

Europa, G-CHAV

AAIB Bulletin No: 9/2004	Ref: EW/G2004/06/12	Category: 1.3
Aircraft Type and Registration:	Europa, G-CHAV	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Rotax 912-UL piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	2000	
Date & Time (UTC):	15 June 2004 at 1153 hrs	
Location:	Gloucester Airport, Gloucestershire	
Type of Flight:	Training	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 2	Passengers - 0
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Damage to undercarriage and propeller	
Commander's Licence:	Commercial Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	48 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	408 hours (of which 161 were on type)	
	Last 90 days - 67 hours	
	Last 28 days - 21 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

History of the Flight

The handling pilot, who was occupying the left hand seat, was undergoing conversion training and had completed 2 hours 50 minutes of dual instruction at the time of the accident. During the first touch-and-go of the circuit detail, the aircraft left the paved runway surface in a partially airborne condition and the instructor was unable to prevent the left wing tip from contacting the ground. The aircraft then slid sideways for approximately 45 yards, causing damage to the undercarriage and propeller.

Sequence of Events

The touchdown, on Runway 27, had been normal, except that it was displaced to the left of the centreline; the wind was from 330°(M) at 15 kt. However, the handling pilot took some time to 'settle' the aircraft, which was therefore slower than usual at the point at which power was applied for the takeoff. Forward stick was applied to raise the tail, but the nose pitch attitude remained higher than normal and the aircraft began to drift to the left whilst yawing to the right, into the prevailing wind. The handling pilot initially applied right rudder to correct the drift to the left, followed by left rudder to realign the aircraft with the runway. The nose then continued to yaw to the left and as the aircraft

reached the runway edge it became airborne for a short time, possibly due to meeting the raised grass edge of the runway.

The commander took control of the aircraft, noting as he did so that throttle was set at less than the full power position. It could not be determined if the throttle had moved during the take-over of control or if it had been at that setting since power was first applied. As full power was applied the aircraft nose began to rise, possibly assisted by a further ground contact. The left wing then dropped, which the commander attempted to recover by application of forward stick and right rudder. However, the left wing tip contacted the grass surface and the aircraft yawed further to the left whilst travelling sideways, coming to rest pointing in a south-easterly direction.

Analysis

The relatively high initial nose attitude would have encouraged the aircraft to become partially airborne at a low airspeed. It would also have increased drag, compounding any reduced acceleration that may have been attributable to a partial throttle setting. In this condition the aircraft would have been particularly vulnerable to the effects of the moderate crosswind, and as the touch-and-go was continued from the downwind side of the runway, there was insufficient width of runway available to correct the swing to the left once it had developed. On the final occasion that the aircraft became airborne, it is likely that it was in, or close to, a stalled condition from which the commander was unable to recover.