



Aviation Investigation Preliminary Report

Location:	Independence, OR	Accident Number:	WPR24FA057
Date & Time:	December 16, 2023, 16:54 Local	Registration:	N3992L
Aircraft:	Cessna 172G	Injuries:	3 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

On December 16, 2023, about 1654 Pacific standard time, a Cessna 172G airplane, N3992L, was substantially damaged when it was involved in an accident near Independence, Oregon. The pilot and the two pilot-rated-passenger were fatally injured. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flight.

According to the owner of the airplane, he allowed the pilot to use the airplane to gain his private pilot's certificate and to continue using the airplane to gain his instrument rating and commercial certificate.

According to the pilot's flight instructor, the pilot explained to him that he and a pilot-rated-passenger were going to fly to the McMinnville Municipal Airport (MMV), McMinnville, Oregon, to practice instrument approaches [in VFR conditions]. The pilot-rated-passenger had an instrument airplane rating and would act as a safety pilot.

Automatic dependent surveillance-broadcast (ADS-B) data recorded the airplane as it departed the Independence State Airport (7S5) Independence, Oregon about 1500, and flew directly to MMV. The airplane made an approach to runway 22, followed by maneuvering in an area about 12 miles southwest of the airport. The airplane then maneuvered to the northeast of the airport and conducted a second approach, to runway 22, to a full stop at 1608.

The flight instructor had been monitoring the progress of the flight on an internet ADS-B provider and grew concerned due to fog that had built up around 7S5. He called the pilot who was on the ground at MMV. During the conversation, the flight instructor advised the pilot not to return to 7S5 because of the low visibility of about 500 ft. The pilot explained that he would fly to 7S5, assess the conditions and decide to either land or divert to McNary Field Airport (SLE) Salem, Oregon, or possibly return to MMV. The pilot informed the flight instructor that he had picked up a second pilot-rated-passenger at MMV.

ADS-B data showed that the airplane departed MMV at 1638 and proceeded directly to 7S5. A recording of the common traffic advisory frequency (CTAF) for 7S5 revealed the pilot made a ten-mile and a five-mile position report that included an intention to land. About three minutes later the pilot reported entering the downwind leg for landing to runway 34. Shortly afterwards five clicks were recorded from the CTAF frequency, consistent with activating the pilot-controlled lighting to medium intensity. About one minute later, the last call made by the pilot advised 7S5 traffic that "92L was final for [runway] 34." The last moments of the ADS-B data recorded the airplane as it entered the 7S5 downwind leg, about traffic pattern altitude of 1,200 ft mean sea level. The airplane then entered a descending 180° left-hand turn. During the turn, the airplane overshot the runway centerline to the east, corrected but overshot the centerline to the west. The last ADS-B data point recorded the airplane about 1500 ft southwest of the accident site, which was about 670 ft west of the approach end of runway 34.

The airplane came to rest inverted on the edge of an open field, adjacent to the airport property. A postaccident fire reduced the fuselage to ash. The wings and empennage were not consumed by the fire. The engine had separated from the airplane and was about 60 ft northwest of the main wreckage. The propeller remained attached to the engine with both propeller blades exhibiting chordwise bends aft, toward the engine. The first point of probable impact was a wooden power distribution line support pole, originally about 80 ft tall, and about 60 ft southeast of the wreckage. The pole had separated into three major sections. The main section, from the ground up to about 69 ft, remained installed in the ground and was affixed with multiple power distribution lines. The middle section, about 12 ft in length, fell onto the right wing. A white color transfer was observed on this section. The top 4 ft of the pole had fragmented and was strewn about the wreckage. The pole had a dual-lamp, red warning light affixed to its top. The warning light separated from the pole and was among the wreckage. At least one power distribution line had fractured and fell to the ground near the wreckage. A section of the power distribution line was in the fuselage section of the wreckage.

Examination of the airframe and engine revealed no mechanical malfunctions or failures that would have precluded normal operation.

The airplane was recovered to a secure facility.

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N3992L
Model/Series:	172G	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Amateur Built:			
Operator:	ANDERSON CURT W	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Designator Code:			

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:		Condition of Light:	
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KSLE,201 ft msl	Observation Time:	16:56 Local
Distance from Accident Site:	9 Nautical Miles	Temperature/Dew Point:	2°C /1°C
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	3 knots / , 190°
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility:	5 miles
Altimeter Setting:	30.17 inches Hg	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Departure Point:	McMinnville, OR (MMV)	Destination:	Independence, OR

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	2 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	On-ground
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	44.86416,-123.2009 (est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Salazar, Fabian
Additional Participating Persons:	Keith Ruconich; FAA; Portland, OR
Investigation Class:	Class 3
Note:	