

Aircraft Type and Registration: Druine D.31 Turbulent, G-APNZ

No & Type of Engines: 1 Ardem 4C02 Mk 5 piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1959

Date & Time (UTC): 3 September 1995 at 1840 hrs

Location: River Rother, adjacent to Iden Airstrip, East Sussex

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - Minor Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Aircraft damaged beyond economic repair

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence with Night Rating

Commander's Age: 32 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 790 hours (of which 67 were on type)
Last 90 days - 81 hours
Last 28 days - 22 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The pilot had flown an air display in G-APNZ and arrived back at Headcorn Aerodrome at approximately 1630 hrs; the weather was excellent with a light surface wind. After an hour on the ground, he then flew the Turbulent, in company with other club members to Iden Airstrip. Following another brief stop he took off, in loose formation with another Turbulent aircraft, for the return flight to Headcorn. The pilot of G-APNZ remembers the takeoff from Iden but has no recollection of subsequent events. Witnesses on the ground included other club members who were also preparing for departure. The aircraft was seen to fly overhead and then enter a spin to the right; it went through 270° before entering the river at a steep descent angle. The pilot was rescued from the bank of the river and taken to hospital. He still has no recollection of the accident, or of releasing his full harness and escaping from the aircraft, but considers that he must have allowed his airspeed to decay to such an extent that the aircraft stalled and entered a spin. His main injury was a severe gash to his forehead and he believes that his flying helmet protected him from more serious damage.