

Aaron McCarter
Aviation Accident Investigator
Eastern

Date:

December 8, 2023 @ 1924

Subject:

Eyewitness Report to NTSB

Contact:

Flight Academy Manager: Wayne Foss @ [REDACTED] and
[REDACTED]

I am General Manager of Knoxville Flight Training Academy at KDKX. Jenny had previously been a student at our flight school for several years. I believe I was the last person to talk to them prior to departure. That morning around 10am Jenny approached me in the FBO lobby while she and her father were waiting for weather to improve. They were going to take the Debonaire to an avionics shop south of Little Rock for a new avionics upgrade.

We talked for some time about her instrument rating training progress which had not been meeting necessary proficiency levels. I, along with my Asst Mgr. had given her an IFR phase check several weeks prior which did not go well on almost all aspects of aircraft control, situational awareness, and risk management. In particular I advised her that she was obviously way behind the Debonaire and that we thought she had purchased more aircraft than she was ready for. She recently changed to a CFII not affiliated with our school. She and her father did not disagree when I repeated this assessment. Even though she was no longer training with us I promised her we would assist her in any way possible to get on track. I departed the lobby and continued on with my day. I assume they departed. We started getting flashes of accident info after a couple hours.

I can be reached as below if you have any questions.

Robert Wayne Foss
[REDACTED]



Aaron McCarter
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Date: February 27, 2025 @ 1355

Subject: Follow up Interview with Manager (Based on his previous eyewitness report)

Contact: Flight Academy Manager: Wayne Foss @ [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

Telephone call with the Flight Academy Manager (Foss) discussing the circumstances of the accident and the pilots (Blalock) knowledge and experience.

He conducted the pilot's stage/proficiency check 2 weeks before the accident. She was instructed to go-around during an approach and failed to use power and started descending towards the mountains. After recovery, it continued to deteriorate, and we had to stop the session there.

She had upwards of over 150 hours; Should have been much further ahead. She had poor situational awareness. She rarely knew where she was in relation to her navigation; It was a complex high performance airplane with a technical avionics package, with which she was not truly familiar. I talked to our instructors, and they all stated they were having difficulty with her instruction. "I was the last one to talk to her that day. I told her you should not be flying that airplane. You're not in control of that airplane." The airplane was just too much for her.

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