

Falcon XP Microlight, G-BUYF

AAIB Bulletin No: 10/2003	Ref: EW/G2003/07/12	Category: 1.4
Aircraft Type and Registration:	Falcon XP, G-BUYF	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Rotax 503 UL piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1988	
Date & Time (UTC):	12 July 2003 at 0951 hrs	
Location:	Near Thames Head Bridge, A433 Tetbury Road, Gloucestershire	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Main undercarriage collapsed, nosewheel bent, broken propeller and damage to underside of fuselage	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	52 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	587 hours (of which 93 were on type)	
	Last 90 days - 20 hours	
	Last 28 days - 16 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

The aircraft was flown from Manchester, Barton Airfield to Kemble Airfield, Gloucestershire to take part in a Popular Flying Association rally. On arrival at Kemble the pilot joined the circuit for Runway 26 and, when on the downwind leg, found that he was positioned between two other aircraft. After turning onto base leg he was being caught up and overtaken by the aircraft behind so the pilot adjusted his heading to the left and reduced power to allow the other aircraft to pass by. When he judged he was clear of the other aircraft he re-opened the throttle, but there was no response from the engine.

At this point the pilot estimated he was about 600 to 800 feet agl and too low to be able to reach the airfield, so he started to look for a suitable field for a forced landing. There were two suitable fields available. Initially he selected one of the fields but after assessing that he was incorrectly positioned he decided to land in the other. After touchdown he lost directional control of the aircraft which spun round through 180° and slid backwards, collapsing the main landing gear and causing damage to the fuselage. The propeller, which is mounted at the rear of the aircraft, dug into the surface and the aircraft came to a sudden stop. The pilot and his passenger were both wearing four point harnesses and were able to vacate the aircraft normally without outside assistance.

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After the accident the pilot confirmed that there was fuel present in each of the two carburettor bowls and therefore thought that the most likely cause of the failure was an electrical problem. The engine was subsequently stripped down and it was discovered that the rear crankshaft oil seal had failed allowing the fuel oil mix to escape. This fluid had then contaminated the points for the ignition system of one of the two cylinders. (This engine model has a single ignition system for each cylinder.) The engine was therefore unable to continue to run on the remaining cylinder alone and this precipitated the forced landing.