

Aircraft Type and Registration:	DG Flugzeugbau DG-800B self-launching motor glider, G-MSIX	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Solo Kleinmotoren 2-625-01 piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1999	
Date & Time (UTC):	15 June 2002 at 1400 hrs	
Location:	Crophorne, near Bidford-On-Avon, Worcs	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Substantial damage to fuselage and tailplane	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	71 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	370 hours (of which 99 were on type) Last 90 days - 14 hours Last 28 days - 2 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot plus further enquiries	

The pilot was participating in a gliding competition, and the engine operated normally during takeoff and the initial climb to 2,000 feet agl. Some 20 minutes later the glider experienced a loss of lift and, at about 1,000 feet agl, the pilot decided to use the engine. He was able to raise the engine normally and it started and ran briefly at low speed before stopping. The pilot checked the switches, the circuit breakers and the fuel gauge and, as all appeared to be correct, he attempted to restart the engine but he was unsuccessful. At between 600 and 700 feet agl the pilot lowered his landing wheel and commenced base leg for his selected field which lay nicely into wind although at that point he was a little high. After turning onto finals the pilot noticed that the field was rougher than he had expected so he decided to close the airbrakes for a more gentle landing. At this point, the glider descended rapidly and the pilot could not determine the reason before it collided with the top of a hedge surrounding the field. This caused the glider to yaw and crash into the field. It suffered substantial damage to the fuselage and tailplane but the cockpit remained intact and there were no injuries to the pilot.

Prior to the flight the pilot had obtained a weather forecast from Bidford Gliding Club. The forecast weather was close to the actual conditions at the time of the accident, with a south-westerly wind of 15 kt, gusting to 25 kt, and good visibility.

The engine was subsequently checked by the company performing the repairs and was found to be in working order. The pilot confirmed that he and his partner had not had previous problems starting the engine in flight and that it is possible that, when starting the engine at 850 to 900 feet agl, he had advanced the throttle too rapidly.

The pilot considered that on final approach he had been well set to make a landing comfortably into his selected field. He could not be sure about the cause of the rapid descent leading to the impact with the hedge but, coming at the point where he was intending to close the airbrakes, he considered it most likely that he had inadvertently moved forward the flap lever, giving a selection of negative flap. In this aircraft the two handles, flap and airbrake, sit next to each other on the left-hand side of the cockpit and the pilot thought that he may have selected the wrong handle or that his sleeve may have caught on the flap lever while he was using other controls.

The pilot also considered that it would have been better to have selected the engine earlier and, in future, he would aim to do so at between 1,200 and 1,500 feet agl.