

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	P & M Aviation Quik GT450 microlight, G-GTSO	
No & type of Engines:	1 Rotax 912-UL piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	2006	
Date & Time (UTC):	9 May 2006 at 1415 hrs	
Location:	Halsall, near Ormskirk, Lancashire	
Type of Flight:	Training	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 2	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - 1 (Serious) 1 (Minor)	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	The airframe and propeller were destroyed and the engine was damaged	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence (Microlights) with instructor rating	
Commander's Age:	50 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	1,415 hours (of which 65 were on type) Last 90 days - 98 hours Last 28 days - 48 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot.	

Synopsis

The aircraft was engaged on an instructional flight for a flex-wing pilot who had not flown for about two years. After some general handling, the pilot under training carried out two practice forced landings. During the recovery from the second of these, from a height of about 40 feet agl, the aircraft struck the ground. The instructor reported that power was applied slowly during the manoeuvre and the control bar was pulled, rather than pushed, and he was unable to prevent this control input.

History of the flight

The aircraft was engaged on an instructional flight for a flex-wing pilot who had not flown for about two years. After the pilot under training (P U/T) had successfully completed some general handling over the coast in good weather, and with a wind from the west-south-west at 5-10 kt, the aircraft was flown inland to carry out some practice forced landings (PFLs).

When it was apparent that the first PFL would not have been successful, the P U/T performed a go-around at a height of about 100 feet agl, using the correct technique, and made another attempt. The instructor considered that the field which the P U/T selected on the second occasion

was more suitable, being an open area with no obstacles. In fact, the instructor had used this second field a number of times before, sometimes touching down on the main wheels. He allowed the aircraft to descend to a height of about 40 feet agl before instructing the P U/T to 'power out'. The P U/T recalled pushing the control bar forward and the aircraft accelerating. However, the instructor stated that power was applied slowly and the control bar was pulled back, and he was unable to prevent this control input. The aircraft struck the ground in a nose down attitude at 55-70 mph, with full power applied, and was reported to have travelled a further 20-30 feet before stopping. The instructor turned off the engine, fuel and electrics, and both occupants released themselves from the aircraft. The instructor then called the emergency services on his mobile 'phone. The aircraft suffered substantial damage but there was no fire. Later, it was assessed that only the engine was repairable. The instructor received a serious back injury and was flown to hospital by air ambulance. The P U/T sustained minor injuries to an ankle and his back.

The instructor concluded that the accident was the result of the late application of power and the control bar being pulled, rather than pushed, during the go-around. The P U/T recalled raising the nose of the aircraft during the go-around although he thought that the nosewheel was the first part of the aircraft to strike the ground. The instructor also considered that allowing the aircraft to descend to such a low height contributed to the accident. There was no evidence that it came within 500 feet of any person, vessel, vehicle or structure.

The instructor commented that the rigidity of the trike keel and monopole prevented the aircraft from inverting when it struck the ground, probably saving both pilots, who were wearing lapstraps, from more serious injuries. Also, the field which they struck was described as having been left fallow for two years and had a soft surface, which he again felt prevented more serious injuries.