your opinion did not having a shoulder harness contribute to your injury?

Yes.

Did the engine respond when the pilot added power to go-around?

He was pretty sure it did. Put another way, it did not get his attention that it did not respond, and that he would have remembered.

What are your injuries?

Broken lower left leg, right forearm fracture, sternum fracture, rib fractures.

Do you have any questions for NTSB?

No.

The call end time was 1556 EDT.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on April 6, 2022. Teresa McCurdy replied the same day at 1717 EDT with, "Rodney received the email and all information was correct." The FINAL digest was e-mailed to him on April 7, 2022.



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**Date: April 6, 2022**  
**Person Contacted: Heinrich J. Theron**  
**NTSB Accident Number: ERA22LA177**

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### Narrative:

Mr. Heinrich Johannes Theron contacted NTSB by phone on April 6, 2022, at 1119 EDT. He called from [REDACTED]

During the call he indicated he was at the local public library and could not open the NTSB Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident/Incident Report that was previously e-mailed to him. A link to the report was e-mailed to him and he was able to open it and figured out how to save the form and complete the data fields. For privacy concerns he was suggested to complete the form on another computer rather than a public computer.

He was advised that I had interviewed the passenger yesterday and Mr. McCurdy said he was flying the airplane when it bounced on landing and you took the controls. He was asked why he did not mention that during the interview and provided the following information:

Mr. McCurdy had performed 2 approaches to the accident airstrip and went around, then returned for a 3<sup>rd</sup> approach. At touchdown, the airplane bounced. He (Mr. Theron) took the controls and initiated a go-around.

The call end time was 1134 EDT.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on April 6, 2022. He replied on April 8, 2022, at 1007 EDT with, "Morning I review the attachment and is good With it Hein Theron." The FINAL digest was e-mailed to him on April 8, 2022.