

AAIB Bulletin No: 4/94

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Category: 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Yak 55-M, RA 01325

No & Type of Engines: 1 M-14P piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1992

Date & Time (UTC): 28 January 1994 at 1325 hrs

Location: White Waltham Airfield, Berkshire

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Propeller destroyed and canopy broken; some skin deformation and minor damage to lower engine cowling

Commander's Licence: UK, USA and Russian Private Pilot's Licences

Commander's Age: 52 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 802 hours (of which 25 minutes were on type)
Last 90 days - 38 hours
Last 28 days - 24 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The pilot was on a local aerobatics/type familiarisation detail. After flying to an appropriate area, the pilot attempted to reduce speed but found that the throttle would not move from the fully forward position. Suspecting that the problem was caused by icing, the pilot commenced a descent and recovered to the White Waltham circuit. The emergency services were alerted and a normal approach speed was achieved on base leg. However the throttle was still stuck fully open and, as height could not be reduced without increasing speed, the pilot turned the magnetos off at an appropriate time. Unfortunately, the subsequent glidepath was much steeper than expected and, rather than complicating matters by switching the magnetos back on and causing damage to the engine, the pilot decided to land on what appeared to be a suitable field short of the airfield. The field was very wet and the aircraft decelerated very quickly, tipping over onto its nose and then further onto its back.

Following recovery of the aircraft an engineering inspection revealed no apparent mechanical reason for the throttle restriction; the engineer and the pilot considered that the restriction was caused by throttle icing. The owner of the aircraft, who witnessed the event stated that the misjudged approach was the result of a combination of the unfamiliarity on type and a gusty wind possibly causing some windshear. At the time the surface wind was 290°/15 gusting 25 kt and the visibility was excellent. An aftercast indicated that there was light scattered cloud at 3,500 feet and the temperature was plus 7°C with a dewpoint of -3°C.