

Elliott Simpson
Senior Aviation Accident Investigator
WPR-AS

Date: June 28, 2022

Subject: WPR22FA229

Contact: Brad Stanford [REDACTED]

-Mr Stanford started managing Dublin airport a few years ago, this is how he met the pilot.

-Pilot a "Marine Type", not stubborn, but had his own way of doing things.

-Procedures based, but sometimes would fall back with, "good enough, that'll work" mentality.

-Tended to make questionable judgment calls, for instance he flew with the pilot from Dublin to SE Texas in 2017. On that occasion, the pilot got a handoff from DFW approach and was given the McKinney frequency. He was fumbling with the readback, did not get the frequency, and did not seem prepared. Rather than perform a 360 before entering McKinney airspace, he just proceeded directly over the airport without establishing communication and was later reprimanded by air traffic control.

- He seemed to be "getting behind" the airplane during the flight.

- In Mr Stanford's opinion, taking a passenger on a post-maintenance flight was not a good idea, and this could be indicative of his general attitude to flying.

- Had a hard landing about 3 years ago in the Mooney that almost resulted in a propeller strike.

- He was going through a divorce, and not happy. He had not flown for quite a long time prior to the accident flight which was likely his first since he dropped off the airplane for annual 6 months prior.
- He was a regular smoker.
- Not sure who would have performed his most recent flight review.



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Contact: Dana Brinkley [REDACTED]

Mr Brinkley is a training pilot with American Airlines.

He provided initial flight training through solo to the accident pilot in 2001, about the time of 9/11. He described the pilot's flying abilities as average. Mr Brinkley was younger than him, a point that appeared to irritate the pilot. The pilot could be stubborn and often refused to use a checklist.

After he had signed him off to solo, he got word that the pilot was taking kids flying while still a student. When he addressed this with the pilot, he "stormed off" and told Mr Brinkley he no longer wanted to train with him.

Mr Brinkley heard that the pilot had started to use another CFI, and he called that CFI to warn him. The CFI did not seem to be concerned.

He has not heard from the pilot since, but got word that he was flying a Cherokee 6, which he believed was too much of an airplane for his abilities.

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Date: June 27, 2022

Subject: WPR22FA229

Contact: Dave Behrens (Dugosh Aviation owner)

The owner/pilot had brought the airplane in for an annual inspection in November 2021. The inspection was completed December 7, 2021, but he never came to pick up the airplane. Mr Behrens repeatedly called him, but the owner stated he was going through a divorce and was too busy to get the airplane. Eventually he sent the owner a "serious" letter, and ultimately, the owner responded that he would pick it up on June 20, 2022.

During the period when it was not flown, it sat on the ramp outside for half the time, and in the hangar for the rest. It was brought in during heavy storms.

Mr Behrens cleaned and reviewed the airplane in preparation for the owner's arrival, and as a precaution he had his test pilot take it up for a flight. That flight was uneventful, except that the directional gyro no longer appeared to be working, so was replaced by a serviceable used unit from Gulf Avionics. The test pilot then flew it again without incident, and the airplane was then fueled with 100 low-lead aviation fuel to the tabs, which would have been about 25 gallons per side. He then called the owner who said he would be there late Saturday afternoon.

Mr Behrens was not there for the day of the accident flight.

When the pilot originally brought the airplane in for the annual inspection, he stated that on one occasion, the landing gear circuit breaker popped after takeoff while the landing gear was being retracted, causing it to remain partially extended. Mr Behrens tried to duplicate the discrepancy during the annual inspection, by cycling the landing gear multiple times, but he could never get the circuit breaker to pop, and

the gear cycled normally. He examined all switches, relays, and systems but was not able to find any anomalies.

The owner also reported that the engine could be hard to start. However, Mr Behrens stated that he did not observe any anomalies with the engine, and if the correct checklist was followed it always started properly. He has found that the engine will not start if you prime it with too much fuel, by leaving the boost pump on for too long. The POH discusses this scenario by saying turn the boost pump off immediately.

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Contact: John Shoemaker [REDACTED]

Mr Shoemaker performs test pilot duties for Dugosh Aviation.

He flew the airplane a few days prior to the accident. He did not have any problems starting the engine, and the landing gear operated normally. The heading indicator did not work. After landing and shutting down the engine, he decided to start the engine again, but flooded it during the process. He let the engine cool down and was able to start again without issue. In his experience, these airplanes can be hard to start when hot.

He then flew the airplane again the day before the accident after the heading indicator was replaced, and no anomalies were noted.

He has lots of experience with J model Mooney's and commented that it should fly well with the landing gear extended.

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Contact: Kyle M. Jones

In an email dated June 25, 2022, Mr Jones stated:

"REF: N4267H / June 25, 2022 / Kerrville, TX.

I witnessed the accident aircraft a minute or two prior to it's fatal crash, but I did not see the actual crash.

I am a retired professional pilot (ATP / CFII), and my Beech Bonanza is hangared at KERV.

By happenstance, on Saturday June 25th at approximately 6:20 to 6:25 PM, my wife and I were driving on Highway 27 on our way to dinner in Center Point. As we were about abeam the Fox Tank plant on Highway 27, I saw the Mooney approaching KERV Runway 30. As I knew the winds that day were favoring the southeast, I wondered why he was making a downwind landing. I thought maybe he was practicing the Localizer or RNAV Rwy 30 approach, but noticed he seemed to be flying erratically both laterally and vertically. The propeller was turning, and the landing gear was down; there was no fire, smoke, or other sign of distress that I saw. I'd estimate his altitude was 150' agl or slightly higher. As we passed him, us traveling eastbound on Highway 27 and him flying westbound along the runway, I thought it very odd that he seemed to be displaced slightly north of the runway and more or less maintaining his altitude. It was obvious at that point he was not merely practicing a low approach / missed approach from a practice instrument approach to Runway 30, and yet he was not lined up to land on Runway 30 either, even though he was in an excellent position near the beginning

of Runway 30 to do so if he was having an issue. As we continued to drive east on Highway 27, I briefly glimpsed the aircraft continuing westbound at about the same altitude and slightly north of the runway.

About an hour or so later, as we returned along Highway 27 from dinner, we saw the many law enforcement vehicles and the grass fire just west of the airport. It was another hour or so before we learned on local social media of the airplane crash. I went on "FlightAware" and found the "N" number and saw the track, the last portion of which essentially concurred with what I witnessed.

Please feel free to contact me if you need additional information or clarification.

Regards,

Kyle M. Jones



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Contact: Ladd Gardener [REDACTED]

Mr Gardener was on highway 27, driving north towards highway 173. Someone in his vehicle asked if that was a Mooney over the airport. He looked over and could see a Mooney traveling west over runway 30. It did not seem to be climbing, and he was not sure why the pilot was taking a downwind takeoff, especially in such hot weather. The nose was not up, but the airplane appeared to be "mushing".

The airplane then began to make what looked like a left base turn for runway 12 just over the tree line. The turn then became an aggressive bank, and the airplane disappeared behind trees.

At no time was the airplane trailing smoke, vapors, or fire.

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Contact: Steven Edmonds (Kerrville Aviation)

Mr Edmonds was working in the FBO office at time of the accident. They have a radio always on and tuned to the UNICOM frequency.

He had the accident airplanes keys and provided them to the pilot when he arrived about 1800. The pilot appeared happy and in good spirits, with nothing untoward. Mr Edmonds did not see the passenger.

There are lots of training aircraft typically in the pattern, so he can always hear transmissions, some of which can be jumbled and scratchy. He recalled that a short time later, he heard a radio transmission from a pilot stating that he was having gear trouble and was coming back to the airport.

Mr Edmonds then called one of the line technicians on their handheld radio, stating that someone may be coming in. He usually does this in preparation for providing fuel.

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Contact: Stewart Veldhuizen [REDACTED]

Mr Veldhuizen's was a friend of the pilot and has known him for about 2-3 years. He is not familiar with the passenger, but believes she is a recent acquaintance with the pilot, who was going through a divorce.

Mr Veldhuizen's was the pilot who dropped off the pilot and passenger shortly before the accident so they could pick up the accident airplane.

The group departed from Dublin in Mr Veldhuizen's Debonair earlier in the day. They got a late start and departed later than anticipated. The weather was hot, but the conditions were stable.

After dropping off the pilot, he took a 20 minute brake then departed for Mustang Island. It was upon arrival at Mustang Island that he was called by the airport manager who informed him of the accident.

He expressed concern that the pilot would fly low over the airport, and assumed because the pilot was a cautious type, that it was a return due to a mechanical problem rather than a low pass.

Mr Veldhuizen's believes the airplane was regularly maintained, but not sure who provided the pilot with a flight review. He is not familiar with the pilot's medical history.