

Aircraft type and registration: Tipsy Nipper T66 Series 2 G-ASZV

No & Type of engines: 1 Volkswagen 1835 piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1964

Date and time (UTC): 7 May 1987 at 1900 hrs

Location: Plaistows Farm, Chiswell Green, Herts

Type of flight: Private (pleasure)

Persons on board: Crew — 1 Passengers — None

Injuries: Crew — Minor Passengers — N/A

Nature of damage: Minor — mainly, nose gear, canopy, wing leading edges and tip tanks

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 40 years

Commander's Total Flying Experience: 507 hours (of which 377 were on type)

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft had been flown for 20 minutes the previous day, not having flown since October 1986.

After a satisfactory run-up and power check the aircraft took off from Elstree for a local flight. When in the vicinity of Radlett the pilot decided to check the maximum airspeed at full throttle when flying straight and level. The pilot is a regular competitor in handicap air races.

Significant vibration was experienced at full throttle and power was reduced until the engine was running smoothly again. Oil temperature, pressure, and cylinder head temperature had been within the permitted limits. The throttle was again fully advanced in order to try and identify the source of the engine vibration, and the vibration recurred. After a few seconds the engine mis-fired, and as the pilot throttled back, stopped.

The most suitable and available forced landing site was a microlight grass strip aligned 30/12 and some 298 metres long. The wind was westerly at 8 knots. The aircraft's position and rate of descent precluded the use of runway 30, and the pilot elected to land on runway 12, which he was aware was downwind and had a downhill slope. The aircraft touched down 107 metres past the runway threshold and ran off the far end of the strip. Although the pilot tried to turn the aircraft to the right to parallel a sunken road running at right angles to the runway, the nose gear encountered a hole, and the aircraft turned over.

The pilot was wearing full upper torso restraint, which held as the aircraft became inverted, and he suffered only minor contusions, and vacated the aircraft through the side of the broken canopy. There was no fire.