

No: 8/87

Ref: 1c

Aircraft type and registration: Druine D62B Condor G-AYZT

No & Type of engines: 1 Continental Motors Corp 0-240-A piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1972

Date and time (UTC): 7 June 1987 at 1700 hrs

Location: Whatfield Airfield, Hadleigh, Suffolk

Type of flight: Glider towing'

Persons on board: Crew — 1 Passengers — None

Injuries: Crew — None Passengers — N/A

Nature of damage: Blown out canopy panels, damage to mainplane and wings, hole in cockpit floor and burned electrical wiring

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 20 years

Commander's Total Flying Experience: 44 hours (of which 12 were on type)

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot.

The aircraft had flown earlier in the day and was being refuelled with MOGAS from a small bowser. The pilot, who was due to fly the next detail, was sitting in the cockpit. On completion of the refuelling some fuel was seen to be dripping from the tank overflow pipe. After about two minutes the pilot attempted to start the engine and, when it did not immediately fire, he pumped the throttle to assist the start. He next noticed some people trying to attract his attention and saw that fire had broken out in the cockpit footwell. He began to leave the aircraft when there was a muffled explosion which blew off most of the canopy and bowed the inboard section of the mainplane. The pilot was able to complete his escape after which the fire was extinguished by others at the scene. The pilot considers that the most likely source of initiation of the fire was from an engine backfire, a characteristic of this aircraft which was not uncommon.