

Avid Flyer MK4, G-BVLW, 27 June 1996

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Aircraft Type and Registration: Avid Flyer MK4, G-BVLW

No & Type of Engines: 1 Hirth F30 piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1995

Date & Time (UTC): 27 June 1996 at 1740 hrs

Location: Harrowway Farm, Petersfield

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Left main landing gear collapsed

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 52 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 333 hours (of which 41 were on type)

Last 90 days - 27 hours

Last 28 days - 20 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

G-BVLW was constructed as a 'Hauler' variant of the Avid Flyer; it has a longer wingspan than the standard 'Flyer' and a refined 'speedwing' aerofoil section. The trailing edge of the wing is fitted with flaperons which can be lowered some 15° but the pilot stated that he does not normally use them for landing because they are less effective than sideslip for controlling the flightpath angle. He considers 300 metres is a comfortable landing rollout distance for his STOL aircraft.

The 09/27 grass strip at Harrowway Farm is 600 metres long and bordered on both sides by standing crop. Near the 27 threshold there is a 7 metre high hedge which crosses the final approach path at right angles.

The pilot flew a glide approach at 70 mph to Runway 27 in CAVOK weather conditions and a light wind from the south west. As the aircraft crossed the hedge near the threshold, it encountered turbulent air which at first lifted the aircraft and then subsequently caused it to sink

rapidly onto the strip about 100 metres from the hedge. At first the ground run was normal but after some 50 yards of travel the left main gear leg collapsed and the aircraft ground looped into the adjacent field of wheat where it came to a halt with no obvious secondary damage.

Candidly the pilot reported that this was his first landing on the strip at Harroway Farm and, with the benefit of hindsight, he should have aimed to land further down the strip thereby clearing the hedge by a greater margin.