



Aviation Investigation Preliminary Report

Location:	Meadow Grove, NE	Accident Number:	CEN25FA261
Date & Time:	July 19, 2025, 20:50 Local	Registration:	N55161
Aircraft:	Kolb Firestar	Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

On July 19, 2025, about 2050 central daylight time, a Kolb Firestar airplane, N55161, was destroyed when it was involved in an accident near Meadow Grove, Nebraska. The pilot was fatally injured. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flight.

A family member reported that the pilot departed his private airstrip about 1610. Local authorities were notified of the accident about 2050 when a property owner noticed the airplane in his soybean field. There were no witnesses, and the exact time of the accident is unknown.

The accident site was located in a soybean field about 0.3 mile south of the departure airstrip. Initial ground impact was about 50 ft from the wreckage, and the impact path was oriented on a southwest heading. The forward portion of the fuselage was crushed aft, and the cockpit area was compromised. The left wing was separated at the root and retained by the wing strut. The right wing remained attached to the fuselage at the root with the wing strut intact. The tailboom was fractured about 2 ft aft of the fuselage consistent with impact forces. It was retained by the elevator and rudder cables. The empennage remained attached to the tail boom. The upper portion of the vertical stabilizer and rudder were deformed consistent with the impact sequence.



Figure 1 – Accident Site

Aileron control continuity was continuous from the control stick to the wing roots, and from the wing roots to the ailerons. Aileron control rod end separations at the wing roots appeared consistent with overstress failures resulting from the impact. The torque tube from the control stick to the aft fuselage was deformed consistent with the impact damage. Both ailerons remained attached to the wings at the hinges. Control cable continuity from the control stick to the elevators and from the rudder pedals to the rudder horn was confirmed.

At the time of the on-scene examination, the engine was separated and rested adjacent to the fuselage. The engine assembly appeared intact. Both intake air filters and carburetors were separated. The left carburetor was located in the debris path. The right carburetor was retained by the fuel inlet hose. Internal engine and gearbox continuity were confirmed via rotation of the crankshaft. Two propeller blades remained attached to the hub and appeared intact. One propeller blade was separated at the root and located in the debris path. The separated blade was deformed and delaminated consistent with ground impact.

The engine ignition modules and engine monitor were retained for further evaluation.

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Kolb	Registration:	N55161
Model/Series:	Firestar	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Amateur Built:			
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Designator Code:	N/A		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	VMC	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KOFK,1551 ft msl	Observation Time:	20:49 Local
Distance from Accident Site:	17 Nautical Miles	Temperature/Dew Point:	24°C /23°C
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	8 knots / 0 knots, 80°
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 2400 ft AGL	Visibility:	10 miles
Altimeter Setting:	29.89 inches Hg	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	NONE
Departure Point:	Meadow Grove, NE (PVT)	Destination:	Meadow Grove, NE (PVT)

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	42.114167,-97.772167

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Sorensen, Timothy
Additional Participating Persons:	Jeff Gomon; FAA Flight Standards; Lincoln, NE
Investigation Class:	Class 3
Note:	