

De Havilland DH82A Tiger Moth, G-ADXT, 22 June 2001 at 1630 hrs

AAIB Bulletin No: 8/2001 **Ref:** EW/G2001/06/28 **Category:** 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: De Havilland DH82A Tiger Moth, G-ADXT

No & Type of Engines: 1 De Havilland Gipsy Major 1C

Year of Manufacture: 1935

Date & Time (UTC): 22 June 2001 at 1630 hrs

Location: Nr Fishbourne, West Sussex

Type of Flight: Training

Persons on Board: Crew - 2 - Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - None - Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Extensive damage to fuselage

Commander's Licence: Commercial Pilots licence

Commander's Age: 75 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 13,981 hours (of which 2,460 were on type)

Last 90 days - nil

Last 28 days - nil

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The pilot, an instructor, was carrying out an air experience flight, a part of which was to demonstrate aerobatics. The weather was CAVOK with a surface wind of 120° at 8 to 10 kt. The instructor was demonstrating a barrel roll to the right and, when the aircraft was inverted with the nose above the horizon, the engine stopped. The aircraft was at a height of about 1,500 feet and the instructor continued the roll until the wings were level and selected the largest green field available to him. There was insufficient height to dive the aircraft in an attempt to restart the engine using the slipstream. He transmitted a 'MAYDAY' distress call whilst commencing a left-hand circuit for the chosen grass field. The aircraft was set up on final approach at about 55 kt on a southerly heading in order to utilise the maximum length available of the field. As the pilot rounded out he realised that the field contained standing crops approximately one metre high. As the main landing gear descended into the crops it felt as though the aircraft had gone into a ditch and it flipped onto its back coming to a sudden stop. Both the instructor and student were uninjured and the instructor told the student not to undo his safety harness in order to avoid head or neck injuries. The instructor was able to release himself and then supported the student whilst he undid his safety harness.

The pilot considered that, when inverted, he had allowed too high a nose up attitude and this had caused the engine to stop. The field chosen looked the best available from the height at which he identified it but, due to the standing crops, the aircraft main landing gear caught in the tops of the crop and he could not prevent the aircraft from turning over.