

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Gemini Flash IIA, G-MYJB	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Rotax 503 piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1993	
Date & Time (UTC):	29 April 2006 at 1450 hrs	
Location:	Talybont, north of Tywyn, Gwynedd	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Damaged beyond economic repair	
Commander's Licence:	National Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	47 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	46 hours (all on type) Last 90 days - 5 hours Last 28 days - 5 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

Whilst taking off from a small airstrip in strong, gusty wind conditions, the pilot was unable to maintain control, the aircraft struck trees and fell to the ground.

History of the flight

The pilot and his 11 year-old son had flown from Aberporth, where the aircraft was kept, to a private landing strip at Talybont. Although the weather conditions were generally good, the pilot noticed before he took off for the return flight that the wind was strong, gusty and of variable direction. However, he reasoned that, since he had landed there in similar conditions, he would be able to take off safely even though he estimated that the gusts were easily reaching 20 mph and the two

windsocks, only some 100 metres apart, seldom seemed to agree on wind direction.

Having judged that the wind was predominantly from the north, and therefore about 30° off the runway heading, the pilot started the takeoff run during what he perceived as a lull in the wind strength. The takeoff roll and initial climb were smooth but, at a height of about 25 feet, the aircraft encountered a gust which dropped the left wing and yawed it left. The pilot recovered to wings level with difficulty but was now aware that they were heading towards a hill to the north of the strip and not climbing due to a downdraught effect. He also became concerned about the proximity of some power cables in the fields

below but was reluctant to attempt to turn the aircraft away from the obstacles for fear of stalling so, with the rising ground approaching, he decided to perform a forced landing in a patch of gorse, which appeared to offer the possibility of a cushioned arrival. The aircraft was then hit by another large gust which almost stalled it, causing it to lose some height and turning it violently to the right towards a copse of trees. The aircraft struck the trees at a height of about 15 feet and a speed which the pilot estimates at 30 to 40 mph, whereupon it dropped straight to the ground.

The engine was still running at full power until the pilot switched off the ignition. Both occupants were trapped in the wreckage, since the control bar and compression strut had wrapped themselves around the pilot, and this prevented his passenger from extricating himself from

behind him. Fortunately, some passers-by had witnessed the accident and the pilot was able to instruct them in releasing the control bar so that he could move himself and his passenger. The emergency services also attended promptly. The passenger suffered only a bruise to his leg but the pilot had a broken finger, badly bruised ribs, a bruised groin (from the lap belt buckle) and a small cut to the bridge of his nose.

In a frank and detailed statement, the pilot castigated himself for getting airborne in such marginal conditions and risking not just his life but also his son's. He also provided an information sheet promulgated by Talybont airstrip which contained the warning "*This is a short field which can suffer from rotor in N and NW winds*". The pilot is convinced that it was this phenomenon he encountered.