

No: 8/92

Ref: EW/G92/05/17

Category: 1c

Aircraft Type and Registration: Acrosport 1, G-BPKI

No & Type of Engines: 1 Lycoming O-320-E3D piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1991

Date & Time (UTC): 19 May 1992 at 1945 hrs

Location: 3 miles West of Barton Aerodrome, Manchester

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Right wings severely damaged, empennage distorted, propeller bent.

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 48 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 597 hours (all on type)
Last 90 days - 11 hours
Last 28 days - 4 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft had taken-off from Barton Aerodrome for a short flight to check the accuracy of its Decca Navigator installation. Whilst flying towards, but 2 miles from, Barton at a height of 1,500 feet QNH the engine started to run roughly. The pilot selected carburettor heat and the engine initially started to pick up but ran roughly again so the control was put back to COLD with the engine still failing to deliver sufficient power to maintain altitude. He then checked that he had selected the main fuel tank with sufficient fuel available and switched on the electric fuel pump, noting a normal fuel pressure reading of 6psi. The aircraft was by now down to about 1,200 feet and the pilot decided to force-land, turning the aircraft into the westerly wind of about 10 kt.

The field originally chosen for landing became out of glide range as the engine stopped completely and he was forced to attempt a landing on an area of scrubland obstructed by bushes and small saplings. After a landing roll of about 10 metres the right wings struck a low bush, the right landing gear dug into soft peat and the aircraft ground-looped and inverted. The pilot evacuated the aircraft without injury which he attributed to the 5-point harness he was wearing together with a hard crash-helmet.

He commented on the fact that the latter also saved him from injury as he released the harness since, in his hurry to leave the aircraft, he forgot that he was inverted and dropped onto his head.

At the time of writing this Bulletin, the cause of the engine failure remains uninvestigated beyond visual confirmation that there were no external signs of major mechanical failure. Should such an investigation take place, the pilot has undertaken to advise AAIB of any significant findings and these will be published in a future edition of the AAIB Bulletin.