

Two Men OK After Ditching Plane Near Ft. Abercrombie

Monday, 08 July 2013

A small private plane floats upside down about 30 yards from the shore off Fort Abercrombie in Kodiak Saturday afternoon. Tyler Polum and Jason Brooks swam to shore after the Aeronca Chief lost power and was ditched in Monashka Bay while returning to the Kodiak Municipal Airport. Photo courtesy Wanda Sizemore

Jay Barrett/KMXT

Two men are okay after a small plane crashed into the water off of Fort Abercrombie at about 2:30 Saturday afternoon. Twenty-six-year-old pilot Tyler Polum was flying his 1947 Aeronca Chief with passenger 44-year-old Jason Brooks, a potential buyer from Palmer.

Their pair were returning to the Kodiak Municipal Airport when the plane lost power, forcing Polum to make a water landing about 50 yards from shore. The plane then capsized, forcing the men to swim for shore.

The Alaska State Troopers report that while conducting a test flight the engine began to sputter, and Polum suspected carburetor icing. After applying carb heat the engine cleared up and they turned back toward the Kodiak airstrip off Mill Bay Road. After turning off carb heat, the engine sputtered again and lost power.

Alaska Wildlife Troopers, a Village Public Safety Officer, a State Parks Ranger, Kodiak Fire Department EMS, Bayside Volunteer Fire Department EMS, along with troopers responded. Medics treated Polum for minor injuries.

The plane was worth about \$25,000. It was pulled to the beach later in the day.