

**Aircraft type and registration:** Pitts S-IE G-CDJH (light single engined fixed wing aircraft)

**Year of Manufacture:** 1977

**Date and time (GMT):** 9 November 1984 at 1304 hrs

**Location:** Yapton, Near Bognor Regis, Sussex

**Type of flight:** Private

**Persons on board:** Crew — 1                      Passengers — Nil

**Injuries:** Crew — 1 (minor)      Passengers — N/A

**Nature of damage:** Aircraft destroyed

**Commander's Licence:** Private Pilot's Licence

**Commander's Age:** 39 years

**Commander's total flying experience:** 1855 hours (of which 120 hours were on type)

**Information Source:** Aircraft Accident Report form completed by pilot.

On the day before the accident the pilot made a short local flight in the aircraft from the airfield at Bognor. Following the completion of two flick rolls, the engine lost power but picked up again after about four or five seconds. The pilot decided to return to the airfield where he carried out a successful precautionary landing.

The following day the pilot refuelled the aircraft with 5 gallons of petrol and then checked the fuel system for possible water contamination. Before departure he carried out several full power checks during which the engine performed satisfactorily. After take-off he climbed the aircraft to 1500 feet and flew inverted for approximately 40 seconds. The engine continued to run perfectly for about 30 seconds after the aircraft had returned to upright flight but then lost power completely. The pilot selected a large field whose surface seemed firm enough for landing and turned into wind while at the same time attempting without success to restart the engine. The aircraft's rate of descent proved to be greater than the pilot was expecting from experience with his own aircraft of a similar type and he aimed for a gap in the boundary hedge of the field he had selected. However, he was unable to reach it and the aircraft touched down in a ploughed field about 40 metres short of the hedge. Because of the ground condition the aircraft cartwheeled before coming to rest upright, suffering very severe damage. Although the pilot was wearing a fully tightened six point harness his head went forward and struck the instrument panel. He was, however, able to turn everything off and leave the aircraft within about 30 seconds.

No apparent defect was discovered when the engine was inspected after the accident. An examination of the fuel system disclosed a plentiful supply of fuel at the intake of the injector which was damaged in the accident. However, there was no evidence of fuel between the injector unit and the cylinders.