



Aviation Investigation Preliminary Report

Location:	Kingfisher, OK	Accident Number:	CEN23FA079
Date & Time:	January 16, 2023, Local	Registration:	N8266D
Aircraft:	Piper PA-32-301T	Injuries:	2 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Instructional		

On January 16, 2023, about 1242 central standard time, a Piper PA-32-301T, N8266D, was destroyed when it was involved in an accident near Kingfisher, Oklahoma. The pilot and certificated flight instructor were fatally injured. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 91 instructional flight.

According to witnesses, the airplane was seen trailing black smoke before it rolled over and dove into the ground. A witness provided cell phone video confirmed the presence of the black smoke and an explosion after impact (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Still frame image from witness provided cell phone video.

The accident flight was the first flight after the airplane had undergone maintenance including the installation of a new autopilot system and an annual inspection. The flying club that owned the airplane reported that club members were required to fly with one of the club instructors to become acquainted with the operation of the new autopilot system. The accident flight was such a flight.

The airplane impacted a firm level field with little vegetation. The initial impact location was a crater that contained the airplane's propeller. The rotation axis of the propeller was near vertical, indicating that the airplane impacted the ground in a near vertical attitude. All components of the airplane were in the immediate vicinity of the accident site. (Figure 2)



Figure 2. Overall view of the accident scene (NTSB Photo).

The main portion of the fuselage, wings, and tail surfaces came to rest about 100 ft. north of the initial impact point. The wings were damaged from impact but continuous from tip to tip except for the center spar section which was melted and consumed by fire. The ailerons and flaps remained attached to the wing. The wing leading edge was crushed aft and all four fuel tanks were ruptured. The fuselage forward of the tail surfaces was almost completely consumed by fire. The aft fuselage from the leading edge of the vertical stabilizer and aft was intact with the tail surfaces still attached. The vertical tail surfaces were intact and the horizontal tail surfaces were intact but with impact damage to the right tip. Control continuity was confirmed from all surfaces to the cockpit with all breaks in the control system consistent with impact damage.



Figure 3. Main wreckage at the accident site (NTSB Photo).

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N8266D
Model/Series:	PA-32-301T	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Amateur Built:			
Operator:	ENGINEERS FLYING CLUB	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Designator Code:			

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	VMC	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KGOK,1065 ft msl	Observation Time:	18:53 Local
Distance from Accident Site:	18 Nautical Miles	Temperature/Dew Point:	15°C /1°C
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	7 knots / , 270°
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility:	10 miles
Altimeter Setting:	29.64 inches Hg	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Departure Point:	Oklahoma City, OK (PWA)	Destination:	Oklahoma City, OK (PWA)

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	Both in-flight and on-ground
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	On-ground
Total Injuries:	2 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	35.874283,-97.792645

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Brannen, John
Additional Participating Persons:	David Amann; FAA - OKC; Oklahoma City , OK Jon Hirsch; Piper Aircraft; Vero Beach, FL David Harsanyi; Textron Lycoming; Williamsport, PA
Investigation Class:	Class 3
Note:	