

I was in the traffic pattern, in Cessna 22920, at RYN the morning of October 7, 2017 when the midair collision occurred between Long-EZ 966EZ and Cherokee 15664. Since I own Cherokee 664 and the pilot is a client of mine, it's etched in my memory very clearly. I also listened to a recording of the ATC tape that afternoon. This statement is based on what I heard.

About 10 minutes before this happened, I shot a touch and go on 6L and Ryan Tower then moved us over to 6R as there were many planes coming in from the northwest. A Mesquite Cherokee was told to report a left base for 6L. 966EZ called in over Wasson Peak. Tower told him to report on a 2-mile 45 for 6L. At the same time I heard 664 call in, Cessna 11518 also called, stepping on him. Tower asked 518 if that was him on a left base at 3100 about 5 miles NW. 518 replied he was at 3200 on the 45. Tower then told him to report downwind. Cherokee 664 called in again about 8 miles NW and was instructed to report a 2-mile left base for 6L.

A few minutes later, Tower asked 518 to ident. Tower then told 518 he was on a left base from that position and to turn southbound NOW! Tower told 6EZ to make a left 360 (for spacing for 518). Tower then told 518 he was #1 for 6L. 518 asked for the option. Tower replied he was unable for the option. He could make a full-stop, touch and go, low pass but not a stop and go. 518 then replied he'd be a full-stop taxiback. Tower instructed the Mesquite Cherokee to keep his base out wide and change to 6R. Tower then told 6EZ the traffic he was following was a Cessna on left base and he was #2 for 6L.

Somewhere through here, 6EZ made several calls that were hard to distinguish in the air, as well as when I was listening to the tape Saturday afternoon. While we were listening to the tape, in the tower, 6EZ explained he was trying to confirm if he was following the traffic on 6R. As it happened, not only was it hard to understand what was being said, but who was saying it. Tower then said, "I've got a Cessna on short final for the left (518). A Long-EZ on the right runway (when he was actually on the left) and a Cherokee rolling out on a one-mile final for the right runway (Mesquite). 6EZ said he had the wrong traffic in sight. Tower again told 6EZ he was following the traffic over the runway on 6L.

The next call was from Cherokee 664 declaring an emergency because he'd had a midair.

Kelly Stites