



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Preliminary Report

Location:	Mullin, TX	Accident Number:	CEN20LA055
Date & Time:	01/04/2020, 1600 CST	Registration:	N5573M
Aircraft:	Aero Commander 100	Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Instructional		

On January 4, 2020, about 1600 central standard time, an Aero Commander 100 airplane, N5573M, sustained substantial damage during a forced landing to a field near Mullin, Texas. The left seat student pilot and the right seat certificated flight instructor (CFI) sustained no injury. The airplane was registered to the student pilot and was operated by the CFI under the provisions of Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 as a visual flight rules instructional flight. Day visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident, and no flight plan was filed. The flight originated from the Abilene Regional Airport (ABI), Abilene, Texas, about 1500.

The CFI reported the purpose of the flight was for the student pilot to satisfy the solo flight requirements at an airport with an air traffic control tower. The airplane was topped off with 100 low lead fuel before takeoff, for a total of 40 gallons. The airplane was destined for the CFI's private airstrip in Mullin, Texas. About three miles out from the airstrip, the CFI initiated a slow descent. The student pilot completed the descent and the before landing checklist. At about 3,000 ft above mean sea level, the engine ceased producing power.

After the complete loss of engine power, the CFI immediately took control of the airplane. He ensured the fuel selector switch was selected for both fuel tanks, the carburetor heat was applied, and the mixture control was at the full rich position. He trimmed the airplane for the best glide speed and the student pilot executed a mayday call. The CFI attempted switching fuel tanks, however the engine did not respond, and the propeller was "wind milling."

The CFI assessed the situation and realized the airplane did not have adequate altitude and airspeed to make it to the airstrip. The CFI altered course about 45° to the west for a suitable landing area. The student pilot read aloud the checklist for an engine failure and emergency landing and confirmed everything had already been completed. The CFI observed a suitable landing area about 1 mile ahead of their current position to a flat, plowed dirt field. At the entrance to the plowed field, there were various trees along the fence line. The CFI attempted to land between the trees, however the right wingtip impacted a tree. The CFI was able to maintain control of the airplane and the airplane touched down on the dirt with the main landing gear wheels first. The airplane "skidded" about 30 ft in the dry, loose dirt before coming to an abrupt stop when the nose wheel dug into the dirt. The airplane nosed over and

came to rest upside down as shown below in figure 1. The CFI executed an emergency shutdown and both occupants egressed from the airplane without further incident.



Figure 1 - View of the airplane after it came to rest (courtesy of the student pilot).

The airplane sustained substantial damage to the fuselage, both wings, and the empennage. The airplane was recovered from the accident site for a future examination of the airframe and engine.

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Aero Commander	Registration:	N5573M
Model/Series:	100 UNDESIGNAT	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Amateur Built:	No		
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KMKN, 1388 ft msl	Observation Time:	2201 UTC
Distance from Accident Site:	16 Nautical Miles	Temperature/Dew Point:	20° C / -1° C
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	3 knots / , 260°
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility:	10 Miles
Altimeter Setting:	30.28 inches Hg	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Departure Point:	Abilene, TX (ABI)	Destination:	Mullin, TX

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	2 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 None	Latitude, Longitude:	31.650278, -98.654167 (est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Michael J Hodges
Additional Participating Persons:	Victor Lopez; FAA San Antonio FSDO; San Antonio, TX
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.