

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Pegasus XL-Q, G-MTYS	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Rotax 462 piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1988	
Date & Time (UTC):	4 October 2010 at 1530 hrs	
Location:	Park Farm strip, Caerleon, near Newport, Wales	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - 1 (Serious)	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Wing, propeller and trike extensively damaged	
Commander's Licence:	None	
Commander's Age:	68 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	22 hours (of which 22 were on type) Last 90 days - 0 hours Last 28 days - 0 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and further enquiries by the AAIB	

Synopsis

The unlicensed pilot was seriously injured when the aircraft landed heavily in a crosswind. He had been conducting full throttle taxi tests and allowed the aircraft to become airborne to avoid departing the edge of the farm strip and entering a ploughed field.

History of the flight

At the time of the accident the pilot had completed a limited amount of flying training in a flex-wing microlight but did not possess a pilot's licence. His most recent instructional flight was in August 2000.

The pilot stated that he planned to conduct "full throttle" taxi tests to check that the engine was delivering "smooth and full power" in preparation for renewal of

the aircraft's permit to fly. The airstrip at Park Farm has one grass runway orientated approximately south-west to north-east and is surrounded by a ploughed field. While rigging the aircraft he estimated the wind to be southerly to south-easterly at approximately 5 kt.

During the first run, which commenced at the beginning of the north-easterly runway, the pilot used "part throttle" with the control bar fully back, inducing a nose-down input to avoid taking off. On the return run, along the south-westerly runway, the pilot applied full power. Approximately halfway along the runway the aircraft began to drift uncontrollably to the left edge of the strip beside the ploughed field. At a speed of approximately 40-45 mph the pilot considered that the aircraft was

travelling too quickly to correct the situation and elected to push the control bar, in an attempt to take off and avoid entering the ploughed field. The aircraft became airborne immediately. The pilot climbed the aircraft to “a safe altitude” and then familiarised himself with the controls for about 10 min before starting an approach to land. By this time the wind had increased to between 7 and 12 kt.

The pilot stated that he had “no problem with the approach” but that, in the landing flare, the aircraft

yawed left and landed heavily on its right wheel before coming to rest with extensive damage. The pilot, who had suffered a broken arm, called emergency services on his mobile telephone and was later airlifted to hospital.

The pilot judged that the accident was caused by his “lack of experience in attempting to handle a flex-wing microlight in what turned out to be significant and variable crosswind conditions”.