

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Beagle B121 Series 1 Pup, G-AXDW	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Continental Motors Corp O-200-A piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1969	
Date & Time (UTC):	26 February 2009 at 1310 hrs	
Location:	Approximately 2 miles from Cranfield Airport, Bedfordshire	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - 1 (Minor)
Nature of Damage:	Substantial	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	51 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	640 hours (of which 12 were on type) Last 90 days - 10 hours Last 28 days - 7 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

The pilot attempted a forced landing as a result of a loss of power. The aircraft undershot the intended landing site and passed through two hedges and a road before coming to rest in a ditch. It is thought the loss of power was most likely caused by carburettor icing, although a technical failure could not be ruled out.

History of the flight

The pilot had intended to fly from Cranfield Airfield to Sibson Airfield near Peterborough. Due to poor weather encountered near the intended destination he elected to return to Cranfield.

On contact with Cranfield ATC the pilot was instructed to remain clear of the approach to allow a BAe 146 to

land. He circled, clear of the airfield, at about 1,000 ft for more than five minutes whilst waiting for the BAe 146 to land and to receive his subsequent joining clearance. The pilot then attempted to reposition to join the circuit and stated that when he increased power, the engine faltered, causing him to select both the carb heat and electric fuel pump on. The engine picked up momentarily before again faltering and producing no useful power.

The pilot transmitted a MAYDAY call to ATC and looked for a suitable place to make a forced landing. Due to the presence of electricity pylons, he was unable to land in the immediate vicinity and attempted a forced landing in a field a short distance upwind. As

the aircraft descended through about 200 ft agl, it sunk markedly which the pilot believes was possibly due to a change in the local wind effects at this height. This resulted in the aircraft narrowly undershooting the desired field. The pilot attempted to clear the boundary hedge by pitching up but the aircraft failed to climb and passed through the hedge. It crossed an adjacent road and a second hedge before coming to rest in a ditch. The pilot and passenger were able to vacate the aircraft unaided through the pilot's door, the passenger's door having jammed.

Assessment of the cause

The pilot believes the temperature and dew point at the time of the accident were approximately 9°C and 5°C respectively, suggesting conditions likely to cause serious carburettor icing, regardless of engine power. However, as the engine has not been subject to inspection, a technical failure cannot be ruled out.