

Falco F8L, G-OCAD, 10 August 1997

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Aircraft Type and Registration:	Falco F8L, G-OCAD
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming IO-320-B1A piston engine
Year of Manufacture:	1996
Date & Time (UTC):	10 August 1997 at 1215 hrs
Location:	Tatenhill Airfield, Leicestershire
Type of Flight:	Private
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1 - Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None - Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Nose landing gear collapsed. Damage to propeller, engine cowling and right main landing gear
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence with Night Rating
Commander's Age:	51 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	239 hours (of which 16 were on type) Last 90 days - 9 hours Last 28 days - 4 hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft had been on the ground for about 30 minutes. When the pilot came to restart the engine, it ran roughly but leaning-off the mixture appeared to clear the problem and he therefore considered that the most probable cause had been an oiled-up spark-plug. The engine ran normally during the subsequent magneto and power checks.

The aircraft taxied out, commenced the take-off run and lifted-off but, as the pilot was about to select the landing-gear up, the engine started to misfire again. As there was still runway ahead of him, he decided to land the aircraft straight ahead. He realised that he might not have enough paved surface left to stop in time and could not see the overrun area because of the topography (it subsequently transpired that this field may have been suitable for a straight-ahead overrun). As he

approached the end of the runway he saw the perimeter track and steered the aircraft to the right onto the track to give himself more paved surface on which to brake. Unfortunately, he was now confronted with a series of three runway lights mounted on low concrete blocks and collision with these was inevitable. The impact collapsed the nose landing gear, allowing the propeller to strike the ground and the right main gear struck another block, causing damage to the brake cylinder. The aircraft stopped some 8 metres beyond the blocks and the pilot vacated the aircraft normally. Two propeller slashes showed that the engine had been rotating at impact.

In his detailed statement, the pilot expressed the opinion that the most likely cause of the engine problem was vapour-locking due to the combination of high ambient temperature and the short period of time between flights. The temperature was reported to have been 32°C at the time of the accident. The pilot also queries the wisdom of having such solid obstructions in an area likely to be used by light aircraft in an undershoot or overshoot situation.