

AAIB Bulletin No: 6/95

Ref: EW/G95/04/10

Category: 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Morane Saulnier MS.880B Rallye Club, G-AXHS

No & Type of Engines: 1 Rolls-Royce Continental O-200-A piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1969

Date & Time (UTC): 14 April 1995 at 1430 hrs

Location: Carlisle Airport

Type of Flight: Private (Training)

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Damage to nose landing gear

Commander's Licence: Student Pilot

Commander's Age: 64 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 465 hours (of which 180 were on type)
Last 90 days - 0 hours
Last 28 days - 0 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and
AAIB enquiries

The pilot was in the process of revalidating his PPL and was in the latter stages of the required flying, with the General Flying Test to be completed. This particular aircraft had not been flown for several months and on the day before the flight the pilot, who was also the owner, had given the aircraft a thorough inspection, during which it was found that there was no fuel on board. 128 lb of AVGAS 100LL was therefore uplifted. The engine was then run for between 15 and 20 minutes and shut down. The radios and the fuel drains were checked and the engine run again. The associated power checks were satisfactory. The aircraft was then shut down without flying that day.

On the following day, the intended flight was delayed until the afternoon when the visibility had improved. The aircraft was again thoroughly checked and the engine started normally. The aircraft was taxied a significant distance before the power checks were carried out, which were normal. The aircraft then backtracked along the entire runway before turning into wind and beginning the take-off roll. The takeoff was normal until about 250 feet agl when the engine lost power. The pilot shut the engine down and force landed in an adjacent field, however during the landing the nose landing gear lower casting fractured. The Flying Instructor stated that the pilot's actions were exceptional and that he had safely landed his aircraft in the field with minimal damage.

Examination of the aircraft some hours later showed that there was little fuel in the carburettor, although it was not possible to determine if this had been lost in the period intervening after the forced landing. The carburettor was removed and will be sent for examination/overhaul, but thus far no defects have been found. The pilot considered that a 'rich cut' may have occurred. An aftercast from the Meteorological Office at Bracknell showed that at the time of the accident there was a scattered cloudbase between 2,500 and 3,500 feet, visibility between 6 and 10 km, and the surface wind was 240°/12-17 kt with a temperature of 14°C and a dewpoint of 6°C. Comparison with a chart showing conditions conducive to carburettor ice formation showed that serious carburettor icing could have occurred at both glide and cruise power settings.